

LOOKING BABY ROWAN IN THE FACE

By Maggie Gallagher Wed May 4, 8:05 PM ET

Have you heard of Baby Rowan?

While runaway brides saturate the headlines, the tale of one small baby allegedly refused medical care hasn't yet made a national splash.

Rowan was born April 2, roughly four months premature, after a late-term abortion induced at a Florida abortion clinic.



Two-thirds of children born at this age live.

Angele, his mother, is a thirtysomething divorced mother of two other children. Creepily, she researched late-term abortion methods thoroughly to find the one that was "best" for her child. "Although 'labor and delivery' is most difficult on the mother," she explained to WorldNetDaily, "it seemed to be the best choice for my son. And it would allow the opportunity for my son to be born whole, stillborn, and I could hold him and grieve him and have him cremated."

You can hear in Angele's words all the instincts of motherhood at war with the culture of death, the social pressures that tell so many women abortion is their only real choice, the best, the responsible thing to do.



Motherhood lost. After hours of lonely labor dubbed an abortion, Angele gave birth to her son Rowan in the clinic bathroom. Unexpectedly, she says, her baby was still alive, moving. She begged the clinic staff to call 911: "The first two times I told (a staffer) to call 911, I thought she would. It hadn't crossed my mind that she wouldn't," Angele said. "It finally dawned on me: They're not going to help me save my son." So Angele called a friend. By the time help arrived, Rowan was already dead.

The local medical examiner recently dubbed Rowan a stillborn. The autopsy found no forensic evidence that Rowan was alive at birth (which likely means he never drew a breath). I asked Angele how she would respond. "I'm not a doctor, but when his fingers clutched my hand, when I saw his legs move, when he 'startled' when I screamed for help, I assumed his heart was beating," she said. Angele doesn't need a medical examiner's report to tell her whether her son was alive or not. She was there, cuddling him, begging for help.

The 2002 Born-Alive Infants Protection Act requires doctors and hospitals to take care of babies born alive, regardless of whether they are the products of an induced abortion. The goal is to draw a sharp line at birth, making sure that the legal right to an abortion doesn't become a right to commit infanticide. The legal definition of born "alive" for the purposes of federal law may thus be different from local forensic standards for defining stillbirths: By federal law, if the heart beats, if the muscles move, or if it breathes, it's a live baby, entitled to the protection of law.



Whether or not Rowan was "alive" at birth, by whatever technical standards federal or state law impose, it is hard to understand how any decent person, much less medical personnel, could refuse to call 911 for a patient who requested help for her baby. No doubt such an urgent request could be confusing for abortion clinic staff, whose job ordinarily is to make sure the baby comes out dead.

If you want to see the face of abortion in America, look at Rowan. His photo is posted at the Web site of Liberty Counsel (Angele's lawyers) www.lc.org/images/aborted_rowan_full.jpg. His picture, while disturbing, is not particularly gruesome. It's just the peaceful face of a child our nation's Supreme Court says you have a right to kill.

If you support an absolute right to an abortion at any time, I think you have a moral obligation to go look Rowan in the face. Then write to me, and tell me how you can stomach it.

(Readers may reach Maggie Gallagher at MaggieBox2004@yahoo.com.)