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March 31, 2016: Well, If It is a Crime, Why Shouldn't Women Be Punished?

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Title: Well, If It is a Crime, Why Shouldn't Women Be Punished?

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3/31/2016—It took Donald Trump to expose the disconnect between the pro-life movement's rhetoric and its policy prescriptions. Trump said yesterday that the mother should be punished if she has an abortion. Then he backed down. Presumably that is finally the end of him. But, if the unborn child is a human being and her mother kills her, it is murder. After birth no one says a mother should not be punished for killing her child. No doctor forces a woman to have an abortion, or even encourages her. Why should the doctor go to jail and not the woman? How about the father who encourages her and pays for the abortion? Does he go to jail? The reason for this disconnect is that *Roe v. Wade* has protected the pro-life movement from having to legislate much of anything besides putting abortion providers out of business. So, how should the doctor be punished? Logically, it should be the death penalty—intentionally taking the life of a child is a capital crime aggravating circumstance in many states. Well, we are not going to do that. So, let's finally admit that while the unborn child is human, abortion is not murder. I call myself pro-life, but that is certainly my position. Maybe the way to handle abortion is with an emergency pill shortly after an unwanted conception, when the ball of cells is not recognizably human. After that, at some point—when is the issue, since most people don't know they are pregnant for awhile—abortion is banned except when the life or health of the mother is at stake. And health would be broadly defined. This would accomplish what I have always wanted—a legal regime in which abortion is discouraged, but is not usually illegal. Even this would not be the actual state of affairs, since some states will have abortion on demand and the right to travel to those states is constitutionally protected. Anyway, we can thank Trump for exposing the false debate we have been having until now.