



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING
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Submission Cover Sheet

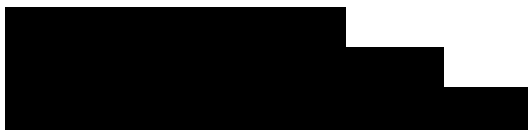
Inquiry into Abortion and reproductive choice in the ACT

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Submission to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Members: Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair),
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1. This submission addresses a number of issues of concern per the ToR. The first of these is basic honesty in language and terminology. The second is the current restrictions on free speech, where the ACT is arguably in breach of national and international law. The third is the moral and ethical impacts which are never addressed in the current ideological environment.

2. **Honesty.** The term ‘abortion’ is a dishonest euphemism deliberately structured to conceal reality. This is a medical procedure in which an unborn child is deliberately killed with Government approval and even encouragement. The killing is routinely done on the basis of poor, incomplete or false information provided to the mother. In many cases, this fundamental dishonesty has devastating impacts further into the woman’s life, up to and including long-term depression and suicide. These well-researched future adverse mental impacts must be reduced insofar as is possible after the killing of the unborn child.

3. **Free Speech.** Australian law and international law guarantee free speech and the right to peacefully protest.¹ In the ACT this right is infringed by the exclusion zone in Moore Street. Irrespective of Mr Theakston’s 2018 decisions, these rights remain infringed in that peaceful protest *on moral and ethical grounds* against what is a plain moral and ethical wrong is restricted.

4. **Moral and Ethical Issues.** The structural dishonesty of the current *zeitgeist* in relation to legalised killing of the unborn is based on either ignorance of or deception concerning the moral and ethical issues it involves. Not considering these has encouraged politicisation of the issue and subsequent increases in the numbers of unborn killed. This is why the term ‘killed’ is used. The following considerations are rarely discussed.

- a. **Falsehoods.** The life-cycle of any mammal (be it a *Mus musculus*, a *Balaenoptera musculus* or a *Homo sapiens*) commences on the formation of a zygote and ends in the death of the mammal. Therefore an unborn *Homo sapiens* is by definition part of the lifecycle of the species. Human life therefore begins at conception. I make this point to illustrate one of the larger falsehoods in the *zeitgeist*. There are many other such shibboleths.
- b. **Moral Violence.** Killing of the unborn is an act of extreme physical and moral violence. Physical violence is understood by most, as is the morality of physical violence; moral violence is not.² Moral violence is the imposed

¹ https://www.alrc.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/fr_129ch_4._freedom_of_speech.pdf

² Close study of diverse sources is required to understand moral violence, as it ranges across scales like physical violence. Research into works ranging from Michael Walzer’s 1977 *Just and Unjust Wars* to Michael Diamond’s 2009 ‘Moral Violence’ in *Private Selves in Public Organizations* (pp.109-125).

reduction of human potential: it is the reason slavery is violent even when the slave is treated well and is not physically abused in any way. Even the Romans recognised this. There is nothing that reduces the human potential of any *Homo Sapiens* being more than killing the *Homo Sapiens* involved irrespective of the life-cycle stage. If, in terms of moral violence, something non-lethal like slavery is considered to be evil, how can the moral violence of killing the unborn be considered differently?

5. **Conclusion.** Killing the unborn is an act of extreme physical and moral violence, all killing is. While some can be justified (see Walzer). In the ACT all moral and ethical aspects of this are ignored, something the ToR at Attachment 1 makes quite clear.

6. **Recommendations.** The following recommendations are made:

- a. Ensure that the expectant mother has all available evidence and information on which to base her position.
 - i. Incorporate honest language into policy.
 - ii. This includes information from agencies who encourage expectant mothers to not kill their unborn child.
 - iii. It also includes information from agencies with moral and ethical views counter to those of the current *zeitgeist* in relation to legalised killing of the unborn.
- b. Formulate policy so as to counter the deceptive dishonesty of the cultural *zeitgeist* with empirical data, focussing on the including the long-term impacts on women of the mental health effects of the killing of their unborn children.
- c. Understand the full implications, including second and third order effects on the long-term mental health on women, when developing policy.
- d. Incorporate moral and ethical considerations into policy. Not doing this has had adverse consequences. Additionally, it is necessary to understand that the common perception of killing of the unborn is describable as ‘evil’ when done without careful consideration of these considerations.
- e. Develop policy to offer and encourage non-lethal alternatives and information to expectant mothers, especially that from persons, organisations and entities with a deep moral and ethical understanding of the *consequences* of current gaps in policy.

