

## Beautiful Differences

By: Helena Sicree

In this day and age, technology and medicine have advanced past all expectations. It is strange, then, that we still struggle with old problems. We have never been so aware of being considered replaceable and unequal as we have this year, with COVID confining our elderly to their homes and Black Lives Matter protestors in the streets. Yet still many of us overlook those who rely on us the most, we ignore those in need, simply because they are different and hard to understand. The disabled unborn are like these people. They have been considered replaceable, like the only choice for them is to be aborted, and that because they are different and might have a harder life that they should therefore not be given life. Aren't we supposed to celebrate our differences?

“You're going to abort it, right?” was what Bertha, a pro-choice advocate, heard. She had been talking with her friend, Jackie, about Jackie's pregnancy. Two weeks earlier, her friend had gone to a baby shower for her little girl, Madison, but now she was in tears. She had taken a quad screen test to find out that her child was at a high risk for Down's Syndrome. Upon hearing this, nearly everyone who had been at the baby shower was pushing her to have an abortion, saying flippantly, “You can just abort it and try again. You can always try for a normal child.” Even Bertha was indignant at this advice. Not so long ago, Madison had been readily welcomed by family and friends, but now she was degraded to an ‘it’, with all of her personhood and identity revoked, simply because she had a risk of being born in less than perfect condition. Though Jackie did choose life for Madison after the test results proved her to be fine, the tragic part of this story is that everyone considered the child replaceable. People have grown to consider the

disabled as a “burden upon the public,” but they fail to see the joy that so many of these people bring to everyone.

For instance, a father in Cairo, Egypt, chose life for his son, Ibrahim, who had a special-needs condition. Even though it required sacrifices, Ibrahim’s father was happy and willing to give anything for his son, whom he considered his “whole world”. “He was only three pounds when he was born. He needed half a liter of milk per day. I’d skip my own breakfast just to buy it for him,” the father said, “I took him to nurseries when he was very young because I wanted him to be comfortable with other children. I found a charity that offered speech classes, and I took him five days a week.” Even with Ibrahim’s disabilities, he is still a person with human dignity, and deserves to be treated as such. His father knew this, and so much more, as he said, “I love him a little more because he needs it a little more.” This is what people like Ibrahim can bring into the world. Who could possibly replace him? Who could possibly replace anyone?

Not only does the thought that the disabled unborn are *replaceable* raise a problem, but also the thought that abortion is the immediate solution. No one stops to consider finding helpful parents who have raised disabled children themselves. No one even thinks about adoption, or the line of people waiting to adopt the handicapped children. Or the possibility that the test for disabilities could have been wrong. Just like Bertha heard, many women consider, “You can just abort it and try again” as their only choice when they get bad test results. However, many mothers have shared how they chose other options for their children, despite the test results, including one woman recalling, “When my niece was pregnant with her third child, the doctors told her that he had a kidney issue and would not survive delivery so she needed to abort him. She of course refused..[and]..she gave birth to this child who is now six years old.” Another woman talked about a similar incident that happened to her, “During my pregnancy, we were

offered and encouraged to abort our now 31 year old daughter. Doctors told us she would be profoundly disabled.” In both cases, the children survived delivery and lived their lives happily. Now, this all shows that not only could the test results be seriously wrong, but that choosing abortion because of the test results could thus prove to be a serious mistake.

Even with this, people still choose to abort a child because of the child’s disability. One woman, Lyndsay Werking-Yip, was writing about how she had a late-term abortion because her child looked like she might have a disability. When asked how she could do such a thing, she, in *The New York Times*, replied with, “.....allowing her to live would have been a fate worse than death. Her diagnosis was not fatal, not incompatible with the bare mechanics of a living body. But it was incompatible with a fulfilling life. And that makes all the difference to me.” Other writers contributed to the talk, such as Amy, who also had an abortion and commented with, “Our daughter had Triple X syndrome, a genetic disorder, and possibly something irregular with her abdomen.” As if to sum up all their thoughts, another woman, Carole, added, “..We did so in order not to bring into the world a child who would know — at best — only pain, disability and misery.” These three women all aborted their children because the children were disabled, and would lead what their parents considered an ‘unfulfilling’ life in the world. They were aborted because they were different and would have been harder to deal with and understand. This is wrong.

Christopher, another writer to *The New York Times*, replied to Lyndsay with, “As the parent of a child with a rare terminal genetic disorder, I understand the fears associated with an uncertain diagnosis. However, a diagnosis with a constellation of symptoms, medications and diagnostic tests tells only one part of the story.” Continuing, he pointed out that, “The most important parts are known only by those who love and care for these amazing and special people;

those who do love and care know that a life can be fulfilling in spite of very real medical challenges.” Christopher had realized what the others had not. It doesn’t matter what challenges a person may have in the future. What matters most is whether or not you’ll be there for them in the future.

To end an unborn child’s life because the child has or has a risk for having a disability is wrong. They have their own dreams and futures, and just because they are different, just because they will face more challenges and a harder life than us, is not an excuse to end their lives. We are all different, aren’t we? Each of us has their own difficulties, and each of us goes through a miserable time sometime in our lives, but we also have our own victories, accomplishments, and joys. For every tear we shed, we discover something more about ourselves, perhaps an inner strength, or determination; all of which makes us who we are today. So just because a person might face a difficult and painful future does not give us leave to end the person’s life. Instead, we should be there for them, offering support and love every step of the way. As we do that, we will discover things not only about them, but also about us, that will give us a whole new view on life. In the end, no matter what pain we had to endure, no matter what scars they had to bear, it will all be worth it, simply because of their beautiful differences.

## IDEAS/OUTLINE:

- Disability-based abortions are unconstitutional
  - Abortion goes against 14th Amendment
  - Disability-based discriminations goes against 14th Amendment
  - Declaration of Independence is against abortion
- Disability-based abortions are comparable to Nazis
  - T4 program similar to abortions; targeting “burdensome lives”
  - “The murder of the handicapped was a precursor to the Holocaust”  
<https://www.britannica.com/event/T4-Program>
  - Pope Francis: “We do the same as the Nazis to maintain the purity of the race, but with white gloves on.” <https://www.liveaction.org/news/pope-francis-abortion-disabilities-nazi/>
- **Disabled people’s lives are worth living**
  - **Karen’s story**
  - **‘Humans of New York’ profiles** [‘Humans of New York’ profiles father who refused abortion for son with special needs](#)
  - **Moms share stories about being pressured into abortions; Emmerson:** [Abortion rejected by parents of child with Down syndrome](#) **Other stories:** [Moms share how they chose life though pressured to have abortions](#) **Rachel:** [Doctors told us to abort, but we knew 'if there's a heartbeat, there's hope'](#)

## Reasons for abortion with disabled children:

- “The baby will suffer and be miserable rest of her life” - baby suffering
- “So expensive; I don’t know how to take care of her; I will take baby’s pain as my own” - parent’s suffering - "Your life is too hard now."
- “Won’t have a fulfilling life; save the world from those with special needs” "Jackie, it's not worth having it." - society suffering
- Modern Medeas - “I did the right thing for my child/family”
- Evil stepmother/grandmother - “I have two daughters who are both in week 21 of their first pregnancies. If either of them is faced with a diagnosis as devastating as Ms. Werking-Yip’s, I hope to God they will make the decision she did with her husband — to save a child from a lifetime of suffering. To me that is the definition of parental love.”
- Re-define terms - “To me that is the definition of parental love.”
- Contradictory feeling terms - “fetus can’t feel anything, but baby will feel pain of disability so we should spare it that”
- “Can’t relate so shut up” - “If you cannot say yes, then you should keep your mouth shut and thank God every day that you never had to make such a truly hard decision.” - if you can’t relate, can’t take care of handicapped or adopt one, (goes for poor, elderly, etc) you don’t have an opinion
- “Oh, I could never be like you! You’re a saint!” - can’t relate ‘cause you’re on a pedestal
- "You're going to abort it right"? - presumption & replaceable - "You can just abort it and try again." "You can always try for a normal child."

## OUTLINE:

- Intro
  - Replaceable, unequal, different, hard to understand
- 1st Argument
  - Replaceable
  - "You're going to abort it right"? - presumption & replaceable - "You can just abort it and try again." "You can always try for a normal child."
    - Human beings aren't replaceable because each one of us is unique, whether physically, mentally, morally, or spiritually
    - Offer a whole new view & perspective
    - Humans of New York
      - "He was only three pounds when he was born. He needed half a liter of milk per day. I'd skip my own breakfast just to buy it for him," the father recalls. "I took him to nurseries when he was very young because I wanted him to be comfortable with other children. I found a charity that offered speech classes, and I took him five days a week." "I love him a little more because he needs it a little more," he explained. Doctors recommended an abortion, which he "wouldn't hear." The man is happy to give Ibrahim, who is his "whole world," "anything that I have,"
- 2nd Argument
  - Unequal/ Presumption
  - "You're going to abort it right"?
  - Pressuring presumptions
  - "So expensive; I don't know how to take care of her; I will take baby's pain as my own" - parent's suffering - "Your life is too hard now."
  - "Won't have a fulfilling life; save the world from those with special needs" "Jackie, it's not worth having it." - society suffering
    - There are other options
    - Inconsiderate to immediately presume solution
- 3rd Argument
  - Different - Hard to Understand
  - The baby will suffer and be miserable rest of her life" - baby suffering
  - Modern Medeas - "I did the right thing for my child/family"
  - Evil stepmother/grandmother - "I have two daughters who are both in week 21 of their first pregnancies. If either of them is faced with a diagnosis as devastating as Ms. Werking-Yip's, I hope to God they will make the decision she did with her husband — to save a child from a lifetime of suffering. To me that is the definition of parental love."
    - They have their own dreams and futures, and just because they are different, just because they will face more challenges and a harder life than us, is not an excuse to end their lives. We are all different, aren't we? Each of us has their own difficulties, and each of us goes through a miserable time sometime in our lives, but we also have our own victories, and accomplishments, and joys. For every tear we shed, we discover

something more about ourselves, perhaps an inner strength, or determination; all of which makes us who we are today. So just because a person might face a difficult and painful future does not give us leave to end the child's life. Instead, we should be there for them, offering support and love every step of the way. As we do that, we will discover things not only about them, but also about us, that will give us a whole new view on life. In the end, no matter what pain we had to endure, no matter what scars they had to bear, it will all be worth it, simply because of their beautiful differences.

- Disabled people's lives are worth living
  - Karen's story
  - 'Humans of New York' profiles ['Humans of New York' profiles father who refused abortion for son with special needs](#)
  - Moms share stories about being pressured into abortions; Emmerson: [Abortion rejected by parents of child with Down syndrome](#) Other stories: [Moms share how they chose life though pressured to have abortions](#) Rachel: [Doctors told us to abort, but we knew 'if there's a heartbeat, there's hope'](#)
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## SOURCES:

[Abortion | LifeSite](#)

[Google Search Pro-Life Handicapped Babies](#)

[“Babies With Disabilities Are Better Off Aborted” | Live Action - Pro-Life Replies](#)

[Disability-based abortion is lethal discrimination | TheHill](#)

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[Abortion](#)

[Ethics - Abortion: Reasons for abortion](#)

[Ethics - Abortion: Disability in the foetus](#)

[The Replaceable Fetus: A Reflection on Abortion and Disability | Manninen](#)

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[Opinion | Abort to Save a Child From a Life of Suffering? \(Published 2019\)](#)

[Opinion | I Had a Late-Term Abortion. I Am Not a Monster. \(Published 2019\)](#)

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[Disability — what if the fetus is or could be disabled?](#)

[Why don't pro-life and disability rights groups work together more often?](#)