

# Books

Carl Robb

1967

a review of

*Abortion* by Lawrence Lader. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill. 211 pp. 1966. \$5.95.

Illegal abortion is the leading health problem in the United States.

There is one abortion for every 3.6 births and half of all childbearing deaths are attributed to illegal abortions. A hospital abortion is one of the simplest and safest of all operations, less dangerous than a tonsillectomy.

Lawrence Lader in this book outlines the world of illegal abortion, the relation of abortion to birth control, prices, place's and opposition to abortion in the United States.

The primary opposition to legalized abortion is from the Catholic Church.

Catholics, themselves, do not oppose legalized abortion, only the official church. Catholics comprise 20% of all abortion patients, almost equal to the Catholic ratio of 25% in the total U.S. population.

The Catholic church's opposition to all birth control information is responsible for the high rate of abortion deaths. Overpopulated Latin America, where conceptive training is omitted from medical schools due to Catholic pressure, has the highest rate of illegal abortion deaths in the world.

Other Catholic pressure has resulted in the banning of Lader's book in Spain and the threat of excommunication to any member voting for a governor known to be an advocate of birth control.

Unless the Catholic church soon changes its official policy on birth control, as it did on eating meat on Friday and the use of usury, humanity is in for the largest man made disaster in the form of overpopulation that history has ever recorded. It is ironic that the Catholic church did not outlaw abortion till 1869 but now acts like it has always been a god-given sin.

Lader does not discuss the possibility of illegal abortion rings contributing money to police pay-offs and politicians who will oppose legalized medical abortion as is done with gambling and drugs.

Lader's research shows that abortions provide no physical or psychic damage when done by competent medical physicians in a society where they are approved.

According to Lader, thoraputic abortions have almost been eliminated in the U.S. Catholics or other people who oppose abortions are allowed to sit on the abortion committee in many public hospitals with the result being that many hospitals boast that they have never given an abortion. Protestantish state of subservience to Catholic doctrine is another reason given for the difficulty of obtaining a legal abortion.

Even though no reputable physician has ever been convicted for performing an abortion in a reputable hospital the medical society has allowed itself to be cowed by a vocal minority so that only 8,000 legal abortions are performed in the U.S. each year in comparison to one million illegal abortions, many done by leading doctors.

Lawrence Lader has done a good job in this book of untangling the myths and hypocrisies from the tragic realities of abortion. As he notes, once a woman has decided to have an abortion no law is going to stop her. What remains to be done is to make it as safe and easy as possible for her.

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