FATHERS HAVE RIGHTS, TOO

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Introduction

Although males dominate all other aspects of society in terms of pay, politics, workplaces, etc., the right of making decisions about their child is one real inequality that men have always faced. A New York Times article cautions that, despite their dominance in other factors, “real examples of male inequality should not be overlooked” (Maillard, 2014). A father’s right is often overlooked by society or it isn’t acknowledged at all. Advocating for father rights doesn’t mean to remove or lessen a mother’s right but it means that both the mother and biological father should have equal say in a termination of a pregnancy or in raising a child. When it comes to the topic of abortion many say it’s only a woman’s decision because it’s her body, and when it comes to taking care of the child the mother gets benefits that a biological father doesn’t. Basically when it is about family decisions, a mother always prevails, completely ignoring the father’s point of view by arguing she knows the best interests of the child. This approach might have come from the constant categorization of fathers as deadbeats who will walk away, but Maillard affirms, “Papas are not always rolling stones.”

Laws and Policies

1. Ohio passed a bill (House Bill 252) which requires the consent of the biological father before performing an abortion. If lying occurs just to have the abortion performed through false fatherhood, a fine of $1,000 will be given.
2. Colorado, Minnesota, Mississippi, and North Dakota give consent to both parents over the decision of an abortion of a minor, giving the father an equal say of what should be done with his child.
3. Coban v. Mohammed (1979) addressed whether the consent of an unwed biological father should be obtained or not before an adoption was finalized. The Supreme Court ruled that any law depriving unwed biological fathers was unconstitutional and a form of Sex Discrimination.

Opposing View

• The decision of Roe v. Wade (1973) gave women the right to choose whether or not they can have abortions freely. The justification for this was to protect a woman’s right to life.
• Job policies are set up in favor for women who just recently gave birth and they don’t acknowledge biological fathers. In a New York Times article, Bernard (2013) describes a story of a father named Josh Levs who felt discriminated by the policies that women are allowed a 10-week paid leave when men are only allowed two. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination based on sex discrimination. It would be considered sex discrimination to give women paid time off to care for a newborn, but not give the same time to men. However, this law is completely being ignored when men want their parental rights.

Findings

This chart shows how a man’s say has no weight over what a woman wants and says.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAN (Dad)</th>
<th>WOMAN (Mom)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WANTS</td>
<td>AGREED PARENTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WANTS</td>
<td>AGREED ABORTION</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIES NOT</td>
<td>AGREED PATERNAL</td>
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Wife’s Decision to have an abortion prevails. A woman cannot be forced to carry a pregnancy and give birth.

Conclusion

Advocating for father’s rights is a matter of reproductive justice because men don’t get an equal say as the mother does towards her child whether it means aborting or raising the child. Although major arguments for this topic is that its her body so she should choose what to do freely or that she carried the baby for nine months so her decision weighs more, it’s wrong because biologically the baby belongs to both the mom and dad and they both should have an equal say in any decision made concerning the baby.

References