SISTERHOOD VS CONGREGATION

A study of two opposing social movements in the
Norwegian abortion struggle
1970-1981

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SUMMARY

This master thesis is an analysis of the Norwegian abortion struggle from the activists’ perspective. The collective mobilizations, arguments and strategies are examined through theories of social movements. It sets out as an examination on how historians have narrated this national event and attempts to bring a divided history back together. The women’s movement was able to push the demand for self-determined abortion into the national agenda and, through mobilizations in alliance with the socialist parties and medical activists, achieved self-determined abortion in 1978. On the other side, a Popular Action against Self-determined Abortion and opponents within the Church and the medical profession, in defence of the unborn child, were central in resisting a new abortion law in 1974 and influencing abortion laws in 1975 and 1978. This thesis attempts to critically bring the origins and actions of the two movements together and see how the activists organized themselves, how they networked and their repertoires of protests. The story highlights interrelations and dynamics between the two movements in the period from 1974-1979 before ending with the transformation of abortion opposition in the early 1980s.
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ABBREVIATIONS

AAN – Alternative to abortion / Alternativ til abort

AFSAN - Action for Self-determined Abortion Now! / Aksjon for Selvbestemt abort nå

AKP-ml – Workers’ Communist Party / Arbeidernes Kommunistparti-marxist-leninistene

B&R – Brød og Roser

FAMSA – Popular Action against self-determined abortion / Folkeaksjonen mot selvbestemt abort / Folkeaksjonen mot fri abort

FF – Folkets Framtid

FLM – Popular Action for Human Dignity and Right to Life – Folkebevegelsen for livsrett menneskeverd

KA – Womens’ Action for Self-determined Abortion / Kvinneaksjonen for selvbestemt abort

KF – Women’s Front

KrF – Christian-Democratic Party / Kristelig Folkeparti

NF – New Feminists

NK – Association of Norwegian Women / Norsk Kvinneforbund

NKF - Norwegian Association for Women's Rights / Kvinnesaksforeningen

NPV – Norwegian Pro Life / Norsk Pro Vita

SLF – Union of Socialist Physicians / Sosialistiske Legers Forening

SV – Socialist Election Union / Sosialistisk Valgforbund

VL – Vårt Land
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1 Introduction

“The women’s issue blossoms luxuriantly in our time, especially among the youth. This is a mere joy, but it strikes one often that the young lacks knowledge about the history of the movement. A such gripping issue has deep roots in our culture and it will feel like a support to know these – in other words: the history”
Tove Mohr 1974

Point of Departure

In the spring of 2016, some months before engaging with this thesis, I stood outside the Polish embassy in Oslo with a handful of women’s right activists from Kobiety razem with posters and banners. We were protesting against a bill in the Polish parliament that would ban abortions for any reason. The crowd screamed ”my body, my choice” and several speeches from the Polish women included personal stories about abortions. In 2014, the activism was directed towards the newly elected Norwegian right-wing government. A proposed new bill would grant Norwegian general practice doctors a conscience clause, allowing them to reserve against giving referrals to abortion. Prime Minister Erna Solberg claimed the bill was not an attack on abortion rights. Her government, according to Solberg, was not restricting women’s rights, but was indeed a proponent of gender equality. The popular protest, however, was immense and the Women’s Day celebrations gathered more protesters countrywide than in the previous three decades. Women’s movements struggling for abortion rights are making themselves heard in countries like Ireland, Chile and Poland. Since the 1970s, abortion has been a notoriously divisive issue in the US.

The more I learnt about abortion struggles worldwide, I wanted to know more about the history of the ”other” side and why this mobilized so much in 2012, thirty years after self-determined abortion was passed. I wanted to study how these rights were achieved in Norway and how the abortion struggle was told. This brought me to the library. I found out that there

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1 ”Kvinnesaken har i våre dager en frodig blomstring, ikke minst blant ungdommen. Dette er meget gledelig, men det slår en ofte at de unge mangler kjennskap til bevegelsens historie. En sak som griper så sterkt har dype røtter i vår kultur, og det vil føles som en støtte å kjenne disse –med andre ord: historien” Mohr, Tove, introduction to Anker Møller, Katti. Moderskapets frigjørelse, p 7-8. (my translation)
2 Kobiety razem means »women together« and is an activist group of Polish women in Norway protesting against restrictive abortion laws in Poland
was no unified history on the “other” side, only small pieces here and there. This thesis is an attempt to bring the pieces together in order to understand the historical background of the Norwegian abortion struggle and activism from two opposing social movements.

**Historiography**

What is then, the history of abortion? There is a large bulk of books on abortion related issues in different disciplines of history writing. Medical historians have studied the use and methods of contraception and abortion through history. Medical historian John M. Riddle shows that contraception and abortion methods have been known in the western world since antiquity. He traces the use of herbal contraceptives until they increasingly disappear in the 20th century, when modern methods and states policies (almost) eradicated them. Like Riddle, Angus McLaren insists on the need to historicize and contextualize abortion. He concludes his History of Contraception by proclaiming, “The issue of fertility control cannot be isolated from marriage and the relationship of the sexes. Children were never stoically accepted. Their value was always a question of debate. The question of family size was a topic over which spouses continually bargained and negotiated”. This means abortion historians must avoid the risk of universalizing a contemporary understanding of what abortion is. One historical and contextual study on abortion has been undertaken by Cornelie Usborne in her book Cultures of Abortion in Weimar Germany. Usborne examines continuity and change in official and private abortion views and abortion practices from Imperial Germany, to the Weimar Republic to the Third Reich.

Legal historians have studied the history of abortion laws and especially examined the legal status of the foetus. The literature is especially vast in the Anglo-American world where it is largely politicized. These attempts to argue for the existence of an almost eternal presence of abortion among women in the western world and vice-versa, a continuous line of

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4 See e.g Riddle *Eve's Herbs: A History of Contraception and Abortion in the West*, Riddle *Contraception and Abortion from the Ancient World to the Renaissance*


resistance towards abortions, are strikingly different to the Norwegian context. Aslak Syse’s book *Abortloven: juss og verdier* is one of few books on abortion laws in Norwegian language and is marked by moderate examinations on different aspects and perspectives of the abortion issue.\(^8\)

The political side of abortion is analysed through the positions and policies of the political parties. In *Abort og politikk* from 1997, Dag Stenvoll sees the abortion issue return as a divisive issue in national politics with the introduction of new reproductive technology.\(^9\) Chapter two recounts the abortion debates leading up to self-determined abortion in 1978, while chapter three treats different theories on foetus politics. It is noticeable that the theories or arguments of the two movements in the abortion struggle in the 1970s are left out.

International research and comparisons of abortion politics were assembled by Marianne Githens and Dorothy McBride in the first half of the 1990s. They brought research from different countries together for comparative aims and the result was *Abortion politics, women’s movement* on feminist movements’ impact on abortion policies in 11 different countries.\(^10\) This comparative study tries to determine and explain variations in the success of the women’s movement in different countries. She uses the concepts of framing, gendering and state feminism for this purpose. Sniff Nexøe has studied the abortion discourses of the 1930s and 1970s in Denmark through discourse analysis and gives interesting perspectives on the shift of political discourse.\(^11\) Physician Berit Austveg takes a global and medical perspective on abortion legislations and summarizes some of the ethical arguments used against abortion rights in different places around the globe.\(^12\)

What has then been written on the Nowegian Women’s movement and their struggle for self-determined abortion? *Bak slagordene* by Runa Haukaa is the reference work on the Norwegian women’s movement in the 1970’s.\(^13\) Chapter 3 discusses in depth methods and

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strategies of both the New Feminists and the Women’s Front. The struggle for abortion rights is a central theme. Religious opponents, nevertheless, are not mentioned in the book.

Haukaa’s book came out two years after Ida Blom’s study on the history of family planning *Barnebegrensning*. Blom is tracing debates in the western world on reproduction and examines the groups for and against different forms of family planning. Chapter seven connects these themes to the emancipation of women. Labour MPs Grethe Irvoll and Tove Pihl are the only named actors of the abortion struggle.

Ellen Schrumpfs book *Abortlovens historie* traces the political debates and legislations from 1902 until the bill of 1978. There is some information on the activist activity, but the women’s movements and the anti-abortion movement stay in the background.

Historian Eliasbeth Lønnå tells the abortion struggle over six pages in her book on the Norwegian Association for Women’s Rights, published in 1996. Lønnå gives great insights to the interrelations between the organizations and the previous literature is supplied by interviews. It is, nevertheless, a story of the victorious women’s movement and the opponents are only briefly mentioned.

Historian Trine Rogg Korsvik has written a Ph.D on the Norwegian and the French Women’s movements and compared their struggle against porn and rape, respectively. This work has later been published as a book. The study contextualized the Women’s movements as social movements and is founded on a broad selection of empirical sources and interviews. The dissertation has provided much inspiration to this master thesis. Chapter 3 is ground-breaking academic research on the Norwegian women’s movement, its background, organization and activity. There are also five pages on the abortion issue and a timeline of central events.

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15 Blom *Barnebegrensning – synd eller sunn fornuft* 107-124
16 Blom *Barnebegrensning – synd eller sunn fornuft* 247
17 Schrumpf, Ellen: *Abortaksens historie*: Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag 1984
In her article *Kvinnekamp!*, Rogg Korsvik summarizes the characteristics of the Women’s movements in Norway and France and the antagonisms within them. She identifies an early phase of the movements marked by spontaneity, enthusiasm, creative protests and a fast growth in the numbers of activists and groups. Another trait is the mixing of expressive and instrumental politics. The activism was not only about reaching the political aims, but also had a cultural meaning to it. In the mid-1970s, the movements had lost some of the zeal from the early phase. Feelings of disappointment, bitterness and dissolution increasingly characterized the movement. This was according to Rogg Korsvik a part of differentiation of the movement. The founding ideas of the early phase was reaching new sides of society and new branches of the movement was created; e.g. lesbian groups, women’s groups in the unions, women’s groups for migrants etc. This means that below the surface of despair and conflict, Norwegian culture was changing. Runa Haukaa pointed out that debates and conflicts were necessary in preventing stagnation, but they also made it harder for the movements to see their struggles in a larger perspective. Rogg Korsvik suggested that Haukaa was a bit too optimistic on behalf of conflict as a fertilizer for movement growth. Unbridgeable personal conflicts are also exhausting in the longer run and in the early 1980s, some of the energy from the women’s movement was gone. Victories like self-determined abortion had been won. The activists had become older and had decreasing will to participate in grassroots activism. Moreover, utopian ideals of the early phase were, like in the rest of society, increasingly replaced by an instrumental way of thinking politics.

Synnøve Lindtner’s ph.d on Sirene is inclusive on the women’s movement cultural meanings and its history of mentalities. Through readings of all the issues and Sirene and contextual literature, Lindtner discusses the negotiations within the movement on the meaning of politics and what politics should be and not be. Lindtner examines how the slogan “the personal is political” was expressed in Sirene and thus broadens the perspective set out by Haukaa in 1982. The Norwegian women’s movement cultural endeavours shows that the movement was

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22 Rogg Korsvik *Kvinnekamp!* 97
23 Rogg Korsvik *Kvinnekamp!* 98
24 Haukaa, Runa. *Bak Slagordene* 172-173, 186-187
25 Rogg Korsvik *Kvinnekamp!* 99
about more than politics in the traditional sense. This is an important reminder when studying the abortion struggle. Lindtner’s doctoral thesis reveals important conflict lines within the movement, and therefore puts the unifying cause in the background.

Journalist and activist in the Women’s Front, Ellen Aanesen goes more into detail in *Ikke send meg til en “kone”, doktor* from 1983. The book is to my information the most in-depth account of abortion activism in Norway. The book is much cited and has become a reference book on the abortion struggle. The book is based on a broad, but not exhaustive selection of sources. Chapter ten unites the story of the new women’s movement and the abortion struggle. Aanesen, also goes into details about the opponents. There are several parts about the interrelationship between the two movements. Aanesen’s account of the abortion struggle is well documented and is open in its methodology. Legal, social and medical aspects, testimonies from abortion seeking women and media actors are included in the story. It is, to my knowledge, the most comprehensive book on the Norwegian abortion struggle.

Are there any then objections to Aanesen’s book at all? As noted in the introduction, Hayden White said all historical writing uses rhetorical figures. History can be written as romance, tragedy, satire or comedy. Aanesen’s writing is the story of the “winners”. It ends with the main goal of the women’s movement, the introduction of self-determined abortion into Norwegian law in 1978. She was an activist herself in the Women’s Front and as she explains her motivation in the preface of the second edition. She raises the issue of illegal and unsafe abortions in other countries and the book is a reminder to the readers that the situation for women in Zimbabwe and other countries was once the same in Norway.

“I wrote this book for the generations after us. They can in this way understand better the situation of women in countries where abortion is criminalized. Where other people than the women decides over her reproduction. This was the situation until 1978”

The abortion issue in Norway is then used as a historical lesson, a tragedy for the many women who suffered, but with a happy ending. On the last page of the book, with the sub heading,”We have arrived” Aanesen proclaims.

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28 The articles on the abortion struggle and the women’s movement in the encyclopedia Store Norske Leksikon cite Ellen Aanesen’s book.
29 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor.* 4
“May 30.1978. Self-determined abortion. So we have arrived. Three generations of women have walked the same path together. A mild day of relief. A beautiful day without grandiose words. A new calm radiates in us with the certainty that we would never walk back that same path. The face of Tove Mohr lights towards us in dignity, where she as spectator in the higher officials box, seeing our new right through.”  

The strong use of imagery and emotions, not unusual for journalistic non-fiction, underlines Aanensen’s ambitions with the book. The narrative, in the sense of Hayden White, is romantic. It is the story of the women’s movements’ victory, but where did the story of the defeat go? 

Birgit Bjerck’s memoir from 2006 recounts the abortion struggle from her own perspective as member of the New Feminists and the Women’s Action. Bjerck was one of the ideologues of the movement for self-determined abortion and wrote articles and texts in the period. In the introduction, she says it presents a different perspective than Aanesen. The primary focus is the New Feminists, where Bjerck was active, but the cooperation in a Women’s Action with the other organization is also accounted for. She traces important events of the abortion struggle and discusses moments of cooperation and conflict within the movement. Finally, she interprets what the abortion struggle meant for the movement she was a part of. 

Ole Martin Rønning has written an article on the organization of the Women’s Front. Even if the political demands remain in the background, the article is useful for understanding the political shifts within the Women’s Front during the 1970s. 

What is written about the opponents of abortion? Globally, there is a vast literature on social movements opposing abortion rights. The American Pro-Life movement is possibly the most studied, including works by professional historians. The literature on the Norwegian
antiabortion movement, on the other hand, is sparse. Knowing that the abortion opposition in the period was mainly a Christian enterprise, what does then the research on these institutions and organizations say? In the reference work on Norwegian history of religion, the abortion struggle of the 1970s and the 1980s is placed in the context of State-church relations. Bishop Per Lønning and Børre Knudsen are presented, but not as movements but as individuals. In the Church History of Norway, a similar history is told but the social and political context is more in-depth. It is striking that despite the large efforts of politicians, professionals and activists in the abortion struggle, the author tells the story mainly in a passive voice. Bernt T. Oftestad’s sentences tend to begin with: “It was claimed that…” or “One faced a conflict on…”.

Except for Lønning and Knudsen, no other abortion opponents or voices in favour of self-determined abortion are mentioned. Laws were passed and opinions were uttered. What could be possible explanations for Oftestad’s exclusion of the Popular Action against Self-determined Abortion (FAMSA) in their works? Firstly, Oftestad relies on his own academic research when emphasizing the conflict between the State and the Church. Secondly, FAMSA published books and pamphlets themselves to spread their arguments. Ufødt liv har óg en mening was published in 1978 and the first chapter gives insights to the background of FAMSA. The other chapters are parts of FAMSA’s submission to the abortion bill, odt nr. 53 1977-1978 and treats the abortion issue critically from different perspectives. This book has probably been overlooked by Oftestad. Thirdly, there is also reason to believe that the disappearance of FAMSA in the early 1980s and the provocative activism of Per Lønning, Børre Knudsen and Børre Nessa in the subsequent decades had influenced Oftestad’s selection of events when he wrote the first edition of Church History of Norway in 1991.

In the chapter Christianity and socialism – conflict and cooperation, Nils Ivar Agøy traces the interrelation between the Labour movement and the Church. From shifting periods of conflict and stability, the chapter introduces the abortion issue in the context of cooperation

36 The New Feminists are named but their views on the issue are detached from this mentioning.
between the two actors. The Party tried to harmonize the relation between State and Church, but the abortion revealed that former tensions between socialists and the Church still were very much alive. Actors of the abortion struggle are absent in the passage.

Other parts of the antiabortion movement are available. The practical anti-abortion work in Alternativ til Abort (AAN) is documented in two publications by the organization itself. The first one titled It was not planned came out in 1988 at the decennial of AAN’s founding. Erik Halldan Grangård’s chapter documents the origins and struggles of the organization. Five years later, Jørn Jørgensen edited a booklet called Thousand lives gained? Torleiv Rognum summarizes the background for a practical initiative against abortion. There is also an unauthorized biography on Børre Knudsen, who is by far the most famous abortion opponent in the country. His life was portrayed in the documentary “En prest og en plage”

There is to my knowledge no work on the Norwegian antiabortion movement done by professional historians. This is not too surprising. There is by the mid-2010s no Norwegian, or European, equivalent to the American Pro-life movement, needing historical explanations. This means that I need to synthesize the movement’s activity without a common accepted frame of interpretation. How have historians solved the problem of the “missing” abortion opponents? As I have shown in the aforementioned literature, there are insights to be found on the abortion activism by the women’s movement and the anti-abortionists, but only the former is commonly seen as a social movement.

History is not found, but invented, according to Hayden White. How is then this important event invented in the synthesized versions of Norwegian History? Much of the following literature is written for a big national audience. This big corpus of historical works on the History of Norway or Norwegian History is useful to understand how the abortion struggle is inscribed in Norwegian collective memory. Historians according to Hayden White are all storytellers; they apply techniques and styles from fictional writing. How do they tell the

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41 Stensvold, Anne. A history of pregnancy in christianity: From original sin to contemporary abortion debates. New York: Routledge, 2015 157
42 Pierre Nora popularized the term collective memory in his three-volume work Lieu de memoire
abortion struggle? Where does it fit? Who are included as historical actors? Is it a romance, tragedy, romance or satire?

In the same year as the right to self-determined abortion comes into force, Edvard Bull jun. tells the story of the abortion issue in the chapter “Retreating Christianity” in the 14th volume of *Cappelens Norgeshistorie*. The arguments used on the two sides are presented in the passive tense. The only actors are the political parties. It reads mostly as a tragedy, about unjust treatment of abortion-seeking women, but in the end as a conflict between State and Church. The women’s movement is presented in the next chapter “The anti-authoritarian revolt” but their most important demand is not included in the abortion rights story.

In the historical encyclopedia of Aschehoug, Edgeir Benum, presents both movements in the abortion struggle, but the story about self-determined abortion is now told as an attachment to the women’s movement, but with the Labour Party and Socialist Left as protagonists. FAMSA is mentioned in one sentence about the 610,000 petitions. The image of the leaders with the petitions is placed in the next chapter, next to a text box on the political consequences the issue had for the Conservative Party. Benum’s narrative can be explained by his focus on historical changes in the decade; from revolt from the left to the “conservative wave”

In *Norsk Historie 1905-1990*, written for history students, Berge Furre tells a similar story. It is attached to the women’s movement and the conflict lines are clear. The women’s movement and the labour movement opposing the Church and Christians. He includes Bishop Per Lønnning’s resignation from office in 1975 and the pastoral letters. He highlights the conflict between Church and State, but in the end he writes” It(the church) had to put their views as a pressure group and a movement of opinion in competition with others.” Furre, with one foot in the labour movement and another in religious circles of Western Norway,

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45 Bull the younger *Norge i den rike verden* 347-452
47 Benum *Overflod og fremtidsfrykt 52*
48 Benum *Overflod og fremtidsfrykt 11*
49 Furre, Berge *Norsk Historie 1905-1990* Oslo: Samlaget 1991 415-418
50 Furre *Norsk Historie 417*
sees the abortion opponents as two competing social movements. He is to my knowledge the only historian with this perspective. Furre experienced the abortion struggle at close range as as Member of Parliament from 1973 to 1977 for the Socialist Election Union and voted in favour of self-determined abortion in 1974 and liberalization of the existing law in 1975. Ola Svein Stuggu follows Benum and Furre and places the abortion struggle with the women’s movement in chapter 6 “The Oil country”. The opponents are mentioned but the petitions are not dated, but used as a way to introduce Anne Enger Lahnstein, protagonist in the EU-debates of 1994. 51

Why has the narrative of the abortion struggle shifted from a tale of Christianity and high politics in 1979 to a feminist struggle in 1990s? The answer lies in Benum’s and Furre’s literature lists. Their synthesized stories were based on Runa Haukaa’s book on the women’s movement and women’s historians Ida Blom, Gro Hagemann and Randi Øverlands popularized books on women’s history and women’s culture. 52 While feminists demanded higher degrees of female representation and equal treatment, the same struggle were fought by activist women’s historians. Blom, Hagemann and others examined historical processes from a women’s perspective and filled many gaps in the writings of an overwhelmingly male-dominated guild of Norwegian historians. They succeeded in bringing women’s lives and gender perspectives into national narratives.

This tendency has continued. Karsten Alnæs’s Historien om Norge is a curiosity in the history of Norwegian abortion history.53 Despite being a bestseller, its reliability is questionable.54 It goes beyond the main events and presents abortion in an extensive way. 55 With thirteen pages on the abortion issue, it surpasses all other national histories. Alnæs was committed to include women’s lives and daily life into the national story and to downplay grandiose structural explanations and big politics. It is likely that Alnæs adapted the narrative from historian Elisabeth Lønnå and her work on the Norwegian Association for Women’s

52 Benum Overflod og fremtidsfrykt 226, Furre Norsk Historie 1905-1990 518
54 The five-volume work published between 1996 and 2000 was heavily criticized by Jan Eivind Myhre and other historians. The book was proven to include many cases of plagiarism. The paraphrasing was often overly similar to the source. While some parts lacked citations, others were based on only one, reducing the independent voice of the text. Myhre Popularisering, plagiering og historie: Diskusjonen om Alnæs’ norgeshistorie i et edruelig lys, in Myhre(ed), Mange veier til historien 87-95
55 Alnæs Historien om Norge: vol 5: Femti rike år 320-333
rights. He includes the main events with Lønning and the petitions, just like Benum and Furre had done. Similar to the the two three historians works, Alnæs’ abortion story is connected to the women’s movement and the narrative reads as a romance on how the women won their right.

Around the end of the millennium, two national histories were written from historians of ideas, Rune Slagstad Nasjonale strateger and Eriksen, Hompland and Tjønnelands Et lite land i verden. Slagstad includes self-determined abortion into his analysis of women as an opposition to the existing powers. The 1978 law is included as a victory, alongside the Equal Status Council (1972), The Act relating to Allodial Tenure placing sons and daughters equally with regard to the order of inheritance of alodial property (1974) and the Equal Status Act. (1978). The New Feminists are presented in the context of historical conflict lines within the women’s movement; equality feminism, state feminism and expressive feminism. He points out a paradox in these historical lines. The women’s movement of the 1970s set out as a critique of the gender equality strategy of their feminist mothers and grandmothers. Women’s Fronters, New Feminists and members of Brød og Roser rejected the strategy of integration into the male society but succeeded in “degendering” Norwegian laws. Where does one place abortion rights in this conflict between a “soft”, utopian, women-centred and state-opposing feminism and an integrationist, gender equality-centred State Feminism? Slagstad chooses the latter. In any case, it seemed like the abortion struggle now was established as a feminist issue. A similar narrative is found in Et lite land i Verden 1950-2000, where the women’s movement and changing gender norms is given a chapter on its own called “The feminized Norway”. The background and the main events of the abortion struggle are told in some detail within this frame, but the religious opposition is placed in the previous chapter called “The Church and the life stance market”. The abortion struggle is here identified as a controversy and a riddle for the State Church. Per Lønning, the pastoral letters and the activism of Børre Knudsen and Ludvig Nessa are discussed, but FAMSA is not mentioned.

Eriksen et al. went beyond the bill of 1978 and examined how abortion opposition continued after women were granted the right to choose. 61

Historian Ida Blom, who must be ascribed for forming the narrative of the abortion struggle in the 1980s and Norwegian women’s history in general, returns to the story in With gender perspectives on Norwegian history in 2005.62 The book aims to synthesize Norwegian history through a gender perspective. For the second half of the 20th century, there are not much professional historical research to synthesize.63 For Blom, long lines in gender history and explanations for continuity and change are better researched through social sciences. This methodological shift, from actor-focused and qualitative history writing to a more structural-focused quantitative approach, surely has influenced her narrative of the period from 1950 to the end of the century. Societal structures are highlighted and actor’s role is downplayed. For Blom, the new women’s movement was a driving force for changing the political culture in the period, but the abortion issue is placed in the next chapter and the mobilizations are synthesized to one sentence.64 The anti-abortionist movement are not to be seen. Blom is thus dissolving the “old” narrative used by Haukaa and herself, and replacing it with a more “encyclopedial” narrative, highlighting the political results from increased feminist activity and representation from 1950 to 2000. It still has elements of romance, the victories and results, but tragedy is lurking with prevailing gender hierarchies and less activity in women’s organizations. 65

How does the larger works on Norwegian history from the last decade narrate the abortion struggle? A recent book is the third volume of Norvegr.66 May-Brith Ohman Nielsen returns to the romance, placing abortion in the history of the women’s movement in the chapter “Education, affluence and diversity 1965-2011” with the subheading “Critique of the gender stereotypes of the post-war”.67 She sets out the chapter with the Equal Status Act of 1978 and the women’s movement as the visual protagonists, while conservative politicians, Christian

62 Ida Blom’s influence is illustrated by the fact that she cites 44 of her own historical works Blom, Ida Brudd og kontinuitet: fra 1950 til årtusenskiflet”, i I. Blom og S. Sogner (red.): Med kjønnperspektiv på norsk historie. Oslo: Cappelen akademisk forlag, 2005
63 Blom Brudd og kontinuitet 335
64 Blom Brudd og kontinuitet 371, 377-379
65 Blom Brudd og kontinuitet 387
67 Ohman Nielsen Norvegr : vol. 3 Norges historie etter 1914 195-200
forces and dominant men glare in the background as antagonists. Ohman Nielsen is original in the way she integrates perspectives from Alltagsgeschichte and history of emotions and illustrates the larger story of gender inequality with the personal stories of Åsa Rostvåg and Kaya Irgens. Self-determined abortion itself is placed outside this personal and emotional framing, and is described as a tougher struggle than other demands of the women’s movement. The abortion opponents are not included. Ohman Nielsen gives the struggle a happy ending as she emphasizes that the 1978 law marks the end of illegal abortions. To summarize, the romantic narrative is withheld, but the umbrella term is now gender equality. This shift of terminology is ironic. Live Brekke pointed out in 1975, the label “gender equality” (likestilling) was an unwanted term for the movement she was a part of. It has nevertheless become the common umbrella term for all issues relating to women, men and gender. Gender equality has replaced terms like “women’s equality” or “women’s liberation”. Other recent historical textbooks include perspectives on gender equality, but leaves out the abortion struggle.

To illustrate this shift in narrative, a small book from 2012 is of interest. Self-determined abortion as a joyful tale is epitomized by Norges historie etter 1814 in the series “National heritage of Norway”. In a national story, covering 200 years of Norwegian history, abortion is integrated into chapter “The Women’s Revolution, where the authors write:

“[…]In practical politics, it meant that they (The women’s movement) demanded self-determined abortion, equal pay, more kindergartens, longer parental leave, end of discrimination and an equal labour division within the marriage. The political parties were considerate of the demands of the women’s movement. In 1974, girls and boys got the same rights to allodial property, and four years later, a new law came, giving women permission to self-determined abortion during the three first months of pregnancy. The Equal Status Act came the same year […]”

This overly positive account does some interesting omissions. There are no opponents and rights and laws are simply “given” to the women’s movement. The story ends by celebrating

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68 Ohman Nielsen Norvegr: vol. 3 Norges historie etter 1914 195
the high level of gender equality in Norwegian society. The last paragraph ends with glee. “At the beginning of the 21st century, Norwegian Women had much to celebrate.”

Opposition from the Christian-Democratic Party (KrF) is mentioned in a sentence in a previous chapter about right-wing politics, but the context is anachronistic in relation to the abortion struggle in the 1970s.

Norsk Likestillingshistorie 1814-2013 was published in conjunction with the centennial of Norwegian women’s suffrage. Self-determined abortion is comprehensively examined in the chapter “The long 1970s” and is introduced by highlighting that self-determined abortion was “sensitive, controversial and a difficult question”. The strategy and activism of the women’s movement is included, so is the contribution by medical activists, the labour movement and the political parties on the left. FAMSA is mentioned in one sentence about the 610,000 signatures. Self-determined abortion is, together with economic independence and sexual freedom, identified as the most important single issues of the women’s movement. This result-oriented narrative is a romance, but what could be a happy ending of the story, is interrupted by the transition from women’s liberation and critique of gender norms to the modern Norwegian value of gender equality (likestilling), which is the theme of the next chapter. The last sentence reads “There were not many warnings to be found in this period, how the gender equality term later would be about many more dimensions than gender.” The next chapter traces the process of including new family patterns, LGBT people and immigrants into the Norwegian narrative of likestilling. It is one of few books by historians to make this clear distinction between the two historical contexts, women’s liberation in the 1970s, likestilling from the 1980s to the 1990.

Finn Olstad’s two books Frihetens Århundre from 2010 and Den lange oppturen from 2017 traces Norway’s contemporary history with a clear narrative. In Den lange oppturen, Olstad, draws long lines of gender transformations in chapter 8, Women’s liberation. This part is largely based on Blom and Sogner’s With gender perspectives on Norwegian history.

71 Stenersen, Libæk, Sveen Norges historie etter 1814 90
72 Stenersen, Libæk, Sveen Norges historie etter 1814 75
74 Danielsen, Larsen, Owesen Norsk Likestillingshistorie 1814-2013 328
75 Olstad, Finn. Frihetens århundre: Norsk historie gjennom de siste hundre år. Oslo: Pax, 2010
The narrative is sensitive to social context, especially daily life, public life, popular culture, working conditions and sports. The women’s movement plays a secondary role in the chapter. This can be explained by the adaption of style from Blom and Sogner. The abortion struggle itself is split in two. Adapting Bloms narrative, Olstad lists self-determined abortion as one of the political demands of the movement. It is examined in chapter 7, where it is told as a victory. The women of the labour movement, the Norwegian Association for Women's Rights and the radical women’s movement are the protagonists, while the KrF plays the role as the persistent opponent. The romantic narrative is only nuanced by the fact that women were divided in the abortion struggle. The main events of the abortion struggle are told in the previous chapter called “Revolt of the youth”. Over three paragraphs, Olstad tells the story from the Church’s perspective. The narrative and framing are borrowed from Oftestad’s *Church History of Norway*. Olstad is more explicit than Oftestad and pompously frames the abortion issue as the biggest fight and the greatest defeat of the State Church. The Church-State conflicts triggered by Per Lønning and Børre Knudsen makes the anti-abortion activity seem like individual efforts. Olstad’s book is a great example of how the abortion struggle of the 1970s is commonly told two times in one national history with two established narratives. One feminist romance and one Christian tragedy.

Why another take on the abortion struggle?

This means that that the modern history of Norway could benefit from a more synthesized and complete presentation of the abortion struggle, the women’s movement and the anti-abortion movement. This thesis will attempt to unite insights and perspectives from the two social movements and ask the actors themselves how they understood “the other”. They protested the same law propositions, lobbied the same political systems in the same streets in the same cities and counties. Doing this, however, they mobilized different social networks with aid from activist journalist and editors.

The American historian and Pro-Life activist, Keith Cassidy has written a historiography on Pro-Life activism. He is critical to different tendencies in research on Pro-Life activism. Firstly, the pathological or deviant bias, where Pro-Lifers are seen as an anomaly in need of

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76 Olstad *Den lange oppturen* 209-230
77 Olstad *Den lange oppturen* 218
The result is a process of “othering”. Secondly, the narrow bias that tends to simplify the movement to only be about antiabortion. The movement is then often narrowed down to few actors and misses that the activism may have a broader political platform. Thirdly, Cassidy argues against the feminist critique of Pro-Life activism to be motivated by changes in gender roles.

As a student with sympathies to the feminist pro-choice movement, I will try to resist Cassidy’s two first biases. Firstly, I will read the sources and literature on the antiabortion movement as genuine and real political struggle, not as pathology. Secondly, I will try to resist oversimplification of the political activity.

The following history is an attempt to bring the actors from two social movements with their grand-scale mobilizations, methods of protests and arguments together in one story. Self-determined abortion for Norwegian women was not a gift from some abstract system. I hope this thesis may do justice to the actors themselves. In hindsight, they were winners and losers, but the result of the struggle was definitely uncertain in spring 40 years ago. Telling the history of one movement requires the other. Ellen Aanesen included the abortion opponents in her 1983 book, but as she gives them an antagonistic role in the story, much of their actions and backgrounds are taken as one.

Theoretical concepts and methods

To write history is rarely limited to one methodology. It is first and foremost a humanistic undertaking telling stories of lived humanity. As a mirror of a myriad lived experiences, history cannot be reduced to one method and historians tend to “borrow” theories, methods and tools from other academic disciplines. In this thesis I borrow concepts of social movements, protest repertoire and framing from the political sciences. Hayden White’s concept of narrative and Simone de Beauvoir and Edward Said’s ideas of “othering” are inspired from philosophy and theories of literature. I’m interested in finding out the

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79 Cassidy Interpreting the Pro-Life Movement: Recurrent Themes and Recent Trends 3
80 Kjeldstadli, Knut. Fortida er ikke hva den en gang var: En innføring i historiefaget. 2. ed. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1999 30-32
interrelations between the women’s movement and their political counterparts. I will rely on theories on social movements, especially the concepts of protest repertoire and framing to study how the struggle for and against abortion played out.  

A social movement can be understood as the result of ordinary citizens, engaging in consciously collective activity to change society by challenging elites, authorities and opponents. They do this when political opportunities and constraints change. They use repertoires of contention and develop through social networks. Studies of social movements are useful in several ways. We learn that politics consist of more than elites and high politics. To engage in contentious politics is a democratic practice. Moreover, it does justice to many people who spent their days and nights fighting for a cause. Their actions have been dismissed as irrational, impulsive or self-indulgent. Social movements are sometimes ignored when national histories are written. Male historians also have traditionally overlooked women’s history in their writings. Researching women’s movements is then recovering “lost” histories on two fronts. In this thesis I will primarily study the organized part of the social movements. They have published their own written material and their historical remains are stored in archives. The organizations are the main actors, but their alliance partners and networks are included.

Experts in many academic disciplines have struggled for centuries over the definition of protesting crowds. Knut Kjeldstadli has identified twelve characteristic traits of an ideal type of a social movement. They are social in the meaning of wanting change of the existing social order. They have something to mobilize against. They underline that the persons in the movement have something in common. They have a mass character. They have a basis in social networks. They are popular, not elites. They are in principle open for

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82 Tarrow *Power on movement*, 7  
83 McAdam, Doug et al. *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001 15  
84 McAdam et al *Dynamics of Contention* 15  
85 Jens Arup Seips book “Utsikt over Norges Historie” from 1974 only names three women and the word ”women” occurs ten times. In comparison, Johan Sverdrup is mentioned 256 times.  
86 Sidney Tarrow considers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels to be first serious theorists of social protest. Tarrow, Sidney, *Power in Movement: Social movements and contentious politics* 16-17  
everyone. There is an element of formal organization. They are democratic. They are relatively enduring. They are independent of the powers that be.

_Protest repertoire_ is the cultural manifestation of popular protest in the public space. 88 In my understanding of the term, it includes all the actions of a social movement do obtain their goals. This could be meetings, strikes, demonstrations, letters etc. Protest repertoires are constantly being negotiated. Some forms of protest may be introduced and maintained, while others are tried out and then dismissed. Activism is a creative undertaking and so it was in the 1970s. Many forms of protests in the abortion struggle were used, but it may be difficult to find reliable sources. I hope to balance the large public protests, documented in national media with the less known ones through interviews and memoires.

Social movements cannot be about everything or nothing. _Framing_ is the process of legitimizing one’s own group. David A. Snow og Robert Benford have identified three core tasks in the framing processes in social movements.89 Firstly, the diagnoses of what is wrong, secondly, a solution to the diagnosed problem and how it should be done, and thirdly, a call to arms and a reason for potential allies to support. The framing of one issue like abortion can be very different. This tool is useful for identifying different groups understanding of the abortion issue and how they understand the aim of their struggle. Abortion movements develop their _framings_ over time.

_Othering_ is the action of putting a group in another value system or in the category “not one of us” 90 Simone De Beauvoir applies the concept as she identified women as “the other” in relation to men.91 Similarly, Edward W. Said identifies the _othering_ of the Orient in the eyes of the west. 92 I have studied the literature and sources with this process in mind and questioned if the actors themselves or the historians “other” the actors in the abortion struggle. Examples of othering can be group thinking, calling of names, exclusion, master suppression techniques and extensive use of straw men.93

88 Tarrow Power in movement 29
90 Brons, Lajos Othering, an analysis Transcience Vol. 6 Iss. 1 2015
93 Berit Ås is credited for identifying the five master suppression techniques
When reading the historians versions of the history of the Norwegian abortion struggle, I examine how they narrate. In Hayden White’s theory of history, he insists that historians not only tell stories about the past, but are using the same literary genres as fiction writers are using. When historical works become classics, it is because they are especially good stories. White identifies four rhetorical styles within these classics: romance, tragedy, comedy and satire.

Research questions

In this master thesis I wish to answer the following research question:

- How is the history of the abortion struggle with its opposing social movements interpreted and narrated in later histories?
- How did the struggle for and against abortion rights express itself in the 1970s?
- To which extent was the forces against self-determined abortion a social movement?
- What were the origins of the two movements and how were the two social movements able to mobilize so strongly in the abortion struggle?
- How did the two social movements understand the abortion issue, how did they organize themselves and what were their methods?
- What were the interrelations between the Women’s movement and the Popular Action against self-determined abortion and did processes of othering take place?

Social movements are often made invisible when their claims have been met or ultimately rejected. The historiography shows this is the case for the abortion struggle. Which actors who get to play a role and be visible in the story is also related to the availability of sources. The actions of the New Feminists, the Women’s Front and Norwegian Association for Women's Rights are relatively well covered in existing literature, but this is less the case for Brød & Roser, FAMSA, Pro Vita and AAN. I hope to balance this with the media clips, interviews and primary sources.

Limitations

Abortion is a wide topic and it can be studied from many different perspectives and fields of study. There are thus thematic limitations to this study. I have referred to political debates in

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94 White, Hayden. Historie og fortelling 16
parliament, but I have primarily studied the activist activity. Activism is both social and political phenomena, but the sociology of abortion activism is only superficially analysed. I have not studied the ethical arguments for and against abortion in-depth, but retold the framings and arguments from the historical context. This history of abortion is inseparable from the history of sexuality and contraception, but the political framings of the two movements limits how much these themes are discussed. This thesis will discuss only the organized part of the two social movements, even though persons with no ties to the organizations surely participated in the abortion struggle.

The point of departure of this dissertation is the creation of the New Feminists in 1970 and ends with the dissolution of the Popular Action against Free Abortion in 1981. This period covers the most important activist activity for abortion rights of the women’s movements and their opponents.

The geographic frame of this study will be Norway, but I will briefly contextualize the abortion issue in a broader international context in chapter 2. I have not restricted the research to specific areas in Norway. That said, Oslo was and still is the political power centre and much of the abortion struggle took place there. This is reflected in the written sources, since so many books have been written and published in Oslo. There was abortion activism in all cities, but it is assumable that the available documentation is limited to bits and pieces of the abortion struggle.

Sources

The women’s movement consisted of many women with higher education and writing skills. There is therefore a rich memoire literature from the period. Many of the personal accounts are collected at the web exhibition Kampdager by Kilden - Information Centre for Gender Research and there is a section devoted to the abortion struggle. There are also other memoire books on the movement in Bergen and Trondheim.

96 Kampdager
The archives of the Women’s Front are found at The Norwegian Labour Movement Archives and Library (Arbark). It includes records of the group’s political activities, films, photographs and campaign material. The archives of of *Brød og Roser* are also located there and includes their publications and protocols of the group’s political activities and campaigns. With private help I have located some sources from the New Feminists. It is not systematically organized and parts of it are still in private hands. The monthly magazine Sirene has been a rich source for debates and insights. Number 3/1977 included an interview with the leader of FAMSA and is valuable as the two social movements were talking directly to each other.


For the study of the activity of Popular Action against Self-abortion(FAMSA), their own publications *Ufødt liv har også en mening* is of great value. There are seven pages on the background, organization mode and political objectives of FAMSA. I have made copies from the Amathea for the period 1976-1980. This includes reports, letters and news clips. I have not been able to find archive material for the first period, when Hans Olav Tungesvik was chairman. The 610,000 signatures from 1974 were given to Stortinget, but they are no longer in their archives. 98 This lack of primary sources for the 1974-1975 period of FAMSA makes chapter 3 and 4 more dependent on media coverage and secondary sources.

The organization Menneskeverd stores material from both organizations of Pro Vita (NPV) and the Popular Action for Right to life and human dignity(FLM)

There are large amounts of media material from the period. Arbark has a very helpful clip archive on the abortion issue from different newspapers during the period. This is a valuable source to see developments in arguments and activism in the period. I have supplemented the

98 I have tried to research the whereabouts of the lists, but after being returned to the FAMSA office in Akersgaten on October 30, 1974, there is no trace of them. One list of signatures was found in the archive, a copy of it is found in the appendix.
clips with microfilm records on *Folkets Framtid*, the party paper of KrF. NRK and the National Library have made many tv-shows and radio broadcasts from the period available for the public. One recent documentary, *Feminists of the 70s* includes interviews with several of the central activists from the movement for self-determined abortion.

**Interviews**

Many of these activists of the period are still in good health, lives in the Oslo area and were accessible for interviews. From the women’s movement I have interviewed Irmelin Wister, Birgit Bjerck, Inge Ås, Berit Hedeman and physician Ragnhild Engesth. Astor Reigstad was interviewed as member of the Association of Socialist physicians. I have interviewed former chairman of the Popular Action against abortion (FAMSA), Otto Christian Rø, activist Ola Didrik Saugstad and founder of AAN, Torleiv Rognum. I have also had phone conversations with Sven Magne Løvik, Anne Enger, Odd Sverre Hove and Anbjørn Neerland.

There are good arguments for using interviews in historical research, but they are not unproblematic. The oral source may lead the historian to relevant written sources from the period or fill in missing in the written material. Memories may serve as good illustrations for analytical points. The interviewee may lead the historian to new research questions and provide the story with a more personal tone. On a social and political level, interviews are democratic and may counter-balance biases from earlier historians. There are also several challenges with using interviews. Since remembering is an active process, lack of memory can be helped by an introduction or descriptions of historical events. Secondly, an interview is a meeting between two humans and the interviewer may dominate or be too leading in the enquiries. I tried to find a middle way between prepared questions and letting the interviewee associate freely.

I made a pilot-interview with one of the activists and let the person speak freely about their experiences from the period. There was much to be learned about the context and what the person emphasized as important. On the other hand, I could see that the person had prepared by reading much of the literature. This meant that the personal story was “aligned” with the written history. I also experienced some inaccuracies on names and chronology. I then

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99 Kjeldstadli, Knut *Fortida er ikke hva den en gang var* 193-194
adjusted the form of the interview to consist of prepared questions, but still let the person speak freely when on subject.

I noticed that as I learned more about the abortion struggle, the better questions I could ask the interviewees. Interviews, like readings of the written sources, were part of a hermeneutic process where the horizon or the pre-understandings of the historian approaches the material from the past. My position or defence against anachronisms and mistakes was increasingly stronger during the research period. I also attempted to include activists from different organizations in the two movements. To synthesize all the interviews, I tried to ask some key questions to include framing, protest repertoire and an understanding of the opponents.101

Language

I chose to write this thesis in English in order to make the Norwegian abortion history accessible for a larger audience. This benefit is accompanied by several challenges. Firstly, I have adapted established terminology as much as possible. I have, however, avoided the established terms pro-life and pro-choice. Applying such a Manichean concept on actors would oversimplify diverse and changing views on abortion. Secondly, some key words are untranslatable e.g. likestilling102. These terms are written in their original form with translation in the footnote. Thirdly, context is important. I have tried to explain background familiar to Norwegians, but unfamiliar to foreigners, in some more depth. Translating quotes and terms involve loss and change of meaning. Longer quotes are available in the footnotes for Norwegian readers.

Outline of the argument

Chapter two explores the background of the abortion issue in the 20th century and demonstrates how the emergence of a women’s liberation movement, in an alliance with health professionals and journalists, put self-determined abortion high on the political agenda and unleashed the Norwegian abortion struggle in 1972. Chapter three analyses the historical background of abortion opposition and the founding of FAMSA in 1974 as a reaction to the women’s movement. Both chapter three and four traces the interrelations between the two

100 Kjeldstadli, Knut Fortida er ikke hva den en gang var 40-41
101 See appendix 5
102 Equality in a broad sense.
social movements. The fourth chapter also explores how the two movements reacted to the parliamentary proceedings on abortion and how the anti-abortion movement was able to reframe abortion in the public debate. The fifth chapter traces the abortion debate after the liberalized law in 1975 and examines characteristics and activism of the two movements until a new abortion law is passed in 1978. The last chapter gives a brief summary of the transformation of the two social movements.
2 From few to many 1969-1971

“This is thus our achilles’ heel. Almost every other pressure group may organize in our society. But it lies in the nature of this issue, that those it regards first and foremost, they will not step forward. Their main aim is to hide the situation they are in or have been in. It is unrealistic that abortion-seeking women will step forward together and form a public pressure group. That’s exactly why our responsibility is so great. Somebody must speak for the silent.” 103 Tove Pihl 1972

This chapter traces the background of the abortion issue in the 20th century to the end of the 1960s and shows how activism for self-determined abortion emerged and developed together with the founding of new Women’s organizations and energizing of the old. Abortion and reproductive rights became central issues in the general election of 1973. This chapter analyses the feminist framing of abortion in the early 1970s and it shows how an alliance of women’s organizations, the labour movement, medical activists and sympathisers within media lifted the issue into the mainstream of Norwegian politics before the general election of 1973. This unleashed a counter-movement, treated in chapter 3.

Judged by the law, then by doctors

In the penal code of King Christian V of Denmark-Norway from 1687, abortion was a crime. 104 “Frivolous women, who kill their foetus, shall lose their neck and their head be placed on a pike”. The death penalty was less applied in the 18th century. After Norway became sovereign in 1814, a new penal code was announced in the Constitution and in 1842 a new milder law was passed. Aborting women were now no longer punished by death, but instead risked prison labour from six months to six years. 105 In 1902, a new penal code was introduced. The professors of law Bernhard Getz and Francis Hagerup were the architects behind this reform were inspired by similar changes in European criminal legislation. 106

106 Slagstad Nasjonale strateger 143
Crimes were increasingly seen in light of social circumstances and not solely as moral defects. Punishment was not just about retaliation, but it aimed to serve society and improve the convicted. This resulted in better protection of Children. The age of criminal responsibility was raised to 16 years and Norway introduced a system for child protection. Abortion, however, was still morally condemned and punishable by three years of imprisonment. The first paragraph of §245 is directed at the woman, the second against the person helping with the abortion. Exceptions did find way into the law, but these were strict medical indications. Abortions could be legal if the health of the mother was severely threatened. This was now up to the physician. In case of doubt, a colleague was to be consulted. All abortions had to be reported. Otherwise they were regarded as illegal. According to historian Ida Blom, this change in abortion practice did not lead to debates in parliament or within the guild of physicians. The silence was broken by Katti Anker Møller, Norway’s first spokes-women for liberalization of abortion laws.

In the the 1930s, Tove Mohr, the daughter of Katti Anker Møller had adopted her mother’s policy and sat in a Penal Code Board, set up to revise the law. The Women Secretariat of the Labour Party (AP) wished to include social indications in the law, but physicians and religious forces mobilized heavily against it. When the Board had finished its proposal in the second half of the 1930s, AP had come to power under Prime Minister Johan Nygaardsvold. The Minister of Justice, Trygve Lie never initiated a reform before the occupation years. In 1951, the MPs of AP agreed to push the claim forward in parliament, but this was delayed until 1959. In the new law, abortion was no longer a solely penal issue. From 1964, when the law became effective, social circumstances were considered a factor, but then only as a part of the medical indication. The social situation of the pregnant women could only be considered as an indication of abortion if it influenced her life and health. In the days after the parliamentary vote, the political parties all made sure that the new law would not open for more abortions. With decriminalization came the panel of doctors. From 1964 to 1979, all abortion-seeking women had to consult a general physician.
and he (or she) would then apply to the panel. These panels were meant to relieve the physicians. The applying woman met alone with two physicians and they would decide if she could have an abortion or not. The 1960 law did indeed help one of the problems it was intended to solve, and brought many of the illegal abortions into the hospitals. This meant that the “visible” abortion numbers rose greatly after its implementation. Opponents of self-determined abortion would use the rising numbers in their rhetoric. The 1960 law was also meant to secure similar and just proceedings for all women, but this would soon prove to fail. The panels interpreted the medical-social indications differently and the percentage of abortions allowed varied from almost hundred percent in some counties and below fifty in others.

**Grete Irvoll gives the abortion issue a push forward**

The Women Secretariat in the AP worked to bring social indications into the new bill, but didn’t succeed within their party. Self-determination was too controversial many central actors. In the umbrella organization, National Board of Women (*Norske Kvinner Nasjonalråd*), self-determined abortion was either fought against or ignored. Even if self-determined abortion had its supporters at the end of the 1960’s, the political will in important organizations was absent. There were too many who would not risk voters by launching such a controversial issue into an election campaign and too few to put pressure on parliament and government.

Then in spring 1969, preparing for the general election, the issue took a surprising turn. Some days before the Party Congress, the Women’s Secretariat had refused to include self-determined abortion into the program, despite two proposals from the Workers’ Youth League (AUF) and the local branch of Ammerud. The Secretariat opted instead for liberalization.

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114 90 percent of all physicians in the early 1960s were male.
115 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 251
116 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 250
118 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 245-246
119 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 295
121 The proposal from the Women’s Secretariat demanded a more unanimous process of abortion application, three physicians in the committee instead of two, a right to appeal the decision and the right to abortion if the
at the congress demanding “an abortion bill that gives the women, who desire so, access to abortion”. 122 After the second speech was held, Einar Gerhardsen, announced a vote over Irvoll’s proposal. The majority of the Congress, of which the large majority were men, voted in favour of the proposal. The proposal has in hindsight often been characterized as a counter-proposal (benkeforslag) but Irvoll herself said in May 1978, that her proposal had been launched by her local branch Ammerud and by the Workers’ Youth League (AUF). She had just insisted on an individual vote over the proposal.123 At this time of Irvoll’s proposal, Rakel Seweriin and Aase Bjerkholt from the Women’s Secretariat were outside the meeting room. When they realized what had happened, Seweriin spoke to the Congress, demanding a new vote to cancel the proposal. A new vote was held, but the delegates chose to keep Irvoll’s proposal.124 Self-determined abortion was now in the political program of the largest party and it would be an election issue for the first time.125 Ellen Aanesen argued that the issue was long overdue. 126 She claimed the Women’s Secretariat showed itself obsolete when they refused to put self-determination into the programme. This was two years after the Socialist People’s Party in Denmark have submitted a law in the Danish Folketing.127 On December 1st 1969, a commission was appointed by the central board of AP, consisting of leader Torbjørn Mork, four women from the Women’s Secretariat and three other labour politicians. 128 At the same time, Professor of Medicine, Axel Strøm, documented the inequality of abortion applications in Norwegian hospitals.129 The abortion commission of AP hence had fresh statistics to support a new law proposal.

Women’s Lib in Norway

Norway and most western countries experienced cultural changes during the 1970s. In 1968, common truths and established authorities were challenged by the post-war baby boom generation. Large crowds of students engaged against university leaders. Peace activists

pregnant woman is below the age of 18 or above 40, or has three children or more. Schrumpf Abortsakens historie 46
122 Schrumpf Abortsakens historie 46-47
123 Arbeiderbladet May 30 1978
124 Grethe Irvoll has later been awarded a prize for her contribution to gender equality ( Accessed April 26, 2018)
125 The Socialist People’s Party and the Communist Party both put self-determined abortion into their programs before the 1969 election but neither party obtained enough votes to enter parliament.
126 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 290
127 Sørensen Anne Fri Abort 1973- (Accessed May 2, 2018)
128 Arbeiderpartiet Trygghet for Mor og Barn: Innstilling fra Arbeiderpartiets komité til utredning av selybestemt svangerskapsavbrytelse
129 Dagbladet April 12, 1969
against militarism, notably the Vietnam War. Environmentalists criticized the industrial and consumer society with its future optimism. A new radicalism, in France, Germany and the US especially, shook society in its foundations. The new generation questioned the conventional way to live life and desired social interaction without suppressing power relations. They experimented with new forms of housing and co-habitations. The attempts of a political revolution were joined by a sexual revolution, made possible by new and more available contraception methods. Norms of what men and women should and should not do were questioned. It is within this context that a new generation of women are politicized and engage themselves in the uprising for civil rights.

The large post-war generation had entered student politics in the late 1960’s. There was a central arena for political debates and meetings in the Dovre Hall in the city centre and in the grand hall in Chateau Neuf often surpassed thousand spectators. The leadership of the Norwegian Student’s Society was taken over by Red Front in 1970 who politicized the Student Society and used this position in the board as a platform for their political aims until 1986. In 1969, the Student Society took a stand on abortion. In a resolution signed by professionals like Aud Blegen Svindland, Axel Strøm, Chris Brusgaard, Gerda Evang and Ernst Schjøtt Rievers, the board of DNS argued that the abortion law was incomplete, practiced differently from panel to panel and that it needed to be revised.

The American feminist Jo Freeman visited Norway in 1970 and found a country with strict gender divisions. She was invited to give a speech at the University of Oslo in August and New Feminist groups were formed at that meeting. This marks the beginning of the second wave of feminism in Norway. The first wave from the 1880s to the 1910s had struggled for formal political rights like the right to vote. The Women’s movement of the 1970s followed in their mothers’ and grandmothers’ step. They demanded emancipation from suppression and marginal gender roles. As a social movement, they were able to change public opinions on what a woman could be and do and what she could strive for. Students,

131 Det norske studentersamfunn Forslag til resolusjon (private archive)
132 Haukaa Bak slagordene 22-23
married and single women, heterosexual and lesbian women raised problems related to their roles in society. Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* was translated to Norwegian in 1970 and books by American feminists were circulated within the organizations. The main goal was a more just society and there were many projects. Activist groups and organizations analysed almost every part of society from a women’s perspective. Many issues, previously not considered political, were politicized and put on the political agenda. The new women’s organizations grew rapidly in members. The older organizations, like the Norwegian Association for Women's Rights were energized by the new feminist impulses, recruited new members and increased their activity. A myriad of publications was launched by the movement and women entered many social and cultural domains, previously reserved for men. The movement is credited for influencing on of the greatest cultural shifts in the modern history of Norway.

The New Feminists

The first New Feminist group emerged in June 1970 and this marks the beginning of the Second Wave of feminism in Norway. This was part of large international emergence of women’s protests. Their influences came from American feminists, but also from ideological currents within Norwegian Society. Elisabeth Helsing and Gro Nylander, founders of the Breastfeeding Support Group, were central actors. The latter wrote a feature in the Norwegian newspaper Dagbladet, “New feminists-unite, in which she analyses the gender roles and different political positions within the gender debate. Abortion is not mentioned, but the concepts of liberty and self-determination over one’s life are central.

135 Beauvoir, Simone De. *Det Annet Kjønn*
137 Danielsen *Da det personlige ble politisk* 58
139 Tarrow *Power in movement* 227-228
140 Historian and Women’s Front member Gro Hagemann has criticised the idea of an imported feminism from America. She seeks to supply a such mono-causalic explanation with other developments within Norwegian society. She thinks gender research in the universities and progressive work within the political parties had prepared the ground for Women’s activism in the 1970’s. Hagemann, Gro, *Norsk nyfeminisme – amerikansk import?* Nytt norsk tidsskrift 03-04
141 Nylander, Gro, *Ny-feminister, foren dere!*, Dagbladet January. 31 1970
The women in the New Feminists organized in small consciousness raising groups. This organization principle was adopted from their American counterparts through Jo Freeman. She was invited by the women’s group Blid men beinhard to hold a rally at the University of Oslo in September 1970 and the women present at the meeting were given a place in a consciousness raising group. Each group consisted of 10-12 women and every woman had to share and discuss her problems from her personal life and these individual experiences would then be analysed as collective women’s experiences, from which political demands could be made. During this process, the members ought to respect everybody’s opinion and preferably share speaking time equally. The flat organization principle renounced any appointing of leaders. The slogan ”the personal is political” is derived from this process and this would eventually make issues, previously seen as personal matters, as political demands, visible in the public sphere. The local groups had no common organization until 1973, when the first national congress of was held. The New feminists avoided political platforms as to keep their policies dynamic. Instead, they would agree on statements during meetings. The number of New Feminists and feminist groups grew rapidly. It is estimated that 1000 women in about 30 cities were active.

In Oslo, many of the feminists had useful skills from their professional backgrounds. Physicians Ragnhild Halvorsen (née Engeseth), Gro Nylander and Magnhild Gaasemyr knew the processes of application and the abortion procedure from the inside the hospitals. Engeseth and Nylander had taken part in the panels of doctors. Lawyer Ingse Stabel had judicial expertise and Nina Karin Monsen held a magister degree in philosophy and logic. Monsen invited philosophy student Birgit Bjerck into the movement. Bjerck and Tove Nilsen, then a student of literature, later a renowned author, were vital activists in this phase. These skills combined were useful in developing knowledge, arguments and strategy in the early 1970s.

The first public abortion demonstration was at Aker Hospital on March 4. 1971. 10-12 members of the New Feminists rallied with posters to protest the way abortion-seeking

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142 Interview with Ragnhild Halvorsen April 6, 2017
143 Rogg Korsvik Porno er teori, voldtekt er praksis: Kvinnekamp mot voldtekt og pornografi 101
144 Haukaa Bak slagordene 93
145 Bjerck Kampen for Selvbestemt Abort På 1970-tallet
146 Klassekampen May 24 2014,
147 Haukaa. Bak slagordene 26
women had to apply. The pregnant women had to sign a form, listing a large number of dangers associated with the abortion procedure. One poster read: “We demand human treatment of the abort-seeking”. A second: “Equality before the (abortion) law”. A third: “The abortion law is a lottery”. The action was supposed to be peaceful, but confrontation emerged since the head gynaecologist was present at that particular time. Gro Nylander testified being locked up during the protest. Shortly after the demonstration, the form was replaced. The activism of the New Women’s movement had its first victory.

New Feminists also began influencing the public opinion. Birgit Bjerck addressed the opponents to free abortion in September. She did not identify who the opponents were, but she argued against common counter-arguments. She denied that life begins at conception and the notion that the unborn child was the weaker part compared to the pregnant woman. She warned against the consequences of restrictive abortion laws; mental problems for the women and in the worst case, injuries from self-induced abortion with knitting needles. The argument ended by identifying her own position as an interest for increased freedom for women and a demand for the opposition to formulate their position.

Later that year, The New Feminists opened a two-day exhibition at the University Square in Oslo. It dealt with many feminist issues, especially the demand for better day-care services, equal pay and discrimination in different forms. There was also a part on prevention and abortion. Self-determined abortion was an outspoken goal and sometime in 1971, 13 women formed a New Feminist abortion group to achieve that aim.

Kvinnefronten - The Women’s Front

For the New Feminists, the enemy was to be found in the patriarchal structures of the male society. The Women’s Front emerged from the idea that suppression of women also originated from class structures in the capitalist system. The women’s struggle had to be accompanied by class struggle. Some women in the consciousness-raising groups had grown tired of the loose organization and flat structure. It was too inward-looking, undemocratic

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149 Arbeiderbladet September 9, 1971
150 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 294
151 Rogg Korsvik Porno er teori, Voldtekt er praksis: Kvinnekamp mot voldtåkt og pornografi 106
and ineffective. A group of students from Red Front took the initiative for a new organization for the liberation of women. The Women’s Front was officially founded at a Women’s Front conference on March 19 with 150 participants present. An organizational platform was adapted. The Women’s Front was to be a mass organization for women and it needed at leadership and a political platform. The active members had to influence the front and participate according to one’s level, interests and opportunities. The preparing platform build-up was done by defining political issues as paroles. Under the main parole, "Battle against suppression of women – for liberation of women", other paroles were decided. The right to contraception and free abortion was one of these political aims.

The Women’s Front succeeded in becoming a mass organization and groups were formed all over the country. In late 1973, about 3500 women were organized in at least 125 cities, most of them in the university cities Oslo and Bergen. 152 The organization structure simplified the division of labour. The radical demands could be transformed to political action in a much more effective way than the flat structure of the New Feminists had allowed for. On the downside, the leadership was open to election and it risked being overtaken by groups.

Like the New Feminists, many of the leading Women’s Fronters had medical training as physicians, nurses or physical therapists.153 In Oslo, Kitty Strand was a medicine student and was a key figure in leading abortion activism within the organization. Without training, Rigmor Nielsen worked as secretary in the Clinic for Sexual Enlightenment. Irmelin Wister and Gro Hansen later became members of the Women’s Action for Self-determined Abortion and wrote articles in the member magazines.154 In Trondheim, Hanne Wilhjelm participated in the creation of a cooperating group.155

**Norwegian Association for Women’s Rights**

According to historian Elisabeth Lønnå, the Norwegian Association for Women’s Rights was an almost dignified organization in the late 1960. 156 It was the first interest group for women in Norway and had played an important role in the struggle for women’s suffrage in the late

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152 Haukaa *Bak slagordene* 93
153 Klassekampen February 20 2013
154 Interview with Irmelin Wister February 14, 2017
155 Holm, Rusten *Kreativitet og feministaktivitet på 70- og 80-tallet* 76
156 Lønnå *Stolthet og kvinnekamp* 228
19th and early 20th century. It had long traditions and the form of organization was clearly defined, with routines, an established network and formulated politics and principles. The political ideology was liberal, claiming equality and individual rights for all humans. The protest repertoire was limited and most resources were spent on lobbying government bodies in a professional way. When the new feminist impulse hit the organization in 1970, NKF framed the women issue as gender equality. The goal up to this point was a redistribution of men’s’ and women’s duties. The radicalism influenced the organization, forcing a more feminist understanding of gender, emphasizing women’s experience and values. Lønnå argues that NKF had organization similarities to the Women’s Front, but were closer ideologically to the New Feminist. 157 By 1972, a third of the seats in the national board of NKF was held by New Feminists, among them Astrid Brekken and Bitten Modal.158 The members of NKF were also in the 40s compared to the 20 year old activists in NF and KF. This age, however, was not a hindrance to adapt a radical political standpoint in the abortion debate. The Annual meeting in 1970 decided a policy allowing “Any woman must decide for herself if there are sufficient grave reasons to terminate the pregnancy”.159 This policy would abolish the panels of doctors and introduce self-determined abortion. Kari Skjønsberg, Chairman of NKF from 1972 to 1978, and Else Michelet would play the most prominent roles. When the abortion struggle intensified, they had both certain fame from radio and television shows for children.

Another “old” women’s organization was the Association of Norwegian Women.160 It had been founded just after the war and consisted mostly of women from the Communist Party.161 It put most of its political efforts in strengthening the peace between Western and Eastern Europe and democratic rights. It was the only organization to celebrate women’s day on March 8th in the post-war period and the member magazine Kvinner hjemme og ute reported on national and international women’s issues.162 Member numbers were stable and counted approximately 1200 in the beginning of the 1970s. The organization was reenergized by the new radical women’s movement, but had trouble recruiting new members. Chairman Marchje Kviberg was asked in 1973 why the members would not join the New Feminists or the

157 Lønnå Stolthet og kvinnekamp 240
158 Lønnå Stolthet og kvinnekamp 239
159 Lønnå Stolthet og kvinnekamp 242
160 Norwegian: Norsk Kvinneforbund
162 VG August 18, 1973
Women’s Front, but answered that such a move would jeopardize the cooperation with the 
*Women's International Democratic Federation*. In the abortion issue, the Association of 
Norwegian Women would join forces with the new organizations.

This was not the case for the broadest women’s organization. The Norwegian National 
Women’s Council was an umbrella organization for the different women’s organizations and 
had been a powerful voice in women’s issue since its founding in 1904. NKF raised self-
determined abortion within the Council, but opposition from Christian and missionary 
organizations and organizations for housewives was too strong enforce the policy. Many of 
these currents pressed for a more restrictive law and opposed sex education. Stories about 
free abortion laws of Eastern European countries, where women assumedly used abortion as 
contraception, were commonly told as part of arguments. The Council was split by the 
abortion issue and NKF withdrew from the forum in 1972. The new Chairman of the 
Council, Anna Louise Beer, would later become one of the founders of the Popular Action 
against Self-determined Abortion.

**Common ground: the abortion issue**

In Oslo in November 1972, members of the abortion group in the New Feminists were asked 
by the Student Society to participate in an open meeting on the abortion issue. The New 
Feminists then invited the Women’s Front to cooperate. The meeting was held on November 
21 with the title ”Free Abortion now!” Established voices in the debate, MP Tove Pihl from 
AP, Astor Reigstad from the Union of Socialist Doctors held short speeches. Pihl oriented the 
audience on the current political situation and supported the initiative to form an interest 
group to influence the opinion on self-determined abortion. Only self-determined abortion 
would make women equal before the law. Reigstad’s speech elaborated on medical aspects 
of abortion and adhered to Pihl’s point on equality before the law. Then the organizations 
themselves held speeches. Kitty Strand from the Women’s Front asked how women 
experience the current abortion law and the consequences of it. She told stories about 
demeaning treatment in the hospitals and said ”this torture and trial is one of the greatest

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164 Lønnå. *Stolthet og kvinnekamp* 243
165 Bjerk. *Kampen for Selvbestemt Abort På 1970-tallet*
166 Pihl. *Fri abort fra et politisk synspunkt*, in *Fri Abort: En kvinnerettighet* 9-10
167 Reigstad. *Sett fra et medisinsk synspunkt*, in *Fri Abort: En kvinnerettighet* 12-16
fears about the current abortion law”. She also warned against viewing abortion as contraception and urged the audience to simultaneously fight for sex education and access to contraception for school children. Nina Karin Monsen from the New Feminists started her argument by formulating abortion rights as women’s rights on level with human rights. She argued that the existing law deprived pregnant women of their moral integrity. Adopting a material argument, Monsen said that women, by demanding free abortion, showed responsibility to care for and give a meaningful life to children and it was up to society and men to prove their willingness to protect human’s right to life.

A broad resolution was then adapted proclaiming that ”the right to abortion is prerequisite for women’s liberation”. The meeting also demanded that the abortion committee within AP should accelerate their work on a legislative proposal. The speeches were then collected and published in a booklet with the title “Free abortion – a women’s right”. The active members of the New Feminists and abortion activists in the Women’s Front continued this cooperating spirit in a common group. The group became the center for abortion activism between 1972 and 1974, but the cooperation was never formalized. There was a common understanding within the group that influencing opinion was the best way to achieve self-determined abortion. Why did the abortion issue have such a unifying effect?

Writer and publisher Birgit Bjerck explains why the struggle for abortion rights played such a large part of the movement.

“Når kampen for selvbestemt abort kunne engasjere så dypt, tror jeg det henger sammen med at abortspørsmålet berørte så mange nivåer som var under diskusjon i kvinnebevegelsen: seksualitet og kvinnekropp; reproduksjon; etikk; makt og avmakt; mens rettigheter versus kvinners; kvinners skjebne; kvinners historie; klassespørsømmål; internasjonal solidaritet; patriarkatet. [...] Aborkampen forente det prinsipielle og det emosjonelle, den lærte oss praktisk politikk og kunne gi resultater. ”

168 Strand Sett fra hvordan kvinnen opplever loven-synspunkt, in Fri Abort: En kvinnerettighet 18-22
169 Monsen Hvordan kvinnen umyndiggjøres-synspunkt in Fri Abort: En kvinnerettighet 24-27
The abortion issue, thus, unified feminists in a way that no other issue could. Ragnhild Halvorsen formulated this idea in similar terms: "This issue became so important for the women’s movement because it showed clearly a pattern where decisions were made on behalf of women, who had no sovereignty over their own lives." The issue had the same effect in many other western countries. It fuelled the energy of women’s movements, who pushed governments to pass laws on self-determined abortion in Western countries. The indications were expanded in Great Britain in 1967, and Scandinavian neighbours Denmark and Sweden passed laws on self-determined abortion in 1973 and 1975 respectively. The political situation was more complicated for the Norwegian women’s movement, even if the largest party officially had adopted the policy.

AP had governed since 1972 with self-determined abortion included in the political program, but Social Minister Odd Højdahl was hesitant to process a new abortion law. He was asked in summer 1972 about the importance of a new abortion law for the Labour Party and said “It is probably an important issue for the groups raising the issue.” The New Feminists had seen through this passive attitude earlier that year. In a letter to the national board of AP, Birgit Bjerck and Siri Nørve asked when the abortion commission within the party would finish its work. It is probable that the letter was never answered. The two tabloids, VG and Dagbladet both ran stories on intentional delay of the new law, forcing State Secretary Torbjørn Mork, leader of the abortion commission, to object to these claims. The delay was due to working pressure and illness.

In September 1972, Norwegian membership in the EEC was turned down in a referendum after many months of widespread popular mobilizations. The AP-government in power, led by Trygve Bratteli, had been supporters of entering the European community and resigned since it interpreted the defeat as a loss of confidence from the Norwegian people. A minority government was formed with Lars Korvald from KrF as Prime Minister. KrF also held the Ministry of Social Affairs, responsible for handling the abortion issue. Bergfrid Fjose, the new Minister, promised in winter 1972 to evaluate the abortion law after admitting

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171 NRK 70-tallsfeministene
172 Kaplan, Gisela New social movements in Stearns, P. N. Encyclopedia of European social history from 1350 to 2000 Charles Schribner’s sons 2001 294
173 Nationen June 6, 1972
174 Bjerck and Nørve to Arbeiderpartiets Sentralstyre, Oslo, March 9th 1972
175 Dagbladet April 17, 1972, VG April 19, 1972,
geographical and social differences in the treatment of abortion-seeking women. The white paper suggested a revision of the abortion procedure, giving women the right to apply directly to the panel. She would, however, resist any liberalization of the law itself. The New Feminists did not care too much about the political constellations in parliament and saw no reason for the Labour Party not to present a new abortion law immediately. Labour MP and supporter of self-determined abortion, Tove Pihl was asked if the delay was intentional. She stood in a difficult position, forced to choose between being loyal to the new movement or to her political party. Her answer was vague, but the loyalty to the feminist movement appeared somewhat deeper. Intentional delay was a truth with modifications. Without a majority, it would have been unwise for any party to raise a controversial issue. She then asked if the change in public opinion and within the medical profession still would allow for a law proposal. She also expressed disappointment in the commission led by Torbjørn Mork. As a proponent of self-determined abortion and an opponent to EEC-membership, Pihl became too controversial and was not nominated in the upcoming election. This was the situation for the abortion group in spring 1973. What would be their methods?

Self-determined abortion was one of the main slogans in many cities on Women’s day 1973. The next month, the New Feminists passed a resolution. Only free abortion or self-determined abortion would stop the humiliating treatment of abortion-seeking women. Five months before the general election, on May 22nd, the abortion group organized an abortion day in Oslo. For six hours, Activists approached and engaged passers-by on fifteen locations all over the capital, handing out flyers and selling brochures. This was not always welcomed. Else Michelet took stand in Western Oslo and was called “Cunt” by a woman strolling by. The speeches from the November meeting had been collected and sold as a booklet called *Free abortion: a woman’s right*. A rally was held in front of parliament and a letter was handed to Minister Fjose, demanding imminent processing of a new law. The activists ended the day by listening to speeches from Berthold Grünfeld and Magnhild Gåsemyr. From different perspectives, they concluded that the pregnant women herself is

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176 VG February 16, 1973  
177 VG August 29 1973  
178 Aktuelt nr. 45 November 11, 1972 10-11  
179 Arbeiderbladet April 11, 1973  
181 Kvinnefronten *Forslag til beretning om arbeidet for sjølbestemt abort*, Oslo Politikammer to Kvinnefronten May 11, 1973, Aftenposten May 23, 1973  
182 Kampdager *Lspissen mot kristenfolket* (Accessed April 25, 2018)
best suited to decide if to carry forth a child or not. In May and June, the abortion group collected signatures, and these were printed in Dagbladet. During the summer, the New Feminists realized that Minister Fjose had no intention to change the law. The women’s movement could also find inspiration in elsewhere in the columns as a new law in Denmark had been passed, allowing women self-determined abortion in the first 12 weeks.

Abortion became one of the central issues in the 1973 general election. The Women’s Front printed a flyer informing voters on the policies of different women’s issues. The parties were divided in two; for and against self-determined abortion. The rest of the table included positions on maternity services, kindergartens and women’s position in the work life. Newspapers and the parties themselves recognized the election as a vote for and against self-determined abortion. Who would win the abortion election of 1973?

**Alliances with medical personnel**

Until 1842, abortions were punishable by the death penalty. Katti Anker Møller was the first in Norway to publicly claim the right to abortion on demand in 1913. She had seen first-hand that her mother suffered from the great number of pregnancies and births. She had also learned about the risks abortion-seeking women were willing to take. Abortion was a commercial good, offered by corrupt physicians or by quacks with lower fares, applying life-endangering methods. Other women risked their lives by attempting self-induced abortions. In 1915, in the Club of Women’s Vote, Anker Møller held a speech titled *Liberation of motherhood*. Her last sentence in the argument has become a classic. “*We love motherhood, we want to promote motherhood, but it should be voluntary, and the responsibility should be ours.*” In the speech Anker Møller asked what society does for mothers and demanded social and political changes. Anker Møller led a movement to help

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183 Dagbladet May 18, 1973, Dagbladet June 30, 1973
185 Kvinnefronten, *Vaiget 73*
186 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor*, 26
women get contraceptives and with aid from women of the Labour Party, the first Health Centre for Mothers was established in 1924. This alliance was at the not an obvious one. Møller came from a upper-middle class background, was married to a land owner and was not likely to frequent working class milieus.

In the 1920s and 1930s, physicians observed the injuries and fatalities from illegal abortions and many knew what the background of the harm was. The Health Centres for Mothers received over 8500 letters from women, begging for help and counselling on what they could do about unwanted pregnancies. Some of the letters were published in an attempt to raise a debate. As abortion was taboo, it would take courage to address the issue in public. Dakky Kjær was a teacher and leader for the Social Service Schools from the 1930s. Kjær saw social work as inseparable from the struggle for women’s right and interpreted abortion as a social problem that could be helped by changing the law. Kjær held speeches on the topic and as substitute leader for the Social school, she engaged in the abortion debate with an article the magazine Samtiden in 1934. She was then personally attacked by a professor of theology, who claimed that her politics were Marxist, anti-Christian and culture radical sexual propaganda. The controversy led to termination of her engagement as substitute leader.

In the late 1920s Katti Anker Møller found new alliances in a group of young socialist physicians. Karl Evang, founded the Union of Socialist Doctors (SLF) to influence the medical profession on sexual and maternal issues. He later became Chief medical Officer after the war. The Labour movement of Einar Gerhardsen decriminalized abortion in 1960. The aim was to eliminate the high numbers of illegal and unsafe abortions. The “Dahlseng-case” was the tipping point. Gynaecologist Arnold Dahlseng from Oslo was sentenced to five years imprisonment for 22 cases of illegal abortions and for having falsified prescriptions. This was comparatively late. Sweden and Denmark had passed similar decriminalizing laws in 1938 and 1939 respectively. Karl Evang played a big role in the

189 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor, 72-74
190 Blom Barnebegrensning – synd eller sunn fornøft 196
192 See Mødrehygienekontorets styre §245 belyst ved menneskelige dokumenter
194 Floystad Dakky Kjaer SNL (Accessed April 26, 2018)
195 Kampdager Tidslinje for abortkampen i Norge (Accessed April 26, 2018)
196 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor, 237-245
modernizing and professionalizing of the Norwegian health system the post-war Norway. His views on sexuality and family planning were liberal. He thought women should be free to control their fertility. The availability of contraception was poor, especially in the working class. Liv Emma Thorsen’s ethnological study on working class women from 1979, sheds light on poor living conditions, lack of basic knowledge on women’s health and few alternatives to control fertility. In 1945-48, almost half of working class women used withdrawal as contraception. Two percent used no contraception whatsoever.

Karl Evang’s association, Union of Socialist Doctors, was reorganized in 1969. A new generation of physician, tutored by Evang, would experience the other side of the poor use of contraceptives. During the period, hospitals in Norway regularly treated molested women, suffering from grave injuries after unsafe abortions. Young medical staff and students witnessed the suffering and considered the injuries to be preventable. Medical abortion was from the beginning of the 20th century a safe medical procedure, after developments in gynaecology and anaesthesia. The law, on the other side, restricted the provision of these services to a limited number of women. The young physicians experienced a high degree of sexual prejudices within the health services and thus saw the need to educate medical staff about abortion and prevention in order to improve the situation for the pregnant women. One short-term goal was to find ways to establish and facilitate communication between women with unwanted pregnancies and competent and non-judgemental doctors.

One of these physicians was Aud Blegen Svindland. Already as a child, she had observed the misfortunes of girls with unwanted pregnancies and how they felt they could not care properly for a child. After completion of medical school in Zürich, she worked three years on population and contraception matters in Afghanistan. She then moved to London in 1965 to specialize in preventive health care. Svindland visited new family planning centers, who counselled women on contraception and abortion. When she returned to Norway in 1967, she was asked to spread information on contraception. Her professional authority on

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197 Thorsen, Liv Emma *Kvinnene På Kampen: En Undersøkelse Av Arbeiderkvinner Levekår 1890-1930* Universitet i Oslo, institutt for folkelivsgranskn ing 1979 184
199 Reigstad, Ganes *Sosialistiske Legers Forening, Klinikk for Seksuell Opplysning, 10 års arbeid*, p. 1
200 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017
201 NRK *Min gode gamle fiende* ([Accessed April 26, 2018])
202 *Sirene* 2/1976 5
these matters was solid. In 1971, she was called one of the foremost experts on the abortion issue by the tabloid VG.203 As a political activist, Svindland participated in many debates and meetings. The shift in rhetoric from “free” to “self-determined” abortion in the women’s movement is likely to her credit.204 Svindland had close ties to the Labour Party and was best friend with Randi Bratteli, the wife of Trygve Bratteli. She later became leader of the Women’s Secretariat in 1977. Aud Blegen Svindland helped to create Office for Prevention and Abortion in Oslo in 1970. 205 During work hours, women could come to the office and get help with the abortion application. It was a safe space, where no women needed to justify the need of an abortion.206 The founding of the office meant a new form of activism in the abortion struggle. Activist health personnel within the system helped women to find their ways around it. There was however a limit in capacity. How could more women get practical help?

Astor Reigstad had moved from Bergen to Oslo to study medicine in 1964. 207 During his studies, he was inspired by socialist ideas and adapted the position that women should be able to choose to carry forth a child or not.208 Reigstad, Mons Lie and other students made a “coup” in the student paper “Æsculap” and wrote about reproductive health, abortion and contraception. This was one of the ways to influence the Norwegian public in these concerns. In books, articles and public appearances, Reigstad and fellow physicians educated on sexual and reproductive matters, especially for the younger generations.209 As assistant physician in Oslo, he witnessed several patients with grave injuries from unsafe abortions. He also became conscious that many of the abortion-seeking women often had economical or personal problems. Abortion was available for women with economic means or connections within the health services. In the 1960s, the hospital Ullevål had 5000 employees, mostly young women.210 If one of them became pregnant, it was easy to arrange an abortion.211

203 VG April 28, 1971
204 Rogalands Avis April 24, 1971
205 Kampdager Tidslinje for abortkampen i Norge: (Accessed april 30, 2018)
206 Svindland encouraged abortion-seeking women to examine the moral attitudes of their general physician before asking them to apply for abortion. Sirene 2/1976 9
207 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017
208 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017
209 See Reigstad Seksualopplysning for ungdomsskole og gymnas, Reigstad Tryggere Samliv: Håndbok i prevensjon
210 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017
211 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017
In cooperation with Aud Blegen Svindland, Reigstad took the initiative to open a new clinic. He sent a letter to the local authorities in Oslo, asking if they would provide facilities. He explained the purpose of the clinic. It would offer counselling on marriage, abortion and contraception and much of the other expenses were tax deductible through the social services. He emphasized the political neutrality of SLF. The authorities showed willingness, but finding proper facilities was a longer process. One year later, in March 1971 the clinic was opened in the health centre of the Norwegian People’s Aid in Storgata 23. The general health centre was reorganized to receive women in the evening. The Norwegian Opera was next door, so the abortion-seeking women could enter the clinic in the shade of a bustling crowd of opera visitors. It took the name Clinic for Sexual Enlightenment to avoid a provocation. The aim of the clinic was twofold; to influence the medical profession to practice the existing law in a more liberal way and secondly influence attitudes to abortion and contraception among common people.

The opening of the clinic was made known to a large public through different media, and the response was massive. After four months, the clinic had applied for 400 abortion-seeking women and Reigstad was already looking for a new site. In September 1972, the clinic moved to Herslebs gate 6. The opening hours had to be expanded. From three hours in 1973 to full day service from 9 am to 8 pm in 1976. The willingness to help even stretched to midnight. In 1975, the clinic had 20 physicians and these were paid by the social services. Nurse Sigrid Gardsjord became manager of the office. Seven other nurses worked shifts in the period. Rigmor Nilsen was an active member of the Women’s Front and found a job at the office as secretary. Reigstad and Nilsen were unanimous in their ambitions: every woman who wanted an abortion should receive help. The clinic helped with the application and after 1975, with appeals. If anybody was denied abortion after the appeal, other alternatives were sought. Astor Reigstad said England was the safest exit. Aud Blegen Svindland knew which clinics were safe. After ten years, the clinic had had over

212 Kampdager Klinikk for seksuell opplysning ((Accessed April 26, 2018)
213 NRK –Vi hjalp kvinner til England for å ta abort på 70-tallet (Accessed April 28, 2018)
214 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017
217 Kvinner hjemme og ute 5/6 1975
218 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017
219 NRK –Vi hjalp kvinner til England for å ta abort på 70-tallet (Accessed April 28, 2018)
220 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017
50,000 consultations and had helped nearly 10,000 women with the abortion application. The result of this medical abortion activism was that women in Oslo, in practice had self-determined abortion in the mid-1970s.

The Czech-born physician Berhold Grünfeld was another important ally, both for his professional colleagues, but for the women’s movement and the parties on the left. As a child, Grünfeld was first raised by catholic foster parents in Bratislava before being granted asylum in Norway. Since he was Jew, Grünfeld had to flee to Sweden when the Norwegian Holocaust was initiated in 1942. The remaining Jewish community financed his higher education after he had returned after the occupation. He was hired as a research assistant at the Institute for Social Medicine at the University of Oslo in 1967, where he worked until retirement. He entered the abortion debate in the early 1970s and took part in meetings, debates and wrote op-eds and a doctoral thesis on the subject. His significance in setting the agenda in the abortion debate can hardly be overestimated.

In the street Theodor Løvstads vei in the peninsula Bygdøy, Berthold Grünfeld had an activist neighbour. She was working as assistant consultant in the Health Council of Oslo, doing research on female maturation when the abortion debate ignited in the early 1970s. Her name was Gro Harlem Brundtland, later to become the first female Prime Minister of Norway. As member of the abortion panels, she experienced much social need at close range and she was convinced of law reform. Grünfeld and Brundtland cooperated in writing articles based on personal experiences and had a controversial column in the party organ of AP. There were allies in other media houses too.

**Alliances within Norwegian media**

The women’s movement, the physicians and the politicians in AP and the Socialist Election Union (SV) made use of an increasingly sympathetic network of media workers. The confrontation between journalists and the American government during Vietnam War had inspired journalists in Western Europa to write more independently on controversial issues.

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221 Dagbladet March 15 2003
224 Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
Moreover, like most public life in Norway at the end of the 1960s, the media was a male-dominated arena, but this monopoly was challenged by a new generation of educated women. Nina Karin Monsen even argued that the women’s movement was made by Norwegian media. The culture-radical Dagbladet took an active role from 1971. Gerd Benneche and Bitten Modal were both central actors in the women’s movement and inspired the paper to frame their articles in a feminist perspective. The party organ of AP, Arbeiderbladet, followed the abortion issue closely and was more openly activist in favour of self-determined abortion. Tone Bratteli Jamholt reported on related news and wrote leaders advocating for self-determined abortion. Journalist Eva Bratholm joined the paper in 1977 and was sympathetic to the cause. The two party organs of the radical left; Friheten and Klassekampen supported liberalization but was less able to set the agenda.

Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) held a State-sanctioned monopoly in radio and television and was the single-most important part of Norwegian public service infrastructure. According to media historian Synnøve Skarsbø Lindtnr, NRK was receptive to the feminist impulse of the late 1960s. This openness can be ascribed to Director-General Hans Jacob Ustvedt, wanting NRK to participate in the public debate by broadcasting radical opinions. Many active women from the activist organizations engaged through different programs of NRK.

All the women’s organizations published their own magazines in different formats and styles and for different audiences. The monthly Sirene, founded in 1973, analysed many aspects of women’s and gender issues in a non-academic language and had a high circulation number. The longer arguments and stories were published as books and the radical publishing house PAX played a central role in the distribution of feminist literature. They hired Women’s Fronter IdaLou Krogvig and later Birgit Bjerk. Important works on sexuality, contraception and abortion came out during the period from 1966 to 1978. In 1966, PAX published Bjørn Bjørnson’s book on the problems of the current abortion law and Clarence Blomquist’s book

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225 Lindtnr «Som en frisk vind gjennom stuen» 154
226 Lindtnr «Som en frisk vind gjennom stuen» 157
227 Lindtnr «Som en frisk vind gjennom stuen» 157
228 Astrid Brekken, Else Michelet, Kari Skjønsberg and Ellen Aanesen worked at NRK during the abortion struggle from 1970-1978
229 See Helsvig Pax forlag 1964-2014 169-184
on abortion ethics. In 1973, PAX assembled texts from important voices of the movement and published *Selvbestemt abort – En kvinnerett*. What does then the book tell about the framing of the abortion issue?

**What was it about? Framing of abortion within the women’s movement and their allies**

The new women’s movement found knowledge and argument in earlier abortion rights campaigners, like Katti Anker Møller. She had first and foremost framed abortion as a social and ethical issue. For Møller, abortion was something that working-class women undertook; knowing that they risked their own lives and abortion should therefore be decriminalized. Moreover, she identifies the status of the foetus and claims that since it’s is mere “matter and liquid”. An embryo is not entitled to the same innate rights as born children and adults. The larger frame of this analysis is motherhood. She claimed women loved mothering, but wanted to increase its status. Dakky Kiær said in 1974, that the women’s movement mainly used the same arguments as Katti Anker Møller.

The women’s movement, however, had to reformulate insights and arguments from the 1910s and 1920s. Birgit Bjerck played a central role in developing arguments and wrote many of the central texts for the movement. Among the many demands of her movement, Bjerck saw abortion as the most crucial one. If women can’t control their own private reproduction, they would never be able to live free lives. This analysis had been developed by Shulamith Firestone some years earlier. She found the source of female subordination in their reproductive ability and demanded “the freeing of women from the tyranny of their reproductive biology by any means available, and the diffusion of the childbearing and childrearing role to the society as a whole, men as well as women” Abortion in this way is

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231 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 26-27
233 Interview Birgit Bjerck, September. 11 2017.
234 Bjerck *Perspektiver i abortspørsmålet*, in Grünfeld, Nyfeministenes og Kvinnefrontens abortgruppe *Selvbestemt abort – en kvinnerett*, 8
236 Firestone *The Dialectic of Sex: A Case for Feminist Revolution* 238
framed in a gendered manner and self-determined abortion is one of the key elements of women’s liberation in society. Firestone’s notion of a complete separation of women and childbirth found little resonance among Norwegian feminists. Birgit Bjerck summarized four important perspectives in the struggle for abortion rights: 1. Women in all classes and geographical areas ought to get equal treatment. 2. The woman must no longer be put under guardianship and be forced to give birth to unwanted children. 3. Every individual woman is best suited to assess her own situation and finally. 4. The lack of abortion rights upholds the myth of an inseparable relation between a woman’s sexuality and conception. Births functions in this perspective as punishment for sexual activity. Ragnhild Halvorsen’s article in the book examined theory and practice from a doctor’s office perspective. She highlighted the injustice and arbitrariness of the current law and illustrated this with her own experiences from the panels. She refuted the myths of psychic traumas after abortions and, finally, emphasized the need for the health services to do more to provide contraception. Tove Nilsen’s article explained the background and organization of the group of New Feminists in favour self-determined. In the last part, Nilsen argued against some of the common argument from the opponents.

It may seem natural to consider abortion a women’s issue, but many women have rejected the idea. Nina Karin Monsen’s article is a longer philosophical, feminist argument. She emphasized the controlling function of restrictive abortion laws. The women’s issue was about justice and human dignity and about seeing women as humans. She criticised a naïve socialist position that sees women’s suppression solely as a material one. The subordination of women was also immaterial. Men were seen as norms, had easier access to status, had more choices etc. Abortion rights were both a material and immaterial good, but the immaterial side was the most important. Self-determined abortion meant that women could choose their own future. Men had more ways to live life, while women only had one: motherhood. This role did not only reduce her practical and economic situation, but restricted

237 Bjerck Perspektiver i abortspørsmålet, in Grünfeld, Nyfeministenes og Kvinnefrontens abortgruppe Selvbestemt abort – en kvinnerett 7-8
238 Engeseth Vår nåværende abortlov – teori og praksis sett fra et legekontor, in Grünfeld, Nyfeministenes og Kvinnefrontens abortgruppe Selvbestemt abort – en kvinnerett 11-20
239 Nilsen Hvorfor vi har dannet en abortgruppe, in Grünfeld, Nyfeministenes og Kvinnefrontens abortgruppe Selvbestemt abort – en kvinnerett 21-35
240 Many women within the Conservative Party rejected to see the abortion issue as a feminist issue in the period. See Holund En studie av høyrefeministene: Ideologi, kampsaker og deres slagkraft som feminister
241 Monsen Selvbestemt abort som kvinnesak – og som globalt ansvar, in Grünfeld, Nyfeministenes og Kvinnefrontens abortgruppe Selvbestemt abort – en kvinnerett 36-48
her single possibility to gain higher status in society. She quoted the newly passed ruling of the American Supreme court and claimed that free abortion gives the individual woman freedom at the expense of the state’s needs.\textsuperscript{242} The state may need workers or soldiers and a pregnant women and the state have conflicting interests. A state in want of workers from their own white population is discriminating and a state in want of soldiers shows aggression towards other nations. Women’s liberation is humanism, but also a struggle against fascism. Monsen underlined that a foetus is not yet a person and in the case of legal abortion the mother is thus acquitted for murder-charges. Furthermore, a woman with the freedom to separate between her sexual and reproductive needs is harder to subdue and is thus a threat to patriarchal structures. She questions the inconsistency in hindering the woman’s moral judgement in democracies where religious and moral pluralism is practiced.\textsuperscript{243} Monsen argues that self-determined abortion ends this moral discrimination and gives the woman choices. These rights give women the ability to choose motherhood in partnership with a caring and invested partner. At the same time, it means that the child does not run the risk of living with a blunted and absent father. Monsen sees humanism in the right of children to live under dignified living conditions and underlines the population explosion in the world. The unequal distribution of wealth in the global world, Monsen argued, threatens humanistic values. In the end, Monsen identified some ideals for new gender roles. The woman of the future is a woman caring for all the children of the world. The future man will no longer connect manhood and power to his ability to impregnate. These norms would contribute both to global responsibility and a more equal relation between the sexes.\textsuperscript{244} Bjerck, Nilsen and Monsen all attempted to argue intellectually and reject more simple framings.\textsuperscript{245} Some activists may have seen abortion as a way of contraception, but such understandings did not find its way into the written materials of the movement.

Berthold Grünfeld’s article in the book was based on his dissertation in social medicine \textit{Legal abort i Norge}.\textsuperscript{246} Grünfeld documented geographic and social inequalities in the practice of the abortion law. Self-determined abortion was in this way framed as a democratic struggle,
where women should be alike before the law. Grünfeld was consistent in rooting his arguments in statistics. In 1971, he claimed self-determined abortion was more or less practiced in Oslo, since the approval rate was above 90 in some hospitals. He also refuted common notions that abortion had physical and mental consequences for the aborting woman. He claimed the practice of the panel of doctors was contrary to the intention of the 1960 law and the law itself needed liberalization. In other debates, he defended the use of anonymized patient histories to illuminate injustice within the panels.

In the tradition of Katti Anker Møller, the women’s movement criticised the unsocial character of the strict abortion law. Middle class and upper class women had the means and networks to buy a safe abortion, even travel abroad if necessary. Working class women, on the other hand, had to meet before the panels. Many of them, when rejected, opted for more dangerous methods. Knitting needles became a symbol for these kinds of dangerous methods. Unsafe abortions were common in the 1960s and 1970s. Some women also paid large sums to quack abortion doctors or corrupt doctors with unethical intentions like Arnold Johan Dahlseng. The Women’s front labelled the law of 1960 a “class law”.

To summarize, the movement for self-determined abortion framed abortion as a question to be answered: Who is to decide? The answer was, of course, the woman herself. No other system would guarantee her liberation. The flaws and arbitrariness of the current system, the stories of desperate women and girls with unwanted pregnancies and the submission of women in society in general, all were used as illustrations of the injustice of the 1960 abortion law. The women’s movement succeeded in making abortion to be about gender, liberty and democratic equality. Was there then resistance within the women’s movement?

Runa Haukaa argues that there was a certain opposition to self-determined abortion inside the organization. Self-determined abortion had its critics within the New Feminists, especially in Bergen, where these voices argued against the stand point until 1974. Structural arguments

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247 Both Birgit Bjerck and Nina Karin Monsen saw the lack of abortion rights as a democratic deficit. Selvbestemt abort – En Kvinnerett, 7-9 and 36-48
249 Arbeiderbladet June 8 1974
250 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 241
251 Kvinnefronten i Oslo/Akershus Den nåværende abortlov betyr at kvinnen blir umyndiggiort (undated)
252 Haukaa Bak slagordene 95
were used by Marxist-Leninists. In a perfect communist society, no woman would ever need an abortion. These views were seldom displayed for a larger public, since there was such a strong resistance to them. Opposition to liberalization was to be found in other segments of Norwegian society.

Reactions: Opposing voices from 1971-73

Former opposition to liberalization of the abortion law had come from a majority within the State, the Church and the medical profession. Despite political radicalism in the early 1970s, there was no organized anti-abortion movement. Who took part in the debate?

In August 1971, a poll was published by Dagbladet. 23 percent of the population was now in favour of free abortion and a majority were in favour of liberalization of the abortion law. In conjunction to this poll, the paper published several articles by supporters of liberalization, among them Berthold Grünfeld, MP Sonja Ludvigsen and physician and AP politician Thorbjørn Mork. The paper also printed editorials in favour of liberalization. The 34-year old physician Hans Olav Tungesvik reacted strongly against the “abortion campaign” of the newspaper. He criticized Grünfeld for exaggerating the significance of the poll and attacked Dagbladet. The paper was not fighting for freedom and human dignity, Tungesvik argued, but the direction Dagbladet and the commentators wanted was a step towards dehumanization.

In November, the congress of Bishops met and discussed the abortion question. Their views were summarized in a public statement and published in the Christian newspaper Vårt Land. The bishops warned against an abortion legislation that distanced itself from a clear understanding of the right to life of the foetus, and the demand to protect life. The first chapter of the statement clearly shows that the bishops had understood much about the consequences of the current abortion law. The statement included a longer passage on contraception. The Bishops considered sexual intercourse to be reserved primarily for married couples, and they were entitled to apply contraceptives if both agreed to it. The

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253 Haukaa Bak slagordene 96
254 Dagbladet August 7 1971
255 Vår Land November 15, 1971
Bishops did, however, encourage changes. It would be good if a new law would secure a more consequent and consistent proceeding of abortion applications.

One of the most vocal bishops was Per Lønning. He had made a quick career in the Norwegian Church and was only 36 years old when he was ordained as provost in Bergen in 1964. He was Member of Parliament for the Conservative Party from 1958 to 1965. He then became bishop of Borg in Eastern Norway in 1969. Despite the many professional and political duties, Per Lønning was almost permanently in a public debate. He intervened in all kinds of debates, but no issue provoked more utterances and ink on paper than the abortion issue. In the early 1970s, he was a known public figure, warning against the dangers of free abortion.

In December, a group of nursing students in Oslo published a resolution. They underlined the motivation for becoming nurses was to guard life and not to end it, but since a five to six weeks internship in a gynaecological clinic was mandatory, the students took part in abortions and became accomplices in ending lives. They had five political demands; more information about the right to life, information about social aid and the possibility for adoption, better possibilities for unmarried mothers and education on human dignity in school. Finally they demanded a right for the students to reserve against participating in clinics, where abortions take place. The next year, 1000 nurses from the county Rogaland signed a petition against free abortion. The Nurse Action was started by a group of anaesthesiologists. Chairman of the protest Jorunn Veen said free abortion was ethically questionable and feared a wave of abortion-seeking women to the hospitals. These women would delay the treatment of patients with grave gynaecological illnesses.

In March 1973, 26-year old Ola Didrik Saugstad entered the debate with an op-ed in Vårt Land. As a medical student, Saugstad had taken part in the student politics of 1968 and saw himself as a Christian socialist. He felt at home on the left-wing of Norwegian politics.

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256 Voksø Kirkelig og Kirkelov 227
257 Morgenbladet March 21, 1973
258 Sykepleierelevene ved Aker, kull nr. 89 Rundskriv til norske aviser in Kagge, Aase Meninger om Abort : Ni Representative Meningsyringer Om Provosert Abort - Fra De Mest Restriktive Til De Mest Liberale. 71
259 VG May 25, 1973
260 Vårt Land March 14, 1973
261 Interview with Ola Didrik Saugstad December 14, 2017
In the same way that the colonized people in the third world were the weaker part against western imperialists, Saugstad saw the foetus as the weak part in relation to the mother. As a 1968-student, the common task was to change society for the better and provide justice and equality for everybody. He was provoked and reacted in a meeting in the Student Society in Oslo, where all of the panellists had been in favour of self-determined abortion. Unlike the liberation movement in Vietnam, the unborn child had no strong allies or defenders. He considered the free-abortion movement to be totalitarian in its thinking. His views led to rupture with both the political left and the women’s movement. In the article, Saugstad argued that activists for free abortion were hesitant to speak about the foetus and the fact that the foetus is a human life. Free abortion, for Saugstad was a liberal idea that conflicted with the holiness of life.262

The medical profession was now mobilizing. On May 14th a press conference was held in Oslo. 1027 physicians declared their opposition to free abortion.263 This was one fifth of all doctors in the country. Six doctors, Hans Olav Tungenhik, Solveig Foss, Viveka Johnson, Johannes Hirsch, Magne Roland and Nils Johan Lavik explained their views; The right to life applies to everyone in society even if they are young or old, weak or strong or born or unborn. If the pregnant woman alone should be responsible, she is entitled to a very difficult and encompassing choice. Gynaecologist Solveig Foss doubted that everybody knew what an abortion was. “It is to pluck out a miniature human – a fully equipped creature”. She also raised the question if doctors should be forced to act against their conscience. Physician Viveke Johnson saw alarming tendencies in Society, if abortion would be allowed. “We are about to get a society of violence, an inhuman society. Free abortion is a step in that direction. It’s neglecting the right of the unborn child to live. It’s a step in the direction to manipulate human life. There is no big difference between abortion and a daughter killing an annoying mother – the road to mercy killings is not long either”. Dagbladet and Arbeiderbladet both wrote several leaders on the declaration, denouncing its legitimacy. Jostein Nyhamar, editor of the weekly Aktuelt, responded ironically to the petition asking if Physicians possessed a special authority in the abortion debate.264 He answered that their opinion was valuable, just as the opinion of 1000 electricians, typographers or chimney sweeps.

262 Norwegian: liberalistisk
263 Arbeiderbladet May, 15 1973
264 Arbeiderbladet May 30 1973
Later in May, Ola Didrik Saugstad was one of 380 medical students who had signed a statement against free abortion. The statement underlined the conflict between the foetus and mother and this conflict needed to be solved according to the law. The students argued that free abortion would make the struggle for improved social and economic conditions more difficult. Self-determination could possibly lead to a reduction women’s motivation to use contraceptives and women’s feeling of responsibility should therefore be reinforced. The petition provoked a reaction from 485 other students who signed a petition in support of self-determined abortion.

The abortion activism of summer 1973 went on in a similar pattern. Election was approaching and a long list of organizations and groups took different stand points. The newspapers also began printing women’s stories from the panel of doctors. In the conservative newspaper Aftenposten, a woman explained anonymously how she used her experience from many oral exams in school to appear convincingly in front of the two male doctors. New forms of activism were also attempted. Per Arne Norum, physician and editor of the Congregation magazine in Oppegård engaged on behalf of the aborted foetuses. The magazine printed enlarged photos of human embryos, famously made by Lennart Nilsson in the mid-1960s, and added text to images. “This little fellow may become a decent football player, but he is only 8 weeks old. If he is unwanted in a free-abortion situation, he has no chance to make it to the team”. The article also included a song from the unborn child, where it sings about its own death due to the parent’s desire for new furniture, television and a trip to Mallorca. Gerd Benneche in Dagbladet criticised the Congregation for lack of compassion for women in a difficult situation. The article was welcomed by Bishop Per Lønning. Norum also applied his medical apparatus in his activism. Two of the co-workers in Dagbladet, open supporters of free abortion, received prescriptions from Norum. Dyspex, a medicine against too much acid in the stomach, was Norum’s ironic comment to the activism in favour of self-determined abortion. Chief Medical Officer in Oslo, Fredrik Mellbye, said he would report on the issue. In July, a priest in Sogndal in

265 Dagbladet May 25, 1973
266 Arbeiderbladet June 2, 1973
267 Aftenposten Aften June 22, 1973
268 Dagbladet May 23, 1973
269 Dagbladet May 19, 1973
270 Dagbladet May 23, 1973
Western Norway commented on the situation in his column in Vårt Land.\textsuperscript{271} He made the observation that the Christian public was too slow to mobilize in Denmark and were thus unable to stop the law. He encouraged his fellow Christians to engage in advance.

On August 30, demonstrations were held in Oslo and Stavanger.\textsuperscript{272} In Oslo, about 500 people showed up under the banners “Common Christian action against Fornication and Ungodliness” and “No to free abortion”. There were also banners against pornography, sounding “Do away with the porn plague”. The same week, KrF MP Kåre Kristiansen considered free abortion to be an expression of socialist or Marxist worldview. He blamed SLF for having undermined the abortion morale. He was right about changing attitudes. The polls published by Dagbladet showed increasing support for liberalization. In the fall 1973, free or self-determined abortion for Norwegian women seemed to be on the verge.

**Conclusion:**

There had been supporters of self-determined abortion since the 1910s, but opposition was strong within Norwegian society. The new women’s organizations broadened the struggle for abortion rights. The women’s movement, the labour women, together with medical personnel and sympathetic journalists and editors brought abortion into the mainstream of Norwegian politics in 1972 and 1973. The visible activism forced common people to take a stand. Self-determined abortion became the most important issue of the women’s movement and they cooperated well in the period. In the early 1970s, self-determined abortion was no longer an issue for a few eager supporters, but instead a demand of a social movement.

Opposition to self-determined abortion was scarce and unorganized from 1970 to 1973, but popular protest was increasingly better organized after the declaration of the 1057 doctors. This marks the beginning of a large cycle of abortion opposition. As a profession of authority, doctors led the way, but they found allies among nurses and in the Church.

For social movements, the outspoken goal of activism often influences the protest repertoire. This was to some extent true for the women’s movement. Since law reform was the primary goal, the movement had to lobby politicians within the political parties. They were

\textsuperscript{271} Vårt Land July 7, 1973
\textsuperscript{272} Arbeiderbladet August 31, 1973
democratically elected, so the movement had to engage with the larger public, the voters. This type of activism demanded writing and oral skills. The occurrence of such skills was high in the women’s organizations in the early 1970s. Horizontal lobbying was also important. The many new members in the women’s organizations mobilized repeatedly in engaging passers-by on the street. A protest in Aker Hospital against intimidating abortion forms was an example of more direct confrontation with an unjust system. Aud Blegen Svindland, Tove Pihl, Berthold Grünfeld, the physicians of SLF and other more prominent advocates for self-determined participated in media debates and in popular meetings. Their role in the mobilization for self-determined abortion should not be underestimated.

The movement framed abortion as a women’s issue, building on the political work of the previous generations. Self-determined abortion meant liberation from an unjust and arbitrary patriarchal system. The rhetoric was supported by statistics provided by activist physicians. This framing of the cause was simple and complex at the same time. The panel of doctors were seen as symbols of suppression of women. Free- or self-determined abortion was not a mere contraceptive, but meant giving women the right to choose. There was also a practical side to abortion struggle. Aud Blegen Svindland’s office and SLF’s clinic were expressions of activism with in the medical professions. Opposition to self-determined abortion was present, but unsubstantial.

Impatient for change, Grethe Irvoll, took the stand when other women and men inside the party played along the official party line. This activism, although, can be seen as more instrumental than expressive.
3 The Great Norwegian Abortion Struggle
1973-1974

“Many consider the further developments in the abortion issue to be of the outmost importance for the future of the nation” Editorial, Vårt Land, April 17, 1974

The first part of this chapter shows the uncertainty of the abortion situation after the 1973 election. The historical origins and developments of Christian religious politics in Norway are explored, followed by an analysis of an emerging antiabortion movement from 1974. I examine the characteristics of the movement, especially its framing and protest repertoire and shows that the movement was successful in its opposition to free or self-determined abortion. The last part of the chapter examines the interrelations between the two movements. I also examine how the movements communicated through media and how these media outlets became actors themselves. The chapter ends with the last mobilizations before the parliamentary proceedings in October 1974.

Waiting for Ludvigsen

The general election on the 9th and 10th of September was a victory for the left-wing of Norwegian politics, but AP made their worst election result since the 1930s. They were dependent on support from SV with 16 seats in parliament. The result of the “abortion election”, however, was unclear. There was a majority for self-determined abortion among the political parties, but one MP of SV, Otto Hauglin, a Christian Socialist, was against it. The many debates on abortion during the election campaign contributed to the election result of KrF. One such debate was how much the clergy of the Church should intervene in political agitation if party politics diverged from official views. Priest Arne Paulsen, encouraged his colleagues to attack AP and SV, both verbally and in writing. Bishop Alex Johnson was against free abortion, but a supporter of such intervention due to one political issue was illegitimate. Many priests followed Paulsen’s lead and helped KrF, the most vocal

273 Vårt Land April 17, 1974
274 VG September 11, 1973
275 Vårt Land July 7, 1973
anti-abortion party, in securing 20 seats in parliament. This was a strengthening of resistance to self-determined abortion.

One week after the election, a young doctor from the county Møre og Romsdal warned against new abortion laws and changing mentalities. Otto Christian Rø’s op-ed “A threat against life” gives grim portraits of both the past and future. Rø introduces his argument with the breakthrough of ecological thinking. Humans were ordered by God to subjugate the living world, but have since learned to respect and protect nature and all living creatures. Rø feared that the respect for humans, on the other hand, was in decline. The strong has always ruled the weak and this has led to war, mass murder and enslavement. Human dignity is a result of God’s creation and this creation repeats itself every time. To protect unborn life is to guard God’s work. Rø used three arguments against the woman’s right to self-determined abortion. It is against democratic legal rights since the foetus has human dignity, it is an offence against the weaker part and finally because the foetus is the life potential of both the mother and the father. Rø ended the argument with a warning against the consequences of self-determined abortion. When that bulwark breaks, attitudes to protect disabled persons and aversions against euthanasia will be pulverised. When this moral glide proceeds, democracy is threatened. Chaos is upon us. Rø would later play a central role in abortion opposition.

The women’s movement waited impatiently for politicians to submit a bill on self-determined abortion. The New feminists sent several letters to AP, both to the Executive Board and later to the Labour members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs. Before AP formed government in mid-October, the new magazine Sirene asked Vice-chairman Reiulf Steen if the submission would come before Christmas. Steen did not seem to take the question too seriously and refused to make a promise. He then added “If we don’t do it, you can hang me, […] we have it in our program”, was Steen’s response.

Abortion rights were increasingly on the agenda in Western-Europe in fall 1973. November 9th was chosen as an international abortion day. Demonstrations were held in West-Germany, Austria and USA. Movements were making themselves heard in Spain and Italy.

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276 Vårt Land September 18, 1973  
277 Interview with Birgit Bjerck September 11, 2017  
278 Sirene 2/1973  
279 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 299
Demonstrations were held in Oslo, Lillehammer, Trondheim, Bodø and Tromsø. The aim was to push Labour Minister of Social Affairs, Sonja Ludvigsen, to submit a bill on self-determined abortion in parliament. In Oslo, 1200 people turned up for the march. Torches lit up the text on the banners: Self-determined abortion now, No to guardianship, abortion law is class law, down with hypocrisy, No to forced births. Tove Nilsen read a letter to the Minister from KF and NF, underlining the need to act quickly to stop the demeaning and humiliating treatment in the panels of doctors. Another speaker was Bergljot Børresen. She had been on the front page of Sirene a month before the demonstration and her background was highlighted: Bergljot Børresen: Catholic and in favour of self-determined abortion. Her speech, nevertheless, was entirely secular in its reasoning. Børresen posed two related questions; “Why do so many women get unwanted pregnancies? – Why are abortion-seeking women not willing to give birth to children?” She then explained that the women were living in society marked by hostility to children, hostility to sexuality and hostility to humans. She ended her speech by encouraging the politicians to “woman” up and “pass a law that would provide responsibility, dignity and justice to all women”.

On Women’s Day 1974, the women’s organizations marched the streets of Oslo with 3000 people taking part. Some of them walked behind the banner demanding self-determined abortion. One month later, AP had finished their preparations and White paper number 51 on Family Politics would soon be submitted to the lower house, the Odelsting. The uncertainty of the result of the abortion election persisted since there was no distinct majority. This was now the time for the opposition to mobilize.

**Historical background of the antiabortion movement**

There seems to be a common understanding, even among anti-abortion activists in the 1970’s that Katti Anker Møller was the “mother” of the debate about abortion. Her political efforts forced abortion into the public sphere. But where was opposition to abortion and abortion

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280 Adresseavisen November 6, 1973
281 Norwegian: Selvbestemt abort nå, nei til umyndiggjøring, Nei til tvangsfødsler, abortlov er klaselov, ned med dobbeltmoralen. Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 299
283 Sirene 2/1973
284 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 300-303
285 Arbeiderbladet March 9, 1974
rights found at the time of Katti Anker Møller? The answer lies in Norwegian law. The 1903 law treated abortion as a crime. Ellen Aanesen shows how the attempts by Møller and her daughter Mohr in the first half of the 20th century to raise the issue were met with fierce resistance. With great authority, leaders in the Church rejected the idea of state-sanctioned abortions. Confronted with the number of mutilated and killed women from unsafe abortions, the Church responded that there was a justice in the suffering. According to the bishops, abortion was a sin and the injuries and deaths were inevitable consequences from moral law. This position was common within the guild of physicians and even in the Labour Party.

In this period, however, the Church was on the defensive. The men of the church had increasingly less political power after the introduction of parliamentary system in 1884. Theologian Gisle Jonson was the primary spokesperson against the political radicalism that challenged the established authorities King, Church and civil servants. Until the 1880s, approximately one third of all MPs was priests or had theological training. By the end of the century, only one, Alfred Eriksen was a theologian, but also a socialist. The reason for this churchly retreat from parliamentary politics can according to historian of religion, Anne Stensvold, not be interpreted as strategy, but rather as a consequence of internal tensions and an identity crisis within the State Church.

Another enemy was lurking. From the 1890s, the Church was sceptical to the Labour Movement and their parties. Priests of the State Church did accept much of the socialist critique of capitalism, but the movement represented first and foremost a godless radicalism. The response was either to battle the new movement or ”Christianize” it. When AP joined the Communist International and opted for armed revolution in the early 1920s, Christian sympathizers left the Party. The attempt to abolish Christian education in schools was another provocation for the Church. In the Labour Party itself, religious faith was from 1923 seen as a personal matter. When the first Labour government came to power in 1935, the party had to tune down their policies on religious matters and the

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287 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 140
288 Furre *Norsk Historie 1905-1990* 46
289 Stensvold *Kulturkamp – Religiøs Kultur og Motkultur* 357
290 Agøy *Kristendom og sosialisme – konflikt og samvirke* 111
291 Slagstad *Nasjonale strateger* 474
inclusion of Christian Socialists in the period is illustrated in the founding of new Christian labour organization. The war years brought Christian leaders and socialists closer as they cooperated in the resistance against the German Occupation.

At the end occupation in 1945, the State Church was a respected institution with moral authority. The sayings of the Bible and perceptions of right and wrong were largely shared by Norwegians. Norway was a Christian Nation, both legally and culturally. Almost every Norwegian was baptized and got Christian education in school. The relation between Church and the Labour Governments after the war was marked by consensus. In a meeting between Church and the Labour movement in 1854, Prime Minister Einar Gerhardsen held an introducing speech. Gerhardsen considered Christianity to be of moral importance, helping to create “a moral quality” in society. Priest Alex Johnson, said Christians had waited 100 years for such a meeting to resolve the antagonism between the two movements.

In the 1960s, both movements were influenced by political radicalism. While the Labour movement was challenged from the left, the Church was challenged to reformulate its social-ethical analysis and increasingly saw contemporary challenges like poverty, pollution, racism or colonialism as structural problems. This led to discussion on what the Christian mission meant and in what degree the Church should intervene in worldly matters. A generation of Christian socialists was radicalised in the late 1960s and 1970s and many of them became students. Later supporters of FAMSA, Trond Bakkevig and Geir Gundersen were among these Christian socialists and they had books on social-ethical issues on their curriculum. They read the two volumes of Tor Aukrust’s *Human in Society: A social ethics*. One important idea in the book is that humanist, Marxist and Christian ethics, normally seen as irreconcilable, had to be aligned in order to solve practical problems in the global world. Aukrust meant that natural law and Marxist ethics were compatible in the way that both seek to protest injustices and inequalities in the existing world. A young radical generation of

292 Agøy *Kristendom og sosialisme – konflikt og samvirke* 114
293 Agøy *Kristendom og sosialisme – konflikt og samvirke* 115
295 Agøy *Kristendom og sosialisme – konflikt og samvirke* 110-111
296 Slagstad Nasjonale Strateger 474
297 Agøy *Kristendom og sosialisme – konflikt og samvirke* 119
298 Dag Hareide, Nils Ringdal, Trond Skard Dokka, Trond Bakkevig, Otto Hauglin and Geir Gundersen were among Christian socialists to play central roles in the Norwegian Church and political life. Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
Christians thus found legitimizing for social engagement and activism. These ideas were not only disseminated in the University. Political active students could participate in discussions and socialize in the Christian Student Union, while physicians organized in the Association for Christian Physicians.\textsuperscript{300} Hans Olav Tungesvik travelled from Western Norway to Oslo to study medicine and he found friends and a professional network in these networks.\textsuperscript{301} The \textit{Diakonhjem} was both a hospital and a college and was an important community for Christian students and health workers.

Compared to other Western European countries, Norway got a Christian Democratic party relatively early. KrF was founded in 1933 in the Bible School in Bergen in Western Norway by out breakers from the Liberal Party.\textsuperscript{302} Less emphasis on temperance and secularization in general were underlying causes. The exclusion of the popular Nils Lavik from the nomination is seen as the trigger for breaking out. Lavik was a preaching lay man with pietistic attitudes and strong commitment to the sayings of the Bible.\textsuperscript{303} He became the first KrF MP in the election later the same year. From this point, the party grew both in local branches, members and voters. KrF continued their progress until Norway was occupied in 1940. All political parties ware banned. At this point, KrF was not yet a full national party. After the war, KrF won 7.9 per cent of the votes and eight seats in parliament and continued its organizational expansion.

What kind of party was now in the progress? The cultural and social origins were famously presented by Gabriel Øidne in 1957.\textsuperscript{304} He identified an almost exact sociological compliance in two election maps. It showed that the KrF had the same epicentre of voters as the short-lived Moderate left had had in 1891. Pietism, laity and revivalism became strong religious currents in these coastal areas. These religious oppositions to the high church are one of three identified types of counter-cultures from the area. The second is related to a cultural struggle for a more Norwegian and less Danish written language. The third is a moral dimension,

\textsuperscript{300} Norwegian: Norges Kristelige Legeforening
\textsuperscript{301} Tungesvik \textit{Medisinerkretsen – ein heim for ånd og fag} Norges Kristelige Legeforening
\textsuperscript{303} Solhjell \textit{Tru og makt} 128
especially the broad temperance movement.\textsuperscript{305} In the post-war period, the expanding KrF would increasingly experience such moral conflicts, especially between pietism of Western Norway and culture radicalism from the cities in Eastern Norway.\textsuperscript{306} In 1946, Nils Lavik saw the risk of the party breaking up. Kåre Solhjell implies that nominating enough candidates from both camps solved the conflict. In this way, no fraction had to overpower the other.

Erlend Wikborg was from Drammen in Eastern Norway, but became a finance lawyer and acted in the business life of Oslo.\textsuperscript{307} He thus frequented very different socio-economic circles than his Western Norwegian colleagues of KrF. In the 1930s, he was strongly influenced by the Oxford Group, founded by Frank Buchman. He developed a strong desire to live under God’s leadership. His deep ethical earnestness drew Wikborg towards KrF, where he was influential in formulating policies rooted in Christian values. One of his central ideas was “moral politics” or the “moral-political dimension”.\textsuperscript{308} For Wikborg, moral politics was more important than, economic, social and cultural politics. To solve the problems in society and secure happiness and progress of the Norwegian people, the moral norms must be restored. Improving morals meant discipline, a feeling of responsibility and self-sacrificing.

What were the moral defects in post-war Norway? KrF joined a larger movement against providing condoms to the 50.000 Norwegian soldiers in Occupied Germany.\textsuperscript{309} The distribution was requested by leading officers to prevent STDs among the soldiers, but this decision was seen as an invitation to further moral decay through “loose extra-marital encounters”. A protest letter from Christian organizations and 440.000 petitions were sent to parliament. KrF voted against the training of unmarried women in “preventive techniques” and voted to defund the Health Centre for mothers, created by Katti Anker Møller in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{310} KrF also opposed the introduction of a State sponsored legal gambling company in 1948. The party mobilized yet again in 1965 against plans to reduce Christian education in the national curriculum.

\textsuperscript{305} Rovde Kristeleg Folkeparti – mellom kristen tradisjonalitet og velferdsmodernitet 125.
\textsuperscript{306} Solhjell, Tru og makt 145-147
\textsuperscript{307} Solhjell Tru og makt 128
\textsuperscript{308} Solhjell Tru og makt 156
\textsuperscript{309} Rovde Kristeleg Folkeparti – mellom kristen tradisjonalitet og velferdsmodernitet 130
\textsuperscript{310} Solhjell Tru og makt 156
KrF mobilized strongly in all these moral issues, but the struggles ended in defeat. The issues, however, had become a central part of the identity of the party. Voters did not mind the lack of results and election results were above ten per cent through the 1950s. Moral politics was now a force to reckon with just as liberalism and socialism had shifted the course of Norwegian politics in the previous century.

**Popular Action against Self-Determination**

By the 1970’s, Christian Norway could make use of three significant public arenas in the form of national newspapers. The oldest newspaper, *Dagen*, had been founded in 1919 on a Lutheran and missionary platform. The cooperating spirit among Christian partisans during and after the war led to the formation of two new newspapers. *Folkets Fremtid* became the party organ of KrF. Published in Oslo; *Vårt Land* would compete with *Dagen* as the prime daily for Christian readers. The first edition distinguished itself from *Dagen* already on the front page. There were no direct Christian articles. The leaders in the coming years rarely discussed conflicts within Christian Norway, but engaged in moral political questions. When public subsidies were introduced in 1969, the economic foundation of *Vårt Land* was secured. Two years later, *Vårt Land* made a deal with *Dagbladet*, allowing them to use their print apparatus and offices in the seventh floor in Akersgata. By 1974, the three Christian newspapers had a combined circulation of 42,352.

Since the AP congress in 1969, *Vårt Land* had regularly printed articles, leaders and op-eds on the abortion issue. One such article in January 1973 reported on a Danish initiative, a Popular Action against Free Abortion. Erling Sagedal was a psychiatric physician in Kristiansand in southern Norway and part of a small organized antiabortion group. He made phone calls to the editors of *Vårt Land*, Håkon Fredrik Breen and editor of *Dagen*, Arthur Berg asking them to initiate a broad popular protest against the Meld.St. 51 that would open

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311 Rovde Kristeleg Folkeparti – mellom kristen tradisjonalitet og velferdsmodernitet 130-131
313 Voksø I strid siden freden: Historien om Vårt Land 1945-1995 62
315 Voksø I strid siden freden: Historien om Vårt Land 1945-1995 139
317 Vårt Land January 9, 1973
for self-determined abortion. Breen was the quicker of the two editors to react. Arthur Berg would later “accept” this little defeat and cooperated with Breen instead of trying to create a competing action.

On April 17, Håkon Fredrik Breen wrote a leader in Vårt Land inviting others to participate in the formation of a Popular Action for social aid against Free Abortion. The paper summoned Norwegians to participate in a popular action and the known anti-abortions were positive to the initiative. Editor Håkon Fred Breen invited to form a broad movement across political and Church boundaries. Breen adopted the broader frame of the family bill, but the demand for self-determined abortion had to be strongly resisted. It reached out to all Churches and congregations, but also to humanistic organisations. The platform ought to be as concrete as possible. Except for the proposal of self-determined abortion itself, no opponents or enemies are identifiable. The action set out as cooperation, more than a confrontation. Breen suggested forming a family friendly and abortion preventive program. This should be followed be a practical commitment to create homes for pregnant women in need of help.

The following day, the newspaper put the reaction on the front page: "The idea of a popular action against free abortion endorsed". The support came from a long list of central persons from the Church, Christian civil society and other organizations. Hans Olav Tungenesvik said the action could hinder a catastrophic development. Bishop Per Lønning was supportive, but saw no use in the practical commitment, since only a change of mentality could stop the development of life devaluation. Four women did also proclaimed their support; Anna Louise Beer was a catholic and member of the Norwegian National Women’s Council, politician from the agrarian Centre party Helga Gitmark, politician from the Conservative Party Sigrid Utkilen and teacher Kjellfrid Kjær Smemo. Both Gitmark and Utkilen emphasized the need to provide practical help for women in an imperfect world. Smemo pointed to the declaration of human rights and the right to be born. She also supported practical measures and the inclusion of the father as jointly responsible in the situation. Anna Louise Beer wanted the debate to be founded and humanistic and reasonable premises. To preserve the legal right to life, women could not decide for themselves since the

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318 Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
319 Vårt Land April 17, 1974
320 Vårt Land April 18, 1974
pregnant woman was party in a legal dispute. In this frame, Beer claimed that abortion must be removed from the broad feminist debate that was taking place in society.

Erling Sagedal continued to organize the action from his telephone in Kristiansand. He called Hans Olav Tungesvik, asking if he would consider becoming Chairman of FAMSA.\textsuperscript{321} He had recently been hired as assistant physician at a Psychiatric Hospital in Oslo and was therefore closer to the political system than the founding group in Kristiansand. He discussed it with his family, professional colleagues and other opponents to abortion. Tungesvik accepted under the condition that he was supported by a “solid and functioning” secretariat.\textsuperscript{322} Håkon Breen had a candidate for the job.

**Table 1** *Norwegian Newspapers’ position on self-determined abortion 1971-1979*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liberal: In favour of self-determined abortion</th>
<th>Pragmatic / moderate</th>
<th>Conservative/Restrictive:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Arbeiderbladet</em> (activism)</td>
<td><em>Aftenposten</em> (The abortion issue is difficult, ethically and socially)</td>
<td><em>Vårt Land</em> (activism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Friheten</em> (activism)</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dagen</em> (activism) Arthur Berg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dagbladet</em> (activism, but open for opposing views)</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Morgenbladet</em> (Free abortion is contrary to occidental moral and thought)\textsuperscript{323}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Klassekampen</em> (activism)</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Nationen</em>: (activism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VG (began supporting self-determined abortion from January 1978)</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Folkets Framtid</em> (activism)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Orientering</em> (activism)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Sirene</em> (activism)</td>
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</table>

Odd Sverre Hove was from outside Bergen and had come to Oslo in the mid-1960s to study theology at the MF Norwegian School of Theology.\textsuperscript{324} He had been active in student politics and had clear opinions on the abortion issue. He wanted to return to Western Norway, but had taken a job as a journalist in Vårt Land while he was waiting for his wife to finish her

\textsuperscript{321} Tungesvik, Hans Olav *Ei forfriskande livsreis*. Oslo: Genesis 2016 66

\textsuperscript{322} Tungesvik *Ei forfriskande livsreis* 67

\textsuperscript{323} Morgenbladet July 7, 1974

\textsuperscript{324} Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
diaconal studies. Since he was already working with the abortion issue, his office was transformed into a central for protest. Odd Sverre Hove’s salary was paid by the newspaper and he would lead the daily work of the secretariat of FAMSA. From April 1974, journalists from Dagbladet and Vårt Land used the same elevators to go to work, where they worked in two different movements for and against self-determined abortion.

The first step of FAMSA would be to formulate a platform for the action and get signatures to support it. Odd Sverre Hove explained that there was some disagreement on the platform. Hans Olav Tungesvik wanted a broader platform in a softer language than others. Catholics in the group, e.g. Anna Louise Beer, had a more restrictive view on abortion, but agreed to support the broad initiative set out by Breen and Tungesvik. Many of the central persons in the group had engaged in the struggle against EEC-membership in 1972. They had two important experiences from the activism. Firstly, that the news outlets or the opinion polls were not true expressions of the public opinion in political matters. A majority of Norwegian voted “no” in the 1972-referendum, despite large mobilization from the largest political parties and newspapers. Secondly, the success of a popular movement was depended on the broadest possible representation.

One month after Breen’s leader in Vårt Land, a press conference was held in Oslo. A panel led by Chairman Tungesvik presented the aims, methods, organizing and financing of the action. A national board was presented. Chairman Tungesvik would be supported by physician Elise Klouman and housewife Helga Gitmark as Assistant Chairmen. A founding platform had been signed by representatives from different professions, political parties, geographical areas, Christian denominations, ages and genders. The young physician and New Feminist Elise Klumann Bekken would make sure that the movement did not estrange the new radical generation of women. Reaching out to young socialists, Tor Aukrust, Trond Bakkevig and Geir Gundersen supported the declaration. Another

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325 The salary was later paid back to Vårt Land from donations Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
326 Paragraph based on telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
327 Vårt Land May 29, 1974
328 Folkeaksjonen mot Selvbestemt «....Ufødt liv har òg en mening» 10
329 The national board of FAMSA consisted of Tor Aukrust, Trond Bakkevig, Elise Kloumann Bekken, Arthur Berg, Kirsten Eeg, Berfrid Fjose, Helga Gitmark, Arne Grimstad, Bernice Haver, Odd Sverre Hove, Per Lenning, Bjarne Stoveland, Ambjørg Sælthun, Hans Olav Tungesvik, Josef Tungland, Sigrid Utkilen and Anne Øberg Folkeaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort «....Ufødt liv har òg en mening» 10
Christian socialist, Arne Grimstad, program secretary in NRK, sat in the panel. Otto Hauglin from SV had participated in the first meetings of FAMSA, but pulled out.

Tungesvik explained what the action was about: “This is first and foremost a yes-action. A yes to protection of the foetus and a yes to women in difficult life situations”. The main goal was to influence the public opinion and stop the introduction of self-determined abortion in Norway. This would be achieved by mobilizing sympathizers and reaching out to all citizens and collecting signatures against the new law. The aim was later nuanced to every Norwegian above the age 18. FAMSA hoped this measure would show that the media and the opinion polls were false as was the case with the EEC-referendum. The action was already working on information material and meetings would be held. The action would be funded by donations and any person donating to the action would become member.

The division of labour in FAMSA was simple. One key person in all the 19 counties of Norway would be asked to lead the action. This person was responsible for finding one person in every municipality in that county to organize the collecting of signatures. This person would be provided with a list of addresses from the local Church council. In 1970, 96 per cent of all Norwegians were baptized and thus registered in the local congregation. This meant that FAMSA had access to almost complete registers to mobilize the Norwegian people against self-determined abortion. How was this mobilization framed?

This must be stopped: Framing of the antiabortion-movement

The broad platform of FAMSA was further developed in their upcoming publications. In September 19th, FAMSA presented Welfare for unborn with eleven articles from different authors. In the preface, Elise Kloumann Bekken and Hans Olav Tungesvik criticized the

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330 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 308  
331 Folkets Fremtid August 28, 1974  
332 Stavanger Aftenblad May 29, 1974  
333 Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018  
334 Den Norske Kirke i tall 37  
335 Arbeiderbladet September 20, 1974
Mld. St 51 to be a rupture in Norwegian legal thinking.\textsuperscript{336} The unborn child is of value in itself and has a right to legal protection. Bekken and Tungesvik openly admitted that the book was part of a struggle against self-determined abortion. The first article by Arve Sæbø makes two claims. Life begins at conception and the abortion procedure is associated with considerable risk of complications.\textsuperscript{337} Hans Olav Tungesvik’s article is a modest reflection on the meeting between the abortion-seeking woman and the physician. The tone changes on the last pages and Tungesvik warns against the consequences of free abortion. The existing abortion law is a dam that stops a future abortion flooding.\textsuperscript{338} In her article, the previous “abortion” Minister Bergrid Fjose informed about the help abortion-women could get from the authorities and the need to create a family friendly society through reforms.\textsuperscript{339}

Anna Louise Beer repeats her legal argument from spring, perhaps in a less tabloid tone, arguing that the pregnant woman cannot decide for herself since she is a party in a dispute.\textsuperscript{340} Like Tungesvik, she warns against the consequences. Our judgement of values will be distorted with self-determined abortion and poorer people or disabled persons will be put under social pressure not to have children. The consequences of free abortion are even more frightening in Agnar P. Nygaard’s article.\textsuperscript{341} The sense of justice will be irrevocably changed. Other groups will follow: the old and the ill are in danger of euthanasia.

MP Lars Roar Langslet has a more direct message in his article.\textsuperscript{342} Christianity has formed the respect for life, and socialists are tearing it down and are treating abortion as a mere service. Helene Valvatne, Astrid Waage and Audgunn Oltedal joined Langslet’s criticism of socialism in their article.\textsuperscript{343} It is immoral for socialists to privatise the problems in society and let women decide for themselves. The last two articles in the book analyses abortion from a theological point of view. Torleiv Austad says the fifth commandment applies in

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{336} Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik \textit{Forord} in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) \textit{Velferd for ufødte} 7-8
\bibitem{337} Sæbø \textit{Grunndrag i mennesket si fosterutvikling / Kva skjer ved abortus provocatus?} in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) \textit{Velferd for ufødte}
\bibitem{338} Tungesvik \textit{abortlov og abortspørsmål i lys av den praktiske medisin} in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) \textit{Velferd for ufødte} 17-28
\bibitem{339} Fjose \textit{Hjelpetiltak og farebyggende arbeid som alternativ til abort} in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) \textit{Velferd for ufødte} 29-40
\bibitem{340} Beer \textit{Abortsaken fra en rettslig synsvinkel abort} in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) \textit{Velferd for ufødte} 41-49
\bibitem{341} Nygaard \textit{Abortproblemet i en større sammenheng abort} in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) \textit{Velferd for ufødte} 51-58
\bibitem{342} Langslet \textit{Abort og de ikke-sosialistiske ideologier} in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) \textit{Velferd for ufødte} 73-79
\bibitem{343} Valvatne, Waage, Oltedal \textit{Sjølbestemt abort, sosialisme og kvinneverigjering kirken} in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) \textit{Velferd for ufødte} 99-103
\end{thebibliography}
abortion situations, but concludes that self-determined abortion removes the legal protection for the foetus. Per Lønning uses biblical insights to argue against abortion after being criticised by Berthold Grünfeld for using medical arguments. His main framing of the problem, however, was similar to earlier writings. The consequence of self-determined abortion will be an out gliding of respect for human life and a threat to the humanist traditions of Western civilization.

The texts are very different in their subjects and arguments, but there seems to be two central arguments within the frame. Self-determined abortion must be stopped, firstly because it is the legal right of the foetus, secondly because the consequences of such a law will be devastating. This consequential framing is often called the slippery-slope argument. Gaute Gunleiksrud’s article stands out from this framing since it confronts the Church with a lack of social understanding of the abortion situation. Gunleiksrud claims that the Church is setting two suppressed groups, unborn child and the women in distress, up against each other. The abortion law is interestingly not mentioned. Was Gunleiksrud in favour of self-determined abortion after all?

Few of the articles addressed the arguments from the women’s movement directly or dwelled on the status of women in society. Astrid Hauglin’s article is an exception. She saw herself as a feminist and tried to unlink abortion as a women’s issue. This type of arguing had been published earlier in Vårt Land. Shortly after the general election in 1973, pharmacist Marte Nerdrum denied that free abortion was a women’s issue. Nerdrum and Anna Louise Beer were members of the The Norwegian National Women’s Council and it is likely that they influenced the Council to go against the other women’s organisations in the abortion debate. She said contraception and now abortion were gifts to the patriarchy. Free abortion leads to devaluation of motherhood. Nerdrum claimed that true feminism, was to upgrade women’s reproductive functions and traditional labour as much as possible, and create a children friendly society, where women can get relief in order to participate in public life and in the work force. This is an interesting article, since it is one of the first attempts to break the link

344 Austad *Et kristent abortsyn* in Kloumann Bekken, Tungevik(ed) *Velferd for ufødte* 105-116
345 Lønning *Bibelen og abortkampen* in Kloumann Bekken, Tungevik(ed) *Velferd for ufødte* 117-127
346 Gunleiksrud *Abort, sosialisme og kirken* in Kloumann Bekken, Tungevik(ed) *Velferd for ufødte* 59-72
347 Vårt Land September 21, 1973
between feminism and self-determined abortion. Nerdrum also used known feminists like Kate Millett in her argument.

Astrid Hauglin began her article in *Velferd for ufødte* by regretting the many men in the debate on self-determined abortion, who often had resisted women’s liberation in society. She confronted the Women’s movement for having neglected the sexual oppression of women. Sex in current society was hostile to women and always on the premises of men. Free abortion would equally free men from responsibility, and would increase the pressure against women to have an abortion. She confronts the different arguments of the women’s movement, but also supports much of its criticisms. The Church does, according to Hauglin, more for the unborn child than for living children, and many anti-abortionists are against contraception. For Hauglin, feminism should not be a struggle against the foetus in the womb of women, but instead be directed at the economic, social, cultural, ideological, medical, contraceptive, psychological and attitudinal circumstances that leads to unwanted pregnancies and the impossibility for the pregnant woman to see other viable solutions than abortion. Compared to Nerdrum’s op-ed, Hauglin is less focused on the reproductive role of women, but their analysis may be summarized as a Christian Feminism. This may give the impression that the movement was in fact protecting abortion-seeking women. How did then the women’s movement negate the arguments of the anti-abortionists? The most common counter-arguments had been commented by the Tove Nilsen in *Self-determined Abortion - A Woman’s right.*

Nilsen criticized the idea of motherhood as womanhood and quotes Friedrich Nietzsche: “Everything in woman is a riddle, and everything in woman has one solution – that is pregnancy” Nietzsche is one of many men to define the nature of women and they have established the romantic myth about the relationship between mother and child. 27-35 Tove Nilsen writes that there can be no such thing as gender equality before women can decide about their own body, and hence their life situation.

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348 Hauglin *Abortsaken og kampen for kvinnewright* in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) *Velferd for ufødte* 81-98
349 Hauglin *Abortsaken og kampen for kvinnewright* 86
350 Hauglin *Abortsaken og kampen for kvinnewright* 98
351 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 308
352 Nilsen *Hvorfor vi har dannet en abortgruppe*, in Grünfeld, Nyfeministenes og Kvinnefrontens abortgruppe *Selvbestemt abort – en kvinnerett* 24
353 Selvbestemt abort – en kvinnerett 1973, p. 22
To summarize, the movement against self-determined abortion included many different views and perspectives on abortion. These were legal, medical, theological, feminist and sociological. The nuances were, for the time being, of less importance since the abortion issue was made into a question of being for or against self-determined abortion. FAMSA, with its representatives from different parties and denominations were unanimous in what the aim was: Stop self-determined abortion in Norway.


In May, the Standing Committee of Social Affairs received many letters from impatient organizations.\(^ {354}\) There was no need to delay the abortion issue any longer and the letters urged the Committee to raise the issue. On May 28, four women’s organizations sent a common letter to the Ministry of Social affairs, expressing disappointment in the delay of the passing of a bill on self-determined abortion.\(^ {355}\) This disappointment was deepened a few days later when the submission of Meld. St 51 was postponed to the next parliamentary session over the summer.\(^ {356}\) The Standing Committee of Social Affairs had not succeeded in finishing its proposition. The leader of the Committee was Kåre Kristiansen of KrF, an ardent opponent of self-determined abortion and had strong support from the other non-socialist parties in the Standing Committee. Labour Party State Secretary Kjell Knudsen confirmed this strategy one month later.\(^ {357}\) A leader in Dagbladet pointed out that the delay now would open the possibility for previously announced mobilizations.\(^ {358}\) The paper was right. FAMSA would take this possibility and local committees were organized all over the country during the summer months of 1974.\(^ {359}\)

The founding of FAMSA radicalised the movement for self-determined abortion. Arbeiderbladet, the party organ of AP, started a new column, “She was rejected” in spring 1974.\(^ {360}\) From May to June, the paper printed stories on how women in hopeless situations

\(^{354}\) Letters found in the Archive of the Storting
\(^{355}\) Nationen May 28, 1974
\(^{356}\) Dagbladet June 1, 1974
\(^{357}\) Arbeiderbladet June 20, 1974
\(^{358}\) Dagbladet June 1, 1974
\(^{359}\) Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 316
\(^{360}\) Norwegian: Hun fikk avslag
were denied an abortion by the panels of doctors.\textsuperscript{361} The column on June 1\textsuperscript{st} presented a story on a 16 year old unmarried woman who was rejected an abortion. The gravity of the situation is emphasized: “[…]She has been hospitalized in psychiatric hospital several times. […] The mother is working and the relationship between her and the applicant is very difficult”. The stories highlighted the impossibility of the woman’s situation and was meant to influence the public in believing that the abortion law and the panels of doctors were harassing women with unwanted pregnancies. The source of these cases would soon be known. The neighbours in Bygdøy, physicians Berthold Grünfeld and Gro Harlem Brundtland had provided them. Vårt Land and several abortion opponents reacted to what they considered a “grotesque” form of argumenting.\textsuperscript{362} Vårt Land called the Chief editor of Arbeiderbladet, Einar Olsen.\textsuperscript{363} He said he was embarrassed to inform them that he was unaware of the column. Some days later, Olsen reported Vårt Land to the Norwegian Press Complaints Commission, asking them to evaluate the press ethics after their attack on “She was rejected”.\textsuperscript{364} Another newspaper Romerikets Blad, somehow discovered that most of the women from the column were not rejected at all. The stories were untrue since the appeal applications were almost always granted.\textsuperscript{365} Gro Harlem Brundtland admitted that this was often the case in Eastern Norway, but said the stories were representative for the country as a whole.\textsuperscript{366} In spring, the abortion group with members from the Women’s Front and the New Feminists had broken up.\textsuperscript{367} FAMSA brought the women’s organizations back together. In mid-June, the Women’s Front reacted and sent a press release to the media.\textsuperscript{368} They wished to create a formalized collaboration of women’s organizations. The press release included the strategy of the action and statements from the Women’s Front on the abortion issue. The strategy was to mobilize women all over the country until self-determined abortion was raised in parliament. The mobilization would consist of spreading of information from stands in the cities, in the newspapers, in radio and by visiting people at home. The National Committee of the Women’s Front stated that the abortion issue would be the prioritized issue in the upcoming period and demanding a submission of self-determined abortion in parliament, separate from

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{361} Arbeiderbladet May 28, 29, 30, 31 June 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10. 11. 12
\item \textsuperscript{362} Arbeiderbladet June 8, 1974
\item \textsuperscript{363} Vårt Land June 7, 1974
\item \textsuperscript{364} Arbeiderbladet June 11, 1974
\item \textsuperscript{365} Vårt Land June 22, 1974
\item \textsuperscript{366} Arbeiderbladet June 29, 1974
\item \textsuperscript{367} Bjerck \textit{Kampen for Selvbestemt Abort på 1970-tallet}
\item \textsuperscript{368} Arbeiderbladet June 17, 1974, Adreeseavisen June 15, 2974
\end{itemize}
the broader White paper 51 on family matters. They also demanded the right to counselling in
the health services and contraceptive education in primary and lower secondary school.

Some days later the Womens’ Action for Self-determined Abortion (KA) was formed.
Representatives from the women’s organizations were chosen to lead it: Live Brekke and
Sissel Moum from the New Feminists, Irmelin Wister and Elisabeth Vislie from the
Women’s Front, Else Michelet from the Norwegian Association for Women’s Rights and
Lisa Schancke from the Norwegian Union of Women. These representatives were given a
mandate to organize the activity in Oslo, but larger decisions had to be discussed in the
“mother organization”. This was democratic, but could lead to slower decision-making. In
Trondheim, the Women’s Front copied the strategy from Oslo and contacted the other
women’s organizations and all the political parties, except KrF. It was the first time a
broad feminist cooperation was attempted in the city. KA in Trondheim was founded in
September 1974 lead by Hanne Wilhjelm and Else-Thurmann Nielsen in the Executive
committee. In Bergen, Tone Ødegaard from the Women’s Front was leader of the local group
and organized the collecting of signatures. From now, activists in the cities and in smaller
communities walked the streets with flyers, brochures with arguments for the cause and a
newly produced sticker on the chest: Self-determined abortion – Support the women’s
demand. They wrote op-eds, arranged meetings, marches and rallies and collect
signatures. From the abortion stands in the cities, held every Saturday, citizens were
informed about the struggle. Hanne Wilhjelm said most conversations were about
contraception instead of abortion. Irmelin Wister said verbal abuse was not uncommon.
Passers-by called them baby-killers. Others, especially middle-aged and older women,
supported their struggle and asked if this was finally the time. KA reached out for external
support outside the women’s movement. Irmelin Wister and Gro Hansen authored a letter
asking all unions, associations and groups, asking to adapt their resolution on self-determined
abortion, help out with donations and mobilize members for upcoming demonstrations.
At a press conference in Oslo on June 21, a new action was launched.\(^{376}\) The Information Committee for Self-determined abortion consisted of twelve members from different parties and professions and they aimed at providing knowledge on the abortion issue.\(^{377}\) The New Feminist Live Brekke worked as their secretary.\(^{378}\) Brundtland was asked by Arbeiderbladet what the most important reason for founding the Committee was. She responded that it was a necessary reaction to the creation of FAMSA.\(^{379}\) Vårt Land commented the initiative a couple of days later, saying it was unethical and illogical to fight for the pregnant woman’s rights on the cost of the life of the foetus. It also criticized the truthfulness of their information since it had supported the publishing of “She was rejected”.\(^{380}\) The Information Committee would participate in meetings and media debates. The group in Oslo later expanded their work and formed a national council with 62 members.\(^{381}\) The Socialist Physicians in SLF cooperated with the Committee and engaged in the media debate in this period.

AP made it clear that the family bill would be submitted to parliament after the passing of the State budget in October.\(^{382}\) From June to October, the two movements did everything in their power to win the abortion struggle. Irmelin Wister of the Women’s Front said that this was David versus Goliath.\(^{383}\) KA had no financial means, but the many members of the women’s organizations could be mobilized. FAMSA had a more formalized organization structure with its clear division of labour and some financial backing from donations. The abortion struggle was now fought on two levels: in the streets, churches and small communities; and in the media.

Ellen Aanesen’s account of the abortion struggle in the summer of 1974 says there was a difference in strategy between the movements. The women’s movement spent little time on the arguments used by FAMSA.\(^{384}\) Gro Hansen and Elisabeth Vislie announced in July that the goal was to keep the debate factual.\(^{385}\) FAMSA, on the other hand, did more to discredit

\(^{376}\) Arbeiderbladet June 22, 1974
\(^{377}\) The members were Gro Harlem Brundtland, Aadne Brun, Dag Brusgaard, Bergljot Børresen, Ragnhild Engeseth/Halvorsen, Ann Gullberg, Inga Heide, Rolf Tore Hildebrandt, Anton Jervell, Fredrik Melibye, Ida Nakling and Holger Ursin.
\(^{378}\) Bjerck *Kampen for Selvbestemt Abort på 1970-tallet*
\(^{379}\) Arbeiderbladet June 22, 1974
\(^{380}\) Vårt Land June 24, 1974
\(^{381}\) Dagbladet October 4
\(^{382}\) Arbeiderbladet June 20, 1974
\(^{383}\) Interview with Irmelin Wister February 14, 2017
\(^{384}\) Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 314*
\(^{385}\) Arbeiderbladet July 13, 1974
individual activists. Bergljot Børresen, a catholic and member of the Information Committee, was attacked by Per Lønning for unchristian activity. On a more general level, Kåre Kristiansen attacked the values of the socialist parties, claiming that free abortion was an expression of Marxist life values.\footnote{Aftenposten July 15, 1974}

Attempts were made to discredit FAMSA too. Since 1970, Hans Olav Tungesvik hosted a radio-show on NRK called “15 minutes with the doctor\footnote{Tungesvik \textit{Ei forsfriskande livsreis} 53-57} The aim was popular education on health related issues. Tungesvik, with the aid of a specialist physician answered questions from listeners; reaching a hundred thousand Norwegians. The show was broadcasted until 1976. After becoming Chairman of FAMSA, Tungesvik, according to his autobiography, was careful not to mention the abortion issue. The mixing of roles, nevertheless, was criticised by the Women’s Front in August.\footnote{Vårt Land August 25, 1974}

In July, Vårt Land reported from the office of FAMSA.\footnote{Vårt Land August 24, 1978} The journalist did not have to walk far since the secretary of FAMSA worked from the same office in Akersgata. Since Odd Sverre Hove was reporting from a meeting in Switzerland, Sverre Jansen had taken his position as a summer job. In the article, Hansen explained that signatures weighed more than opinion polls. He also argued that the opposing movement were following FAMSA’s step. When FAMSA launched an action, the opposition did the same and were now copying the strategy of collecting signatures. He also commented that his movement were harassed and called “Action Contempt for Women” and were accused of hypocrisy for not helping women out. Jansen advertised for the start of the action in September, before the article ended with the banking details of FAMSA.

The medical abortion struggle continued in the newspaper columns. In August, Ragnhild Halvorsen wrote an op-ed on the situation and claimed the extreme positions dominated the abortion debate.\footnote{Arbeiderbladet August 22, 1974} Her physician colleague on the other side of the abortion struggle, Ola Didrik Saugstad had told the newspaper VG about experiencing seeing a breathing foetus after an abortion.\footnote{Dagbladet August 19, 1974} The foetus had been left to die. He was asked by Rudi Svensson to
explain the context of the abortion, since Svennson claimed late abortion were only allowed in cases of life danger to the mother. Saugstad later admitted that the incident was from Sweden and that talk of whining babies was a derailment of the abortion discussion.\textsuperscript{392} He then warned against the dangers of rising abortion numbers if free abortion was introduced.

Hans Olav Tungesvik led the board meetings of FAMSA in a mild, authoritative manner.\textsuperscript{393} There were strong characters in the board, among them, Per Lønning and Arthur Berg. There thus many strong voices in the internal discussions. Argumentation, strategy and economic challenges were on the agenda. Elise Kloumann Bekken was influenced by the feminist impulse and made sure that women-discriminating rhetoric was removed from the written communication material.\textsuperscript{394} Pastor Emil M. Martinson wished to help FAMSA with visual illustration from medical researchers in USA.\textsuperscript{395} The images showed aborted foetuses next to living babies. Martinson had printed 18,000 brochures in order to influence people’s opinion in the debate. Bekken and the other women on the board played a central role in the decision not to include the images, since the women feared the public would see them as offensive and scare sympathisers away.\textsuperscript{396} Symbols and posters were designed and ordered from the print shop. A human embryo inside a section sign was chosen as logo for the action. Since the secretary had large expenses for sending out mail, ordering brochures and posters, FAMSA, soon had little money left. The board decided to take up a loan with Arthur Berg, married to a wealthy woman, provided the surety.\textsuperscript{397}

The Women’s Front had sent a letter to the Standing Committee on Social Affairs in July, informing that they had collected 9898 signatures for self-determined abortion.\textsuperscript{398} The collecting of signatures continued after the summer.\textsuperscript{399} In cooperation with the Information Council, they arranged a rally in front of the University of Oslo in September. The friends and neighbours from Bygdøy, Berthold Grünfeld and Gro Harlem Brundtland, held speeches on the legal, medical and mental aspects of the abortion question. Brundtland was about to become Environment Minister in the Labour government.

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392 Dagbladet August 29, 1974
393 Telephone call with Anbjørn Neerland May 3, 2018
394 Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
395 VG September 18, 1974.
396 Telephone call with Anbjørn Neerland May 3, 2018
397 Telephone call with Anbjørn Neerland May 3, 2018
398 Kvinnenfronten/ Inger Olsen Sandbæk to Stortingets Sosialkomite July 1, 1974.
399 Aftenposten September 3, 1974.
\end{footnotes}
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FAMSA started advertising for support in the summer. Hove sent out letters and made telephone calls, asking sympathisers to donate money and attention to the cause. FAMSA put ads in the newspapers through the summer months. In Folkets Fremtid, the party organ of KrF, FAMSA proclaimed that all members of KrF ought to get a membership in the Popular Action. They encouraged the members to donate money, raise money in their communities, create local branches of FAMSA in their home cities and make their voices heard. FAMSA also published in the smaller newspapers, but here the ad simply asked for support.

On September 11, Odd Sverre Hove announced the start of the action. He encouraged all congregations and organizations to cancel all meetings for the upcoming weekend. On Friday and Saturday, stands were established to advertise for the meeting. Four days later, FAMSA launched their campaign and signature collecting in a sports hall in Western Oslo. Hans Olav Tungesvik proclaimed in front of a crowd of 2000 people that FAMSA had become a true popular movement. Tungesvik said the movement would mobilize to stop the rupture in Norwegian cultural heritage and legal traditions. Elise Klumann Bekken and Arne Grimstad held speeches on why self-determined abortion Bekken’s message was that abortions were no legitimate solution to social and economic problems. Grimstad was observed in intense debate with someone holding a different view. Inside and outside, activists from the Women’s Front gave out flyers, saying that only a law on self-determined abortion would serve justice to women.

From now, FAMSA’s key persons in every county sent out their activists, the list carriers, to collect signatures. In Eastern Norway, they were maybe too avid in their task. The Chairman of an Elderly home in Ringsaker, had reported on the list carriers since one of them had entered the facilities where the residents averaged 88 years without asking for permission. Several of them had signed the lists without knowing what it was for. The increased activity also unleashed a debate on how much the Church could contribute. Secretary of FAMSA Odd

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400 Folkets Fremtid June 26, 1974
401 Folkets Fremtid July 26, 1974.
402 Fædrelandsvennen June 25, 1974
403 Folkets Fremtid September 11, 1974
404 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 320
405 Arbeiderbladet September 9, 1974
407 Arbeiderbladet September 18, 1974
Sverre Hove left the office after finding a job as a priest in Western Norway. He said that he placed the lists in the weaponhouse and this was common in most congregations.\textsuperscript{408} There were also reports on physicians laying out lists in the waiting room of their clinics.\textsuperscript{409} Some of the waiting patients were possibly about to apply for abortion.

Odd Sverre Hove was replaced by Anbjørn Neerland. He had known Hans Olav Tungesvik from the Union of Christian Students. Neerland and Hove worked two days together before Hove left for his Church duties.\textsuperscript{410} New opinion polls were published in September. 47 per cent of Norwegians were in favour of self-determined abortion, 40 per cent against.\textsuperscript{411} Neerland was optimistic on behalf of FAMSA about these figures.\textsuperscript{412}

KA launched a new brochure in September and Arbeiderbladet printed the message as a quote: “Women are mentally sane.”\textsuperscript{413} The authors of the brochure argued that since women were mentally sane and were fit to vote, marry, care for children and take social responsibilities, they were also capable to decide in the serious matter of having an abortion or not. The decision had large impacts on a women’s life, but none whatsoever for the physicians in the panels. 150,000 copies of the brochure, “What does self-determined abortion mean?”, was distributed in the upcoming months.\textsuperscript{414} This was made possible by financial support from SLF and AP. The intense period of activism may have disrupted the cooperating spirit. At some point in fall, the New Feminist representatives pulled out of KA.\textsuperscript{415} They had been criticised for their feminist approach and women-centred framing of self-determined abortion. NKF was still in the Women’s Action. Their representative Else Michelet criticised KrF for having prepared their own restrictive law proposal.\textsuperscript{416} Abortion would only be allowed in case it could lead to more dangerous illegal abortions. In a press release two days later, FAMSA distanced itself from this proposal saying the movement was

\textsuperscript{408} The entrance of the church or the church porch was storage room for weapons since it was prohibited to enter the building carrying weapons. Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
\textsuperscript{409} Arbeiderbladet Oktober 7, 1974
\textsuperscript{410} Telephone call with Anbjørn Neerland May 3, 2018
\textsuperscript{411} Aftenposten September 21, 1974
\textsuperscript{412} Folkets Fremtid September 25, 1974
\textsuperscript{413} Arbeiderbladet october 2, 1974
\textsuperscript{414} Haukaa Bak slagordene 100
\textsuperscript{415} Bjerk Kampen for Selvbestemt Abort på 1970-tallet
\textsuperscript{416} Arbeiderbladet October 9, 1974
united against a law on self-determined abortion, but held a spectrum of views on what the alternative should be.417

In the beginning of October, Anbjørn Nerland reminded the readers of Vårt Land that only two weeks remained of the petition.418 He hoped to drown in lists of signatures. FAMSA also made it public that they would continue regardless of the outcome of the upcoming vote.419 The New Feminists held a National convention in Bodø in late October. They had had enough of antiabortion activism from the Church and passed a resolution that encouraged women to opt out of the State Church.420 On October 10, 900 people marched for self-determined abortion in Bergen.421 Kaja Irgens continued the struggle in an article in the local newspaper arguing that the opponents had made the debate metaphysical and abstract. One day before the parliamentary debate, the Women’s movement arranged marches in Nesna, Mosjøen, Trondheim, Bergen and Oslo. Else Michelet from NKF held a speech in front of 5000 supporters of self-determined abortion.422 Michelet’s message was clear: The only right thing to do is give the woman the legal right to decide in accordance to her conscience.

The day before the vote, the FAMSA office had finished the collecting of signatures. There were thousands of hand-written lists. Neerland and other members of FAMSA wrapped the lists in brown paper. In order to transport the piles of lists to the Storting, Neerland asked a volunteer, Helge Reindal, to pick up a trolley on the East-side of town.423 Reindal managed to crash the car on the way back, so the handing over of the lists was delayed. In the evening, Anbjørn Neerland, Hans Olav Tungesvik, Tor Aukrust and Helga Gitmark smiled victoriously in front of the photographers. 610.000 signatures from all over the country was the result. The President of the Storting, Guttorm Hansen received the petition and signed the official letter. Hans Olav Tungesvik formulated the letter in a modest way: “We ask that the Storting will be informed about the result of the campaign before the debate on White Paper nr. 51”. 424 All incoming protests were collected in the Archive of the Storting, but the piles were too many. Neerland and Reindal had to drag the trolley back to the office in Akersgata.

417 Arbeiderbladet October 10, 1974
418 Vårt Land October 5, 1974.
419 Arbeiderbladet October 23, 1974.
420 Kvinnefronten Kreativitet of Feministaktivitet på 70–og 80–tallet (Accessed May 2, 2018)
421 Haukaa Bak slagordene 100
422 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 334
423 Telephone call with Anbjørn Neerland May 3, 2018
424 Folkaksjonen mot selvbestemt abort to Stortingets presidentskap, October 30, 1974
After the photo session, Hans Olav Tungesvik, Elise Kloumann Bekken and Helga Gitmark held a press conference. Tungesvik said the number of signatures were high when considering the spontaneity of the action and the short time period. Western and Southern Norway had the best results, while Oslo and Bergen had the worst. Tungesvik pointed out that the majority of the signatures were from women. Elise Kloumann would now chair the new board of FAMSA, and enter a new phase of activism.

**Cultural abortion struggle**

The abortion struggle was not only limited to political action. Synnøve Lindtner argues that the women’s organizations may be seen as the surface of a much larger cultural movement. The political efforts of the women’s organizations were followed by cultural expressions in many forms. The abortion struggle is one clear example. Vibeke Løkkeberg’s movie *Abortion* came out in 1971, but it received negative reviews from conservative film critics. At the premiere, Løkkeberg, was not asked much about the content of the film, but her then-husband was asked if Vibeke løkkeberg would pose naked wrapped in film rolls. The music band Amtmandens døtre was established during the convention of the Women’s Front in 1974. It first played translated songs from Sweden, but came out with their own songs the next year. Several of the songs included lyrics on the abortion issue. The Women’s Front also printed abortion songs from revues in their brochures. 21 years old, Tove Nilsen made her literary debut in the midst of new feminist activism. The novel *Never let them undress you defencelessly naked* dealt directly with women’s right to self-determined abortion. The magazine Sirene printed poems and short stories where abortion was a central topic. The women’s movement mobilized in myriad ways, but would this effort suffice to win the abortion struggle? All eyes were on parliament on October 30, 1974.

**Conclusion:**

To which extent was the forces against self-determined abortion a social movement? Previous resistance against liberalization of the abortion law was found inside all political

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425 Nationen October 31, 1974  
426 Lindtner «Som en frisk vin gjennom stuen»: kvinnebladet Sirene og det utvidete politikkbegrepet 27  
427 Klassekampen August 22, 2015  
428 Nilsen, Tove *Aldri la dem kle deg forsvarslos naken* Oslo: Cappelen 1974
parties and from individual voices in the debate. When the socialist parties were forced by the women’s movement and their allies to push self-determined abortion forward, this resistance was consolidated. From 1973, the physicians, the nurses and the medical students expressed a more collective opposition to liberalization. The editorial in Vårt Land on April 17, 1974 marks the beginning of a broad social movement against self-determined abortion. FAMSA had many of the characteristics of an ideal type social movement, listed by Knut Kjeldstadli.429 The first trait is debatable. Did FAMSA have a goal of changing the existing social order? The goal was in the first place to stop a law on self-determined abortion. Tungesvik tried to reformulate this negative framing on the press conference in May and called the movement a “yes-to-life”- and a ”yes to women in a difficult situation”-movement. This may have been more true for later phases, but the first phase of FAMSA from 1974-75 is primarily about preventing change of the existing social order. The other characteristics are more evident. The opponents were the socialist parties, the women’s movement and their allies, but emphasis was put on cooperation instead of labelling or “othering”. They had a collective identity of forces that rejected the idea of self-determined abortion. They were a mass movement and they had basis in social networks, especially in Christian circles in Western and Southern Norway and among Christian students and health workers in Oslo. The abortion issue cut across most conflict lines within Christian Norway. From Bishops and academic circles in the larger cities to the small prayer houses of the Inner Missions, a strong spirit to struggle against self-determined abortion was present. The theological disputes and cultural and social differences were put aside in an attempt to stop the moral decay of the country. They were not social elite and were open to all sympathisers. FAMSA was a formalized democratic organization with an internal communication. It was independent from the powers-that-be, but had close ties to political parties. FAMSA would also endure for a long time.

The protest repertoire of FAMSA was essentially an attempt to recreate the energy from the struggle against EEC. This meant reaching out to form a broadest possible movement. This was based on an analysis that media and opinion polls were untrue expressions of the popular will. Written signatures were considered to weigh more heavily in such political matters. This form of protest was expensive and required a large network of key persons and engaged activists. The broad framing of the opposition against self-determined abortion made it easier

429 Knut Kjeldstadli Kollektive bevegelser 14-15
to mobilize different social groups in different geographical areas. It was, however, not possible to find key persons in all counties, meaning that the collecting of signatures had to be organized from the office in Oslo. Petitions had previously been used by Christian movements, especially in sexual matters, and was the main method of protest. Bringing lists and convincing friends and strangers to sign them, demanded large groups of supporters. It was also an expensive undertaking. Large debt would haunt FAMSA in the upcoming period.

The emerging of FAMSA, radicalised the women’s movement and their allies and led to the formation of two new organizations, The Women’ Action for Self-determined Abortion and the Information Council for Self-determined Abortion. During spring, summer and fall 1974, the Women’s movement mobilized heavily to convince the larger public about the necessity of a new abortion new.

The repertoire of the women’s movement consisted of four types of protest. The first type consisted of meetings, rallies and information stands and was part of a horizontal reaching-out to other citizens, especially women. This was combined with a second type of protest: the collecting of signatures, inspired by FAMSA. Lobbying was the third type of protest and was the vertical reaching-out to the political parties. Direct actions in form of spectacular protest were the fourth type.

The relation between the Women’s movement and FAMSA was confrontational, but not bitter or hateful. The Women’s Front confronted their opponents at the Kick-Off-meeting in Njårdhallen, but did this in a communicative way. The strong rhetoric of the bishops was badly received. It is likely that the opting-out action from the New Feminists in November was linked to abortion opposition dressed in capes.
4 Looking for heroes in the parliamentary system 1974-1975

“We will probably be the last European country to pass self-determined abortion”.
Berthold Grünfeld, October 30, 1974

This chapter examines how White paper nr 51 on family matters and self-determined abortion was submitted to the Storting and how activists tried to influence the MPs. I argue that the missing majority in October 1974 forced the two movements to rethink their strategies and organizational forms until a new modified law was passed in spring 1975. Finally, it discusses the abdication of the Oslo bishop Per Lønning and what this meant for further activism.

Disappointment for the women’s movement despite parliamentary majority

Under Prime Minster Trygve Bratteli, the Labour government included self-determined abortion in a White paper nr 51 on family politics. The paper was prepared from the Minister of Social Affairs, who had abortion in her portfolio. The decriminalization of abortion in 1960 had moved the issue from the criminal code and the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Social affairs and this position had been held by Christian-Democrats Egil Aarvik and Bergfrid Fjose in most of the subsequent years. By 1973, it was the first socialist majority since the early 1960s, but it was only by one vote.

Sociologist Otto Hauglin was one of sixteen members of Parliament from SV. As a Christian socialist, he had informed his party about his reservation to support self-determined abortion during the nomination process in the Østfold branch of SV. Self-determined abortion was not compatible with his private beliefs. He had participated in a couple of meetings with FAMSA, but chose to opt out. He had been the centre of attention in the abortion debate.

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430 Dagbladet November 1, 1974
431 NRK Politiikk: Selvbestemt abort april 5 1974
432 Telephone call with Anbjørn Neerland May 3, 2018
since the election result was ready in the middle of September 1973. When he was interviewed by NRK prior to the vote, Hauglin said abortion was a matter of life and death.\footnote{NRK \textit{Politikk} april 5 1974} Even if the pregnant woman was in a difficult situation, it would not be a matter of life and death for her. This was the right of the foetus. No single person can be allowed to decide on life and death single-handedly. Abortion was a sign of social problems and Hauglin addressed initiatives from the government to solve these problems. Hauglin admitted that the panels of doctors functioned unsatisfactorily and needed reform. He wanted to let women apply for themselves and appeal the decision. Watching the television, activist Inge Ås says she did not believe her own eyes and ears.\footnote{Interview with Inge Ås September 9, 2017}

A few days prior to the debate, a different issue had been raised within AP and SV. Some of the men in the socialist parties had demanded that the pregnant women would need to go through mandatory counselling before getting an abortion.\footnote{Skard, Torild. \textit{Hverdag på Løvebakken: Personlige erfaringer.} Oslo: Gyldendal 1981 222-224} The Labour women and the Women in SV were able to stop the suggestion. According to SV MP Torhild Skard, the parties on the right, except KrF were unclear, but were most likely to resist self-determined abortion.\footnote{Skard Hverdag På Løvebakken: Personlige Erfaringer 219}

Could anyone save self-determined abortion? Bjørn Unneberg in the Centre party was known to be in favour of self-determination but would not go against the program of his party. The Anders Lange’s Party had entered Parliament for the first time in 1973. Carl Ivar Hagen replaced Lange after the latter died just weeks prior to the vote. He chose to oppose the bill, something he later regretted.\footnote{NRK Carl I. Hagen beklager abort-standpunktet etter 40 år (Accessed May 6, 2018)} New Feminists tried to lobby the possible candidates. The Anders Lange Party was one possible aim. They had just entered the Storting for the first time and had campaigned on reducing taxes and fees. They could only accept the law if the
pregnant women paid for the surgery. New Feminist Gro Nylander tried to convince their candidates that free abortion against payment would not help the situation for the most disadvantaged women.\footnote{Nylander Abortloven–betydning i dag og i morgen, in Kompetansesenter for likestilling Abortloven 20 år 11} She got a telephone call from one of the MP’s the following night, asking if she would come to his office and continue the discussion on the issue further. Nylander declined, saying her commitment to the struggle had a limit. KA in Trondheim sent letters to MPs Per Borten and Birgit Bryhni urging them to vote in favour of self-determined abortion.\footnote{Kvinneaksjonen i Trondheim for selvbestemt abort Brev vi overleverte til Borten og Birgit Bryhni. October 27.1974}

The New Feminists mobilized for the last time before the members of the Storting would debate and vote on white paper nr. 51. They made a human chain around the Parliament building to mark their support for the law proposal.\footnote{Bjerck Kampen for Selvbestemt Abort} The MPs could hear their voices singing “We are many”.\footnote{Arbeiderbladet November 1, 1974} Was there any hope for a majority for self-determined abortion when the parliamentary debate began at six o’clock on Thursday, October 31, 1974?\footnote{St.tid 533 (1974-1975), St.tid 122 (1978), St.tid (1978) 605}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In favour of self-determined abortion</th>
<th>Content with existing law or open for minor adjustments</th>
<th>In favour of restricting the existing law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labour Party (AP)</td>
<td>Conservative Party (H)</td>
<td>Christian-Democratic Party (KrF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Election Alliance (SV) (Otto Hauglin had reserved against voting for self-determined abortion prior to the 1973 election)</td>
<td>Liberal Party (V)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Centre Part (SP)</td>
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<td>New People’s Party (DLF)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Anders Lange Party (ALP)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

At 2.15 am, the debate was over, and a vote was held.\footnote{St.tid 533 (1974-1975), St.tid 122 (1978)} There was no one to save the day. There was no hero for the activists in favour of self-determined abortion. Berthold Grünfeld
had observed the debate from the stands. He had been impressed by the speeches from Trygve Bratteli and Torild Skard. They had brought fresh arguments to the discussion.\textsuperscript{445} Despite this, Grünfeld was pessimistic. “We will be the last European country to pass self-determined abortion”.

**Castling of two abortion movements: Compromise law**

When a legislative proposal is voted down in Parliament, it is common procedure to accept the defeat and wait for the next parliamentary period. Trygve Bratteli ended the debate by saying that the debate revealed a majority for changing the existing abortion law.\textsuperscript{446} A couple of days later, Minister of Social Affairs Tor Halvorsen announced that a liberalization of the existing abortion law would be prepared immediately and be discussed in the spring session of the Storting.\textsuperscript{447} This liberalization included the woman’s right to apply directly to the panel of doctors, a right to appeal and social indications.

The New Feminists, The Women’s Front, NKF and NK sent a letter to the government demanding an immediate submission of self-determined abortion.\textsuperscript{448} They argued that there was in fact a majority in the Storting for self-determined abortion. Irmelin Wiyster from the Women’s Front was furious and blamed SV for not forcing Hauglin to vote in accordance with their political program.\textsuperscript{449} This was something SV could solve. Why couldn’t he just get a sickness leave from one day of voting? Wasn’t there a way for him to stay at home? \textsuperscript{450} The Labour MPs had voted in unity in October, despite having several MPs who were critical to self-determined abortion in their ranks. Why was this not the case in SV? New Feminist Birgit Bjerck raised the issue in SV asking for a united vote and a quick submission of a new law.\textsuperscript{451}

The next couple of months, much of the abortion debate would concentrate on the right of health personnel to refrain from participating in abortions.\textsuperscript{452} The pressure for such clauses in

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{445} Dagbladet November 1, 1974
\bibitem{446} St.tid. (1974) Barnefamiens levekår 606
\bibitem{447} Arbeiderbladet November 1, 1974
\bibitem{448} Arbeiderbladet November 23, 1974
\bibitem{449} Interview Irmelin Wiyster February 14, 2017
\bibitem{450} Interview Irmelin Wiyster February 14, 2017
\bibitem{451} Birgit Bjerck, Nyfeministenes Abortgruppe to Torild Skard February 20, 1975
\bibitem{452} Dagbladet November 12, 1974
\end{thebibliography}
a new law had been reinforced by the emergence of a new organization. Norsk Pro Vita(NPV), meaning Norwegian Pro Life, had their founding meeting in Oslo in September 1974. The aim of the organization was to support health workers rejecting to participate in abortions. The ethical platform of the group was the Lejeune-Declaration, formulated by the World Federation of Doctors Who Respect Human Life. The organization saw great dangers in the medical advancements of the time. Jérôme Lejeune was a French paediatrician and geneticist, best known for discovering the causes of Down’s syndrome.

“Before God and men, we bear witness that for us every human being is a person. From the moment the embryo is formed until death it is the same human being which grows to maturity and dies. The absolute respect owed to patients depends neither on their age nor on any infirmity which may afflict them. Just as medicine remains at the service of a life that is ending, so also it is there to protect a life just beginning. From the moment of conception, the person is inalienable. The fertilized ovum, the embryo, the foetus, the newly born, may not be given away, or sold. Nobody may subject it to any experiment...”

NPV was part of an increasingly active European network of health workers, who saw abortion as an ethical rupture with the Hippocratic Oath. Gunnar Melbø was the first Chairman and the board which consisted of an equal share of physicians, nurses and sympathisers. The board set out to recruit new members and distributed 11.000 flyers to all employees in the health institution.

1975 had been selected The Women’s Year by the United Nations and the women’s movement continued their struggle. Lobbying politicians became the main strategy. On February 26, 1975, an open meeting was arranged by KA. All MPs from Oslo and Akershus would participate in an abortion hearing and the audience could ask questions. After the parliamentary debate on October 30, the women’s movement had little patience or compassion with the politicians. Members from Pro Vita was present at the meeting and reported that it was “regrettable to witness such an enthusiastic struggle to increase the numbers of abortions. The politicians of the socialist parties were met with booing if they failed to deliver the right answer. They were accused of playing tactical political games. Torild Skard wrote a couple of years later that many of the women in the audience were furious and desperate. Since she was struggling for self-determined abortion within SV,

453 Sunnmørsposten October 15 1975
454 Translation from Association Les Amis du Professeur Jérôme Lejeune (accesed may 6, 2018)
455 Dagbladet February 22, 1975, Skard Hverdag på løvebakken 229
456 Aftenposten February 27, 1975
457 Pro Vita Nytt 1975
458 Skard Hverdag på løvebakken 229
she felt it was unjust to be attacked in this way. Berthold Grünfeld and Dag Brusgaard from the Information Council criticised the new abortion law, saying the new proposal would not provide equal treatment of women. The Women’s Front agreed to this analysis and rejected any compromise law.\(^{459}\) The parties on the right were to a lesser extent targets of critique.

In March, Members of the Women’s Front in Trondheim attempted to confront the SV MPs, but they were refused to enter the National Convention of SV in Trondheim.\(^{460}\) Instead they used a strategy called picketing. This means that the protesters continuously walk around the building to force participants of the meeting to walk through the “picking” activists. They later entered the building and tried to convince Hauglin to vote for self-determined abortion. The Women’ Front also warned against a privatised version of self-determined abortion, where women had to pay in separate abortion clinics.\(^{461}\)

In 1974 and 1975, the Women’s Front increasingly developed a more class-oriented and less feminist political platform.\(^{462}\) Leaders in Communist Party – the Marxist-Leninists (AKP-ml) meant there were too many petit-bourgeois deviations and too many middle-class women in the Women’s Front. Over the next couple of years, a more socialist profile was developed, and issues more easily framed as class-issues were emphasized.\(^{463}\) For the abortion struggle, this shift of strategy was probably of less significance within the Women’s Front, since the abortion issue encompassed both class and women. However, the shift complicated cooperation with the other women’s organizations since they were dismissed as enemies to the class struggle and it led to a split of the Women’s Front in the second part of 1975.\(^{464}\) The out breakers would form Brød og Røser. The distrust between the Women’s Front and the other women’s organizations is illustrated by the organizing of Women’s Day celebrations.\(^{465}\)

From 1976 to 1982 two separate marches took place in most Norwegian cities.

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\(^{459}\) Arbeiderbladet December 12, 1974

\(^{460}\) Rusten, Holm Kreativitet og Feministaktivisme 80

\(^{461}\) February 2, 1975

\(^{462}\) Rønning, Ole Martin. Kvinnekamp, Imperialisme og Monopolkapital: Kvinnefronten og Ml-bevegelsen 1972-1982 208-209

\(^{463}\) Rønning, Ole Martin. Kvinnekamp, Imperialisme og Monopolkapital: Kvinnefronten og Ml-bevegelsen 1972-1982 212-2143

\(^{464}\) Lønnå Stolthet og kvinnekamp 240-241

After the Abortion meeting in February, the women of SV were in a difficult situation and were accused of treason. For Torild Skard, there was only one thing to do to solve the situation. Start negotiating with her party colleague Otto Hauglin. How far was he willing to go without renouncing his principles and integrity? Skard and Hauglin had been friends for a long time and now they sat on each side of the table. Skard and the other SV MPs were also depended on AP. There was discussion on the formulations but in the end Otto Hauglin could accept a compromise law. In a short time, a new law with an open-ended formulation of social indication would be submitted to the Storting. There was also a change of procedure. Women were now allowed to apply directly to the panel of doctors and they could appeal the decision. How did the movements react?

FAMSA was in a tough situation. The mobilizations in summer and fall 1974 were costly. Their expenditures exceeded 300.000 NOK and the deficit counted 70.000 NOK by January 1975. The board discussed the strategy for further activity. One goal was to oppose the scientific activity of the opposing movement and build an expertise on abortion-related issues within the organization. A convention with professional speakers was planned for the spring. A second goal was to closely observe the processing of the new law. In February they sent a hearing response in which the compromise law was rejected. FAMSA claimed the law removed the protection of life for the foetus and the indications were too diffuse to align the unequal treatment of abortion applications throughout the country. Social indications were comparable to free abortion. This means that FAMSA adjusted their framing to be more restrictive than in the 1974 campaign. The hearing response also noted that some members of FAMSA demanded such restrictive changes in the proposed law. The Bishops, on the other side, were unanimous in rejecting the new law, calling it a life hostile development.

The Women’s movement was divided in their response. NKF supported the new law, saying it gives women a slightly stronger position in applying for abortion. The abortion group of the New Feminists was more critical saying the law proposal was not in accordance with the intentions of the government to solve the problem with unequal practice. The Women’s Front

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466 Skard Hverdag på løvebakken 231
467 Arbeiderbladet January 8, 1975
468 Nationen February 2, 1975
469 Vårt Land February 27, 1975
470 Arbeiderbladet February 28
distanced itself from the law entirely and demanded the submission to be retreated. Only self-determined abortion would suffice.\textsuperscript{471} A compromise law would only prolong the inhuman treatment of women standing before the panels of doctors. This disagreement on strategy was tiring on the cooperation spirit in the Women’s Action.

After the formal activism of writing to the MPs was done, a group of women’s activists decided to engage in more direct action.\textsuperscript{472} On April 25, they entered the Storting as part of a guided tour before occupying a section of the Central Hall.\textsuperscript{473} They made a human chain while showing banners brought in concealed under their jackets and sang militant songs about the abortion law. The activists had registered for the tour with the name “Kristine Holms Study Group for State Administration”.\textsuperscript{474} The police were alarmed and the activists were carried out of Parliament one by one. After 45 minutes, the sit-on was over. After the protest they had changed the name to “Association of Fertile Women in Norway”.\textsuperscript{475} A demonstration was held on May 15, but a modest audience of only a couple of hundreds had mobilized to hear Irmelin Wister’s speech, where she demanded self-determined abortion instead of a rotten compromise.\textsuperscript{476} The Women’s Front felt both AP and SV had failed to support the women in their most important struggle. Otto Hauglin was ridiculed in the magazines. \textsuperscript{477}

FAMSA mobilized too. At the convention in early May, the resistance against the new law was confirmed and they had adopted the demand for a conscience clause for health workers.\textsuperscript{478} On May 22, a demonstration was held on the Stortorvet square.\textsuperscript{479} Speeches were held by Elise Klouman, Bishop Per Lønning and Editor Arthur Berg. 1500 people had turned up. Arthur Berg admitted defeat in his speech, but said they would return in 1977. Klouman said the Storting from now offered abortion as a solution to social problems, while Lønning repeated his warning against the devaluation of human life. The crowd then marched past Parliament and they were greeted by KrF MP Kåre Kristiansen.\textsuperscript{480}

\textsuperscript{471} Arbeiderbladet April 19, 1975
\textsuperscript{472} Arbeiderbladet April 26, 1975
\textsuperscript{473} The protesters originated from the New Feminists and anarchist groups. Haukaa Bak slagordene 101
\textsuperscript{474} Rogg Korsvik Porno er teori, Voldtekt er praksis: Kvinnekamp mot voldtekt og pornografi 119
\textsuperscript{475} Arbeiderbladet April 26, 1975
\textsuperscript{476} Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 346
\textsuperscript{477} Kvinnefront 1/1977
\textsuperscript{478} Vårt Land May 12, 1975
\textsuperscript{479} Vårt Land May 23, 1975
\textsuperscript{480} Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 348
On May 21, NPV discussed if they were to support the demonstrations, and they decide to let all members make up their own opinion. They decided to send a letter to Otto Hauglin with a short question. “Do you dare? Greetings NPV” He dared and inside the Storting on May 22 a compromise law was passed, allowing abortions on diffuse social indications. His daring act would unleash a different type of conflict.

Women or Nazis?

Thor Bjarne Bore was the new editor of Vårt Land and he encouraged readers to resist the new law in an editorial. He hoped the debate could be about restoring moral attitudes in the Norwegian population. In his analysis, education on sexuality and contraceptives would only worsen the immorality among the young. Together with changing attitudes, Bore asked for new social policies to help women in a difficult situation. These debates would be secondary in the upcoming period. One week later, the law was passed in the upper house and Per Lønning had travelled from Østfold to attend the debate. After a long debate where KrF tried to resist the bill, a vote was held and the social indications were now included in the abortion law. Lønning left the galleries and approached the waiting journalists in the Central Hall. This marks the beginning of a new type of activism in the abortion struggle: the cleric strike.

Priests had been State civil servants since the Norwegian Constitution was signed in 1814. During the Occupation by Nazi Germany, Norwegian priests had organized a nationwide protest. Priesthood had a duality to it. Since the Church was part of the State, they could boycott their civil duty, but keep performing their spiritual duties. This was inspired by the German Bishop Otto Dibelius who had been suspended from his office by Nazi officials in 1933. Dibelius renounced his administrative duties, but would continue to perform his spiritual leadership in the form of preaching and pastoral care. Dibelius argued that since these duties were assigned to him by the Church, they could only be revoked by the Church and not the state. During the war years, Norwegian bishops and priests used the same strategy and with financial aid from helpful associates, they were successful in resisting “nazification”

481 Norsk Pro Vita, Norsk Pro Vita 1974-1976 May 21, 1975 (Board meeting minutes)
482 Vårt Land June 6, 1975
of Norwegian Christian life. When Norway was liberated in May 1945, the Church held a high moral status after a successful civil struggle against the occupant.

Per Lønning saw State-sanctioned social indications as a rupture with Christian values. Passing of the new law would therefore be problematic for the relation between State and Church. Lønning and his diocese colleague Kaare Støylen had raised the issue publicly in Vårt Land earlier in May.485 When the law was passed on Per Lønning told the television reporters that he would step down as a civil-serving State bishop. The next couple of weeks, most of the abortion debate would be framed on the relation between State and Church. Lønning explained that the Norwegian State had renounced its God-given task to protect life.486 He admitted that the situation would not allow a hastened schism between the Norwegian State and the Church of Norway. He also denied that his renouncing of his office was an encouragement for other bishops and priests to follow in his footsteps. He was instead convinced that his action would have the greatest effect if he walked alone. Some Congregations did, however, began talking about initiating a new Church leadership independent of the State.487

Lønning’s resignation caused great controversy. Torhild Skard watched the spectacle on television and was furious.488 She said all media attention given to the debate in the upper house was directed at Lønning’s protest and all the women who commented the abortion law itself were ignored. Elise Klouman from FAMSA was also disappointed by Lønning’s behaviour, saying it derailed the abortion debate.489 Journalist Jostein Nyhamar accused Lønning of narcissism and claimed the centre of the universe for Lønning was Per Lønning himself.490

There was a backlash in the population after the new law. An opinion poll showed that opposition against self-determined abortion was rising.491 The majority for self-determined abortion had changed to a majority against it. FAMSA Chairman Hans Olav Tungesvik found

485 Vårt Land May 20, 1975
486 Arbeiderbladet May 30, 1975
487 Arbeiderbladet June 3, 1975
488 Skard Hverdag på Lovebakken 235
489 Telephone call with Elise Klouman May 4, 2018
490 Arbeiderbladet August 2, 1975
491 Aftenposten June 7, 1975.
the opinion poll interesting and pleasant and would hold an immediate meeting to discuss how the numbers could be used in the struggle against the new abortion law. 492

On July 1, readers of Arbeiderbladet learned that the Women’s Action was dissolved. The disagreement and conflict on further strategy were unsolvable.493 NK and NKF criticised the Women’s Front for raising unrealistic demands in the current parliamentary situation and said the compromise law was a step in the right direction. The two organizations said the next move was to win the upcoming election. Gro Hansen from the Women’s Front later explained their views in an op-ed.494 Acceptance of the new law would possibly mean a delay of 10-15 years and the disagreement within KA had slowed the struggle for self-determined abortion. Hansen said the defeat now had led the struggle into a new phase, where information about the effects of the new law would be gathered and published.

Conclusion:
The two proceedings of the abortion issue in October 1974 and in May 1975 deeply influenced the two social movements. The defeat by one vote in 1974 was a large setback for the women’s movement and it led to mistrust to the political parties on the left. There was disagreement within the women’s movement on future strategy. Accept the new law or reject it altogether. This irreconcilable debate made cooperation in KA difficult and led to its dissolution. The feeling of bitterness and despair is paralleled with other conflicts within the women’s movement in the mid-1970.495 FAMSA was unified in their resistance to social indications, but an internal debate on what kind of law the organization really wanted was lurking. The protest repertoires of the movements were stable and creative at the same time. They both had to lobby MPs in different ways. Otto Hauglin was set under heavy pressure from both movements. The picketing action in Trondheim and the sit-in in Parliament show that the Women’s movement were creative in their activism. FAMSA, on the other hand, copied the use of rally and demonstrations and mobilized greatly on May 22. The emergence of NPV enforced the demand of many health workers not to participate in abortions. The resignation of Bishop Lønning introduced a new type of activism in the abortion struggle and

492 Vårt Land June 6, 1975
493 Arbeiderbladet July 1, 1975
494 Arbeiderbladet July 5, 1975
495 Korsvik Kvinnekamp! 98
he single-handedly reframed the 1975 law to be about State and Church and thus draw attention away from the previous framing of the abortion debate.

The abortion issue by 1975 was unfit for compromise. Only self-determined abortion would be a just law for the women’s movement and FAMSA equalled social indications to free, or self-determined abortion. Otto Hauglin could have become the hero, but instead ended up as the villain in Per Lønning’s story of cultural and moral decay.
5 From compromise law to victory and defeat 1975-1979

“It’s time to confront the feminists!” Anne Enger, April 26, 1978

As highlighted in chapter 4, neither the women’s movement nor the abortion opponents applauded the revised abortion law of 1975. The Women’s Front claimed the bill did nothing but to continue the demeaning treatment of abortion seeking women, who would stand in front of the panel of doctors. This chapter examines activism in the two movements from the passing of a compromise law in 1975 through the election campaign in 1977, the debate in the Storting in spring 1978 until self-determined abortion was implemented on January 1 1979.

Old and new voices

In August 1975, Hans Olav Tungesvik moved to Vadsø in Finmark in Northern Norway to pursue his career as a psychiatric physician. Otto Christian Rø had been asked to replace Tungesvik and become the new Chairman of FAMSA. He was only 29 at this point and much younger than the previous members of the board. He had no formal political experience, but had been engaged with medical-ethical issues during medical school and had undertaken research on health services research. He also had written op-eds in national newspapers on the abortion issue. Rø was elected in mid-June and expressed his disappointment with the new law saying it had pulverised the legal protection of the foetus. He was however optimistic on the possibilities of reversing the law since opinion polls were in the favour FAMSA, KA was dissolved and leading Labour politicians saw the abortion issue as a liability for the party.

FAMSA was reorganized and refinanced in the summer. Rø was assisted by an executive group consisting of Trine Tornæs, Inger Takle and general secretary Bjarne Stoveland. The

496 Folkaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort Innkalling til styremøte April 26 1978
497 Interview with Otto Christian Rø. Oct. 11. 2017
498 Vårt Land 18, 9. 1973
499 Aftenposten June 23, 1975
500 Folkaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort “...ufødt liv har òg en mening” 10
debt of over 300,000 NOK was paid with aid from private donations.\textsuperscript{501} There was also a shift of strategy. Rø identified three core tasks as FAMSA Chairman. Firstly, keep the organization updated on the national debate on the abortion issue. Secondly, to arrange meetings, hold presentations and take part in media debates. Finally, FAMSA ought to influence policy and law making.\textsuperscript{502} Rø was interviewed by the newspaper Vårt Land prior to the FAMSA national board meeting in December and proclaimed a continuation of their activism on a wide range of topics. \textsuperscript{503} He warned against an out gliding of abortion attitudes and criticized the new abortion bill for functioning as a free-abortion law. \textsuperscript{504} He challenged all political parties to do more to help pregnant women in tough living conditions who wanted to carry forth their child. FAMSA was also working on an “orientation brochure” for pregnant women and they also hoped to develop a more ethical consciousness among youth by changing the sex education in schools and Confirmation instruction.

FAMSA had a delicate challenge. One of the members of the national board was fighting a personal abortion struggle. Per Lønning had transformed the abortion debate to be about the relationship between State and Church. Later in 1975, Lønning even published a book, \textit{Therefore}, with an extended explanation for his resignation from office.\textsuperscript{505} The book consisted of documentation from the abortion debate, including a letter to his episcopal colleagues, a letter to the King and a letter to the Ministry of Church and Education. At some point, however, Lønning did engage in a serious debate on how a just abortion law would look like.\textsuperscript{506} He suggested doing away with the panels of doctors. Instead of an application process, the parents would sign a declaration saying that they have contrasted the right to life of the foetus against the conditions the parents see as arguments for having an abortion. This declaration would be signed by a doctor and relevant counselling would be given to the couple. Long-term supporter of self-determined abortion, Berthold Grünfeld, surprisingly supported Lønning’s view. Grünfeld’s only remark was that the woman must have a

\textsuperscript{501} Aftenposten June 23, 1973
\textsuperscript{502} Interview with Otto Christian Rø. Oct. 11. 2017
\textsuperscript{503} Vårt Land 9.12 1975
\textsuperscript{504} Vårt Land 9.12 1975
\textsuperscript{505} Vårt Land 9.12 1975
\textsuperscript{506} Lønning, Per Derfor: Dokumentasjoner omkring abortdebatten og en embetsnedleggelse Oslo: Gyldendal, 1975.
\textsuperscript{508} Vår Land August 26, 1975
guarantee of getting the abortion after the signing of the document. Lønning’s actions illustrate that movements seldom are controlled by one organization or leader. 507

Ever since the parliamentary ruling in May, a great many health service workers have announced that they would make reservations against their involvement in abortion. Otto Christian Rø expressed hope that this stance would spread within the population. Anti-abortion forces within the health system organized a resistance to halt abortion services as effectively as possible. Vårt Land reported in January that 750 health workers had signed a declaration not to take part in abortions and some areas of Norway would become “abortion free” 508

The widespread reservation was criticized by the Women’s movement. The Norwegian Association for Women's Rights was disappointed in the health workers and said they showed a lack of solidarity with women in a difficult situation. 509 The women would have to travel long distances to obtain abortions they are entitled to according to the law. 510 NKF also demanded that some of the passionate efforts to stop the new abortion bill instead should be canalized to provide for contraception services. The New Feminists said the principle of reservation was violating women’s rights and they would fight actively for a new law on self-determined abortion with no such conscience clause. 511

The monthly Sirene was founded in 1973 and the founding mothers had mostly been part of the New Feminists, the Women’s Front or other feminist organizations. 512 Author and founder Bjørg Vik had the idea of a new and different women’s magazine. 513 From the first trial numbers, they took an active stance in the struggle for self-determined abortion. Before the 1973 election, they tried to persuade Otto Hauglin to change his mind and vote in line with his party. 514 Sirene entered the reservation debate by printing the names of over nearly 300 doctors who would not take part in abortion procedures. 515. The list was made to help

507 Tarrow Power in movement 12
508 Vårt Land 19.12 1975
509 Arbeiderbladet 14.1. 1976
510 Arbeiderbladet 14.1. 1976
511 Arbeiderbladet 14.1. 1976
513 Lindtner, Synnøve Over disk som varmt hvetebrød in Hilde Danielsen Da det personlige ble politisk: 124
514 Sirene 2/1073
515 Sirene 2/1976
abortion-seeking women in avoiding any doctors with reservations and simplify their application process. It was an attachment to an interview with Aud Blegen Svindland who informed readers on how to proceed with an abortion request. The magazine also encouraged readers to report on helpful doctors.

In 1976, abortion–seeking women had easier access to abortion services than before. Help and guidance with contraceptives and abortion applications could be found in many cities. Women in the capital could visit the clinics in Arbeidersamfunnets Plass, Herslebs gate or find counselling by physicians in Christies gate and Arendals gate. Sirene printed a list of “safe” clinics in Drammen, Bærum, Tønsberg, Trondheim, Stathelle, Bergen, Askim and Namsos. Physicians and gynaecologists at this addresses helped women with the abortion application and filed it to a panel of doctors, who they knew was inclined to accept it. This meant that self-determined abortion, in many places, was a practical reality, if not yet by law.  

In 1976, FAMSA was confronted by a new threat. The morning after pill was successfully tested in Oslo in spring 1976. Tungenesvik feared for the consequences and said the technology would further the privatisation of the abortion problem. Otto Christian Rø feared it would be difficult to maintain a strict division between abortion and contraception.

**Bread and Roses**

Another women’s organization entered the public arena in spring 1976. Brød og Roser (Bread and Roses) was the result from a split within the Women’s Front. Inspired by the New Feminists, B&R held a flat organizational structure, but as opposed to the New Feminists wanted to influence the larger public instead of just raising political consciousness among other women. During the reservation debate, B&R sent a letter to Minister of Health Torbjørn Mork questioning why there was no investigation into the health workers’ reasons,

516 Sirene 2/1976 39  
517 Interview with Astor Reigstad April 8, 2017  
518 The morning after pill was first named abortion pill in Norwegian. Today it is commonly referred to as the “regret pill” in Norwegian language Dagbladet April 7, 1976  
519 VG April 8, 1976  
520 Sirene 3/1977 17
while conscience objectors underwent long interrogations when rejecting mandatory military service. 521 This was the first mention of the organization in national media. They cooperated with the abortion group of the New Feminists, Lesbian Movement, Anarchist Women’s Group and NKF.

B&R wanted to reignite the abortion struggle after the disappointing compromise law. 522. They had a clear strategy of hosting large public meetings with considerable media presence to put self-determined abortion back on the political agenda. The first meeting was an abortion hearing on May 25. Three anonymous women shared their personal experiences from applying for abortions followed by speeches by physician Berthold Grünfeld, physician Aud Blegen Svindland, lawyer Torstein Eckhoff, Else Michelet, Chairman of AUF Sissel Rønbeck, medical student Gunvor Haarveit, social worker Kirsten Rytter and MP from the Conservative Party Lars Platou. Different arguments against the 1975 law were raised. The abortion opponents were given attention by Gunvor Haartvedt who criticised the law from a Christian perspective, claiming that human dignity is linked to responsibility.523 Since the law denied women the right to be responsible for her actions, it was unchristian in its nature. Else Michelet’s satirical speech, titled “Who are the immoral ones?” circles around the consequences of the anti-abortion speech.524 An audience of 800 people was given arguments and documentation for the view that the only just law would include self-determination for the pregnant women. 525 Brød og Roser hosted an “abortion week” in the same week as the abortion hearing. From March 1976 until election in 1977, the members of Brød og Roser spent much of their spare time to plan, organize and execute abortion-related activities beside parties and dugnad. 526

In October, a new meeting is held. This time the opponents are invited. Both FAMSA leaders Hans Olav Tungesvik and Otto Christian Rø were in the panel. They debated journalist and NKF-member Else Michelet and Labour-MP Trygve Bratteli. The perspective in the debate was abortion and morals. Tungesvik claimed the abortion issue was fought around different

521 Arbeiderbladet 18.5.1976
522 Brød og Roser, information brochure 1977 p.5 archive box??
523 Brød og Roser Hvem er de umoralske: Om den nye abortloven 38-40
524 Brød og Roser Hvem er de umoralske: Om den nye abortloven 25-24
525 Brød og Roser, information brochure 1977 p.5
526 Brø
morals. The Christian morale system entails the protection of the foetus. Rø pointed out that taking lives to solve social problems is unjustifiable. Else Michelet wanted a shift in perspective. Abortions would not be eliminated by an abortion ban, but the women would be forced away from a safe medical space to a more insecure situation. She also commented her opponents. Michelet said one should treat the anti-abortionists as honest opponents, but said it was sometimes hard since she so often felt misunderstood and the opponents doubted her motivations. This would be one of very few face-to-face interactions between FAMSA-leader Rø and the Women’s movement. Late that month, the Association of Christian Workers saw the need for a new abortion hearing. This time, there were no anonymous witnesses, but five speakers including abortion opponents Anna Louise Beer and Gunnar Stålsett.

AAN – Not just politics and morals

“One cannot argue against social work”. These are the words of Torleiv Rognum. He graduated medical school in 1974 and he had earlier been influenced on the abortion issue by charismatic professor of gynaecology, Wichard von Massenbach. He became a member of NPV and had participated in demonstrations, but felt that protesting was not enough in his struggle. Rognum had met abortion-seeking women at a hospital in Oslo. One of his patients said she actually wanted to keep the baby, but she had no place to live and that settled the situation. Rognum tried to help the situation. He contacted the City Council and asked them to provide housing for the woman in order to save the baby. There was no alternative to abortion. Rognum first raised this issue on the annual meeting of NPV on November 21, 1975 and his idea of establishing a counselling office was noted as “an important idea” in the board minutes. This would be a broadening of the statues of NPV and maybe blur the aim of organization and thus maybe weaken it. One year later, Rognum held a speech on the annual meeting of NPV with the title “A new tool in the abortion struggle”:

“The supoorters for abortion engages in an extensive information campaign and have a practical aid in their struggle, the Union of Socialist Physicians’ Clinic for Sexual Enlightenment. 100 percent of their abortion applications accepted and they are also doing contraceptive education. We still do not have an organized helping apparatus to meet afflicted women. We are easily stricken by the following critique: «You have a clear stand point, but what do you do [to help out]?»”

527 Arbeiderbladet October 15, 1976
528 Arbeiderbladet October 26, 1976
529 Telephone call with Torleiv Rognum. March 22, 2018
530 Aalen, Oftestad, Rognum Det var ikke planlagt 9-10
For physician Erik Halfdan Grangård, the speech was a relief and a way out of an inner conflict and role mixing. Rognum cooperated with Otto Christian Rø of FAMSA, Secretary of the Inner Mission in Oslo Aage Müller-Nilssen and other representatives from Church organizations to discuss the matter. Rø said different members of FAMSA had too diverging abortion views to engage too much in the project. The Church organizations were also hesitant because of the uncompromising formulations in the Lejeune-Declaration. In order to cooperate and be less uncompromising on the abortion issue, NPV had to reformulate its mission statement. In March 1977, a seminar was held to recruit personnel to a counselling office. An executive board of 10-11 activist physicians would engage in raising money and do the practical work in establishing an office. Later in 19977 a name for the new organization was chosen: Alternativ til abort i Norge. This was chosen since it explained the purpose of the office, but also since it would appear first in the telephone catalogue. In June 1978, the first women were welcomed to the counselling office in Torshov. After 9 years, almost 3000 clients had consulted the office.

**Bad conscience for complicity or abortion activism?**

The new liberalized law would take effect on January 1. 1976 and NPV mobilized. In a brochure, sent out to 11.000 health workers, including all nurses in the Norwegian Nurses Organisation, assisting in abortions was compared to committing murder. In the brochure NPV encouraged Christian health workers to reject participation in abortion and in this way stop the new law from functioning. The reserving health workers were supported by Hans Olav Tungesvik. He saw parallels between reserving health workers and recent Nobel Peace Prize laureate Andrej Sakharov for standing up for civil rights, freedom of speech and freedom of conscience. Health Director Torbjørn Mørk disliked the attempt to sabotage the abortion law from within. Before Christmas 1975, 750 health workers had reserved against participating in abortions. The cities Tynset, Rana, Florø and large parts of the counties

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531 Aalen, Oftestad, Rognum *Det var ikke planlagt* 11
532 Aalen, Oftestad, Rognum *Det var ikke planlagt* 13
533 Telephone call with Torleiv Rognum. March 22. 2018
534 Aalen, Oftestad, Rognum *Det var ikke planlagt* 18
535 Aalen, Oftestad, Rognum *Det var ikke planlagt* 95
536 Arbeiderbladet September 26, 1975
537 Vårt Land December 6, 1975
538 Dagbladet December 12, 1975
539 Vårt Land December 19, 1975

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Hordaland and Stavanger would be “abortion free”.\textsuperscript{540} Nine hospitals would reject abortion-seeking women. The Women’s Front later estimated that 44,000 women were affected by the reservation right.\textsuperscript{541} The hospital in Rana would operate with an independent abortion law and only accept abortions on medical indications. Otto Christian Rø interpreted the medical activism as a sign of rejection of the new law by the Norwegian people and asked if the debate now no longer was about the formulation of the law, but about what kind of law is possible to practice.\textsuperscript{542}

The opposing movement reacted. Author and later member of SV, Marit Landsem Berntsen wrote a Christmas letter to Per Lønning and the reserving health workers and criticized them for letting women in a difficult situation down.\textsuperscript{543} NKF and the New Feminists expressed disappointment in a press release, saying the activism of the reserving health personal worsened the demeaning treatment of abortion-seeking women.\textsuperscript{544} There was little solidarity in forcing these women to travel longer to get an abortion they were legally entitled to. The New Feminists would for these reasons not allow a conscience clause in a new law on self-determined abortion. The critique of the women’s organisations was supported by media artillery. Both Dagbladet and Sirene printed lists of all reserving health workers. SLF demanded that the government paid for the travel expenses of the abortion-seeking women.\textsuperscript{545}

Bishop Axel Johnson raised another debate in winter 1976. He wanted a popular movement against the sexual moral in the country and wanted to revive the terms “adultery” and “fornication”.\textsuperscript{546} He suggested a salary for pregnant women to prevent them from having an abortion. Mistrust among women and the women’s movement towards the Church was growing in this period. Journalist Kari Lindbrække was part of a women’s action for opting out of the State Church. She said Johnson was out of touch with reality and held an outdated view on women, in which they were mere birth machines. Another man of the Church entered the spotlight in August. Priest Børre Knudsen in Balsfjord in Northern Norway was criticised for including the unborn in his evening prayer.\textsuperscript{547}

\textsuperscript{540} Dagbladet December 18, 1975
\textsuperscript{541} Kvinnefronten Abort: Et debatthefte fra Kvinnefronten Undated
\textsuperscript{542} Morgenbladet December 20, 1975
\textsuperscript{543} Friheten December, 31, 1975
\textsuperscript{544} Arbeiderbladet January 1, 1976
\textsuperscript{545} Ny Tid April 2, 1976
\textsuperscript{546} Dagbladet March 12, 1976
\textsuperscript{547} Vårt Land August 18, 1976
To summarize, debates on abortion and related issues like sexuality were seen as a threat to the hegemonic authority of the health professions, especially of the doctors and a threat to the moral authority of the Church. 548

**Election in 1977 – Another abortion-election**

According to Ellen Aanesen, the forces for self-determined abortion within the socialist parties were strengthened before the national conventions in 1977. 549 Self-determined abortion was kept in the programs of AP and SV and remained a central issue in the upcoming campaign.

In March 1977, FAMSA held a seminar to discuss how a new abortion law could be formulated. Otto Christian Rø was pessimistic on behalf of his movement and called the situation a crisis for abortion opposition. 550 After the resignation of bishop Per Lønning, the movement was, according to Rø, no longer a strong united force and especially the church needed to preach more clearly that abortion meant taking life and this was against God’s word. The feminist magazine Sirene reached out to Rø in the winter of 1977 and asked for an interview. 551 Was it possible to agree on anything in the heated debate? Rø had express fears that Norwegian women would stop getting children and prioritize personal material welfare instead. Sirene thought Rø underestimated women, but acknowledged that Rø was against an abortion law that nobody would respect. Rø also acknowledged that men had caused great injustices to women through the ages and he could therefore understand why self-determined abortion had become a central part of women’s liberation. He then warned that since women have a strong mother instinct, they would, if they kept fighting for the right to abort, discover in 10-20 years that they had lost something central about their humanity. Sirene responded that women want more than just be mothers. When Rø claimed the right to life was the most central of all rights, Sirene gives up and concluded that the world views are too different. Rø then warned against another consequence, arguing that the road from self-determined abortion to forced abortions was a short one, using eugenic abortions as an example. Sirene concluded yet again that opposition to abortion was hard to comprehend. The Women’s Front

548 Lønnå Stolthet og kvinnekamp 245
549 Aanesen Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor 352
550 Vårt Land March 18, 1977
551 Sirene 3/1977
did not like the interview, calling it collaboration with the enemy. The Women’s Front was also building bridges in this period as the struggle against porn began in 1977 and 1978. This brought opponents from the abortion debate together. Women’s organizations opposing self-determined joined the Women’s Front in this struggle. The invitation to a founding meeting for a Women’s Action against pornography was initiated by Ambjørg Sælthun, MP for the Centre Party, and, member of the consulting board of FAMSA. This cooperation may have helped the abortion struggle in the longer run.

On Women’s Day in 1978 a total of 20,000 participated in the marches across Norway, many of them under banners for self-determined abortion. In 1975, a new initiative across party boundaries had been launched to increase women’s representation in the political system and improve the economic status of women. The Feminist Action did not include the abortion issue in the early phase, but in spring 1977, the action led by New Feminist, gynaecologist and helper at the Clinic for Sexual Enlightenment, Magnhild Gaasemyr, handed a private law proposal to the President of the Storting. It included self-determined abortion in the first 12 weeks of the pregnancy and until 18 weeks on medical, eugenic or social indication. In June, a new action was launched to win the struggle for self-determined abortion. Brød og Roser, NF Oslo, NKF Oslo and Lesbian Movement formed “Action for self-determined abortion now! ”(AFSAN). Their first aim was to distribute information about the stand point of local representatives in the abortion issue. It is likely that the fear of another Hauglin-crisis was the reason. Physician Aud Blegen Svindland was now leading the Women’s Secretariat of the Labour Party. She said it was up to the women now to win the struggle. A vote for one of the socialist parties was the only safe vote to achieve that goal.

FAMSA mobilized again in the election campaign. A flyer with the the positions of the different political parties were distributed to all households. Berthold Grünfeld criticised the flyer for misleading voters to believe in a correlation between increasing abortion numbers and falling birth rates. Rø responded that there was an obvious correlation, just as contraception and family planning influenced the number of births. Rø said that FAMSA

552 See Rogg Korsvik Porno er teori, Voldtett er praksis: Kvinnekamp mot voldtett og pornografi 427
554 Arbeiderbladet June 9, 1976
555 Arbeiderbladet September 6, 1977
556 Arbeiderbladet September 9, 1977
had decided from the beginning not to engage in these factors. Vårt Land encouraged its readers to vote for the non-socialist parties.\(^{557}\) The positions in the abortion debate were at this point quite predictable, and after the interview in Sirene, there was little contact between the movements. It was “us” against “them”.

While the socialist parties were unanimous on the abortion issue, the stances among the non-socialist parties were not unambiguous. This was pointed out by Astor Reigstad a month before the election.\(^ {558}\) The Centre party and the Conservative Party wanted to reverse the legislation to the 1960 law.\(^ {559}\) The Liberal Party wanted to observe the effects of the law, while FrP would let their MPs decide for themselves. KrF and Kjell Magne Bondevik had the most restrictive view and would only allow abortions on medical indications and possibly in the case of rape.

**Left majority means self-determined abortion**

The opinion polls showed a close race between the two political blocks during the election campaign. Three days before Election Day, the polls showed a clear majority for Conservative Prime Minster candidate Lars Korvald and a coalition of non-socialistic parties.\(^ {560}\) The first results showed that SV was almost eradicated from the Storting, possibly with only one MP. AP, on the other side, had done much better than the polls had showed. In the next couple of days, a scandal was revealed.\(^ {561}\) 50 votes had been forgotten when counting the votes in the county Nordland. This meant that Hanna Kvanmo of SV would take a mandate on behalf of the Conservative Party and secure a socialist majority. After several days of fine counting, the result was ready. 78 MPs from the socialist parties held a majority by one. The abortion election had a winner and a loser.

\(^{557}\) Vårt Land September 8, 1977  
\(^{558}\) Dagbladet August 3, 1977  
\(^{559}\) Vårt land August 31, 1977  
\(^{560}\) Dagbladet September 8, 1977  
\(^{561}\) Aftenposten September 15, 1977
FAMSA was reorganized again in September 1977. A new board would be assisted by a consultative council, among them Bishop Per Lønning. After the election, the Church mobilized again. 310 congregations choose to donate to FAMSA. 65 of those donations were money raised in offertory. When asked by Arbeiderbladet, Otto Christian Rø said the Church was an alliance partner in the struggle against self-determined abortion and is an important educator for the young. He said it was necessary for the Church to oppose the one-sided abortion propaganda from the rest of the society and mentioned physicians as the source of this propaganda. Minster of Social Affairs, Ruth Ryste said society as a whole was responsible for the education of the young, not only the Church. The raising of money was, despite the criticism, a great success. By April, a daily average of 2000 NOK was transferred to FAMSA’s bank account.

A teacher and NPV-member in Åndalsnes had showed an abortion film for his students, showing graphic images of curettage and an aborted foetus. Labour MP Sissel Rønbeck later showed the film to the other representatives in the Standing Committee of Social Affairs, demanding a prohibition against showing it to school children. KrF MP Odd With admitted that the imagery was not of the soft type. It had considerably less viewers than Ellen Aanesen’s TV program Women’s meeting with the panel of doctors, broadcasted in February. The stories were not new. Abortion-seeking women saw the panel of doctors as a tribunal where their destiny was handed over to strangers. They experienced intimidating questions just as they had before the new law. A last rally was held on April 18. Brød og Roser, the Women’s Front, Lesbian Movement, the New Feminists and NKF Oslo had cooperated on the event, but the mobilization was limited.

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562 The board consisted of Otto Christian Rø, Hilmari Wiksaas, Geir Lahnstein, Åge Haavik, Marthe Nerdrum, Gunnar T. Johannessena and Per Arne Norum Folkeaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort Ufødt liv har øg en mening 10
563 The council consisted of Arthur Berg, Einar Bore, Arne Grimstad, Elise Klouman, Thorvald Kolshus, Per Lønning, Edvard Nordrum, Ola Didrik Saugstad, Ambjørg Sælthun, Hans Olav Tungesvik and Kolbjørn Øygard Folkeaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort “...ufødt liv har øg en mening” 11
564 Fædrelandsvennen May 3, 1978
565 Vårt Land December 8 1977,
566 Folkeaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort Referat fra styremøte April 19 1977
567 Dagbladet January 27, 1978
568 VG February 11, 1978
569 Dagbladet February 14, 1978
570 Aftenposten April 19, 1978

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Otto Christian Rø intensified his writing in March. Maybe he hoped to recreate some of the energy from 1974. He wrote letters and several op-eds in an attempt to wake the antiabortion opinion. In one sentence in a letter to Minister Ryste, Rø saw abortion in connection with baby killings and mercy killings.\(^{571}\) Even the previous Chairman of FAMSA, Hans Olav Tungenvik, now MP for KrF, was reserved in his support, and said the comparison was “surprising”. There was no longer a broad alliance of opponents to self-determined abortion to mobilize. In April, Rø attacked the Labour Party for having lesser moral fibres than the opponents to abortion.\(^{572}\)

During the winter of 1978, a continuous debate on the “right of reservation” took place in the newspapers. Minister of Social affairs, Ruth Ryste and AP probably did not want to exert too much power over the reserving health workers. When the Standing Committee on Social Affairs submitted “Ot.prp nr.53” on abortion, a conscience clause or a “right of reservation” was included in the law. The Standing Committee was, as was the case in 1974, led by a KrF MP. Debates inside the Standing Committees are not recorded and made public. One can speculate that the Committee members of the non-socialist parties did all in their power to shape the law. When the law proposal was ready, the women’s organisations were furious. Jenny Mosland from NK said the right to reservation meant discrimination against women.\(^{573}\) Berit Jagmann from the Women’s Front encouraged the movement to mobilize again to remove the reservation right and the mandatory counselling. One day before the Storting debate and vote, the women’s organisations stated to VG that the new abortion law had been hollowed out.\(^{574}\) Especially §6 of the new law was seen as a possibility to deny women her right to abortion.

FAMSA hired a new secretary in April 1978. Anne Enger had finished her nursing degree and took on the job on April 10\(^{\text{th}}\) after a period at home with her three children in her house in Oslo.\(^{575}\) Her then-husband Geir Lahnstein was member of the board and he had asked her if she wanted to contribute. The organization provided her with a telephone and she could use an old mimeograph machine. On April 20, Enger’s first op-ed was printed in

\(^{571}\) Dagbladet March 15 1978  
\(^{572}\) Nationen April 3, 1978  
\(^{573}\) Klassekampen April 17, 1978  
\(^{574}\) VG May 29, 1978  
\(^{575}\) Lahnstein Gronn Dame, Rød Klut 57
Two days later the new secretary urged the organization to increase its activity. The Standing Committee on Social affairs would submit a law on self-determined abortion to the Storting, possibly on May 2nd. The strategy was to provide counter-documentation to stop the bill. In the meeting request, Lahnstein also asked for someone in the board to accompany her to an upcoming meeting of the Women’s Front, where Ellen Aanesen would hold a speech. They would confront the feminists!

FAMSA held a press conference in the beginning of May. They launched the counter-documentation called “*Unborn child has also a meaning*”. This booklet had similar themes to Klouman and Tungesvik’s *Welfare for the unborn* from 1974, even some of the same authors. Otto Christian Rø repeated his comparison between abortion and mercy killings and his criticism against the Labour Party. The party had great normative influence and it was regrettable that it was supporting self-determined abort. The new law represented, according to Rø, a cultural shift and a rupture with the legal right to life.

On May 30, Otto Christian Rø and Anne Enger Lahnstein personally brought copies of the booklet with counterarguments to self-determined abortion to the Chairman of the Standing Committee of Social Affairs Odd With and Spokesperson Astrid Murberg Martinsen. They then watched the debate from the diplomat standings. There was nothing more they could do to influence the outcome.

The debate was divided into two sessions before the vote. The previous teacher from Holmestrand Astrid Murberg Martinsen walked up and down the Chair of the Storting and repeatedly argued against all verbal attacks from the non-socialist parties. The double-vote of the President of the Storting was needed to win the vote.

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576 Arbeiderbladet April 20, 1978  
577 Folkeaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort *Innkalling til styremøte* April 26 1978  
578 Folkeaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort “...ufødt liv har og en mening”  
579 Arbeiderbladet May 3, 1978  
580 Lahnstein *Grønn Dame, Rød Klut* 56  
581 NRK *Abortdebatt i Stortinget*
The law was not ideal for anyone, but for the women’s organisations and the Labour Women it was a historical day. Arbeiderbladet wrote in an editorial that May 30, 1978 may be written in golden letters. Grete Irvoll was honoured for pushing the Labour Party to adopt self-determined abortion in 1969. Tove Mohr sat with her daughter Tove Pihl in the galleries during the debate and told journalist Eva Bratholm that it was a joy to experience the event. Labour MP Kristine Rusten, retail cashier and mother to five, gave a voice to all abortion-seeking women when she openly admitted having had an abortion in the tabloid Dagbladet one day after the debate. She was happy to no woman no longer needed to stand in front of the panel of doctors.

**Bishops, feminists and His Majesty the King: The pastoral letters**

The joy and relief of the passing of self-determined abortion was disturbed by the Church. The day after the debate, evangelical preacher Arild Edvardsen compared abortion to the holocaust. The Bishops were shocked by the introduction of self-determined abortion. They decided to protest openly against the law by formulating a pastoral letter. This brought the abortion struggle to the pulpit, since all priests across the country were ordered to read it aloud. This type of protest had been used in 1941 during German occupation to protest against the Nazi governments attempts to break the priests’ duty of confidentiality.

In Ullern Church in western Oslo, the pastoral letter would be read by bishop Andreas Aarflot. The feminists prepared a counter-attack. A group of activists from the Women’s House in Oslo, many of them from Lesbian movement, placed themselves in the galleries and would surprise the audience. They were unaware of the presence of the Royal Family and the Mayor of Oslo since the Church service was a celebration of the 75th anniversary of Ullern Church. The activists suddenly rolled out two banners with the text “Look at the hypocrisy.

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582 Arbeiderbladet May 31, 1978  
583 Arbeiderbladet May 30, 1978  
584 Arbeiderbladet May 31, 1978  
586 Dagbladet may 31, 1978  
588 Aanesen *Ikke send meg til en kone, doktor* 352.  
589 Arbeiderbladet June 5, 1978
of the Church!” and “No to the contempt of women by the Church!”.

Below the slogans, the feminists enquired about pastoral letters on torture, car accidents and nuclear weapons. Police officers, Royal Guards and members of the congregation apprehended the protesters, partially in violent ways and forced them out of the Church. They were severly fined, between 800 and 1000 NOK. The activists, however, were given legal and financial aid from sympathisers and a support group was created. A benefit concert was held in Club 7 to cover the fines. The trials were used as a political arena to address misogyny in the State Church.

The pastoral letters by the Bishops was condemned as misogyny and led to an even deeper split between the women’s movement and the Church. This type of activism, previously used against the German Occupant during the World War, and written by ten men, resonated badly with the women’s movement, but also with the larger population. Author Dag Skogheim was furius, saying the pastoral letters hit the weakest of girls. “Ordinary working girls have been suppressed in this cursed Christian-Class society through all of history”.

His book Hexhora from 1978 was seen as a literary intervention in the abortion debate. President of the Storting Guttorm Hansen called the letters an expression of intolerance, judgement and hunt for dissidents.

Hundred members of the Church signed a critical letter to the bishops. A spontaneous petition was organized by the Labour women, led by Aud Blegen Svindland.

After a couple days, 9242 signatures were given to Bishop Andreas Aarflot, who promised that in the future the Church, despite its democratic right to speak out, would be more careful in its political formulations. Contrary to these accusations, Hans Olav Tungevik interpreted the pastoral letters to be about comfort for women in a difficult situation.

There was activism from the Church even after Aarflot’s self-critique. When the abortion law entered force on January 1, 1970, Børre Knudsen attempted a protest, similar to Per Lønning. He laid down his office as State Civil servant but continued his duties as Church priest. This triggered a reaction from the Women’s Front. They wrote theses on a “papal bull”, nailed it to the front door of the Oslo Cathedral, before the roll was sent towards Balsfjord. A relay race of women brought the thesis to the protesting priest Børre Knudsen.

590 Klassekampen June 5, 1978
591 Ryste, Marte Aksjonen mot hyrdebrevet
592 Arbeiderbladet June 8, 1978
593 Arbeiderbladet June 10, 1978
594 ArbeiderbladetJune 21, 1978
595 ArbeiderbladetJuly 27, 1978
596 Kreativitet Og Feministaktivisme på 70- og 80-tallet i Trondheim.
597 Klassekampen June 11, 1979
Victory and defeat

The passing of self-determined abortion in spring 1978 was a great victory for the women’s movement. Over 60 years of struggle had come to an end. However, the antiabortion movement had succeeded in keeping the right to reservation in the law, and the §6 on the medical risks of abortion was still included. The formulations in §2 of the abortion law were almost identical to the mission statement of AAN.598 Eight hospitals would not offer abortion for women, due to the reservation clause. Comedians Harald Heide Steen jr. and Trond Viggo Torgersen response was to create a routine where Steen played the role as a consultant, allowing his health workers to reserve against all types of unpleasant treatments.599

FAMSA and Vårt Land announced a continuation of their struggle.600 Otto Christian Rø said the law would not get old.601 Vårt Land rejected to print an ad from the Health Directorate informing about the new law on self-determined abortion.602 When the bill passed, Ola Didrik Saugstad was doing an internship in Northern Norway. He was disappointed and wanted to continue his struggle. He was later asked by Børre Knudsen to join in his demonstrations. Since this meant protesting against gynaecological clinics, patients and colleagues in the health services, Saugstad knew he would risk his medical career. He chose to decline the offer and instead continued his work and research. He was later given awards for his work in paediatrics.603 When FAMSA held their national convention in October, strategy was on the agenda. Anne Enger convinced the board to change the name of the organisation to “Popular Action against Free abortion” since “self-determined” meant accepting the arguments of the opposition.604 Another strategy was to feminize the struggle since polls had shown that a majority of women were against self-determined abortion.605 Otto Christian Rø stepped down as FAMSA leader in the first half of 1979 and continued working with health services research dealing with elderly health.606 He later specialised in internal medicine and geriatric

598 Aalen, Oftestad, Rognum Det var ikke planlagt 105, Telephone call with Torleiv Rognum. March 22. 2018
599 Wesensteen Utvidet reservasjonsrett (accessed May 8, 2018)
600 Vårt Land May 30 1978
601 Vårt Land June 29, 1978
602 Vårt Land February 2, 1979
603 UiO Prisdryss til professor Ola Didrik Saugstad (Accessed April 28, 2018)
604 Enger Lahnstein Rod dame, grønn klut 56
605 Folkeaksjonen mot fri abort Notat om forslag om kvinnemobilsering October 1978
606 Interview with Otto Christian Rø October 11, 2017
medicine and lobbied to improve the status of geriatric research. Anne Enger replaced Otto Christian Rø and became the first Chairwoman of FAMSA in 1979. Her political work in FAMSA was noticed and she would later serve as Leader of the Centre Party, Minister of Culture and member of the Nobel peace prize. She says that she is regularly discredited for having participated in the abortion struggle. Rø and Saugstad said in the interviews that they had opportunities to enter high-politics. Saugstad has since regularly participated in debates on abortion and eugenics.

Conclusion:

After the compromise law, both movements were forced to evaluate its further strategy. For the Women’s Front and, from 1976, Brød og Roser, only self-determination would secure justice in the abortion issue. The News Feminists, Lesbian Movement and the organizations based in the Women’s House continued their activism. Both movements were successful between 1975 and 1978. The women’s movement, especially Brød og Roser brought self-determined abortion back on the agenda. The Abortion hearing was a new powerful way of highlighting the injustices of the system. The interviews with the anonymous women had a similarity to the column in Arbeiderbladet “She was rejected”. This was a broadening of the protest repertoire. The cooperation between the women’s organizations was temporarily disrupted, but this is explained by events outside KA. To the outside world, the Women’s Front gave priority to the class struggle before women’s liberation after the Marxist-leninist coup of 1975. The active Womens’ Fronters, nevertheless, continued the struggle for self-determined abortion.

From 1975, FAMSA continued its struggle against self-determined abortion, but it changed character in the upcoming years. Hans Olav Tungenesvik succeeded in building bridges across political parties and social groups. Otto Christian Rø was a different type of Chairman and installed himself as an important voice in the debate and produced a large body of articles, texts and books in the period. They managed this, despite constant precarious financial situation. This however, made FAMSA look less like a collective movement and more like an interest group.

608 Telephone call with Anne Enger, March 6, 2018
609 Interview with Otto Christian Rø October 11, 2017, Interview with Ola Didrik Saugstad December 14, 2017
The 1977 election opened the possibility of a new abortion law and in May 1978, self-determined abortion was passed with a majority of one in both the lawer and the upper house of the Storting. The Bishops reacted and formulated a pastoral letter against the new law. This led to massive condemnation of the State Church and accusations of contempt for women. FAMSA decided to continue their efforts after the passing of self-determined abortion.
6 Epilogue

Transformation of the abortion struggle

The New Feminists were never officially founded as an organization, so it has never officially been dissolved.610 Bread and Roses were loosely organized and disappeared from the public in the mid-1980s. Berit Hedemann explains the dissolution as a result of the flat structure. "Life goes on". That means central members became pregnant, married, moved away or had career changes. Voluntary work was sacrificed under these circumstances. 611 KF was reenergized by the struggle against porn and had become more feminist after several years of subordination to the class struggle of AKP-ml. The organization was energized from the struggle against porn in and different groups of KF mobilized several times against antiabortion actions of Børre Knudsen in the mid-1980s. The organisation experienced another split in 1991, leading to the formation of the Women’s Group Ottar. Some of the most active feminists engaged in meetings and practical tasks all day long for many years in order to liberate their fellow sisters. Many of these have received little recognition and live on minimum pension.612

FAMSA laid down its work in 1981. By the end of November 1980, the secretariat had a deficit of 150,000 NOK and secretary Kjell-Henrik Henriksen could no longer be paid, but was encouraged to continue his work pro-bono.613 The last Chairman of FAMSA, Sven Magne Løvik says it was difficult to get media attention, since no one longer wanted to read about the abortion issue in the newspapers.614 Bodil Bø Oftestad was the last assistant Chair of the organization. On October 17, 1981, FAMSA was officially dissolved at the National convention in Oslo.615 Some months later, a new organization was set up, and Oftestad was elected Chairwomen of the Popular Action for Human Dignity and Right to Life. An antiabortion festival was held in Oslo in 1986. The Women’s Front mobilized again.

610 Interview with Birgit Bjerck September 11, 2017
611 Interview with Berit Hedemann February 19, 2018
612 Interview with Inge Ås September 9, 2017
614 Telephone call with Sven Magnus Løvik September 28, 2017
615 Folkeaksjonen mot fri abort Landsmøteprotokoll October 17, 1981
At the beginning of the 1980s, KrF had to solve the abortion struggle within the organization. Antiabortion politics was a large part of the identity of the party. Since the other non-socialist parties had more liberal views on the issue, abortion policies had to be resolved before a coalition government on the right could be formed. Two agreements were made, the Tønsberg-agreement in 1981 and the Oslo-agreement in 1983. The first stated that KrF wishes a government change, but a reversal of free abortion is a prerequisite for government participation. The Conservative Party formed a minority government after the election in September. Two years later in Oslo, in spring 1983, KrF modified the uncompromising position from Tønsberg and opened up for government participation without absolute demands for change of abortion legislation. In the summer, a coalition government consisting of the Centre Party, the Conservative Party and KrF was formed. Renouncing the abortion ultimatum was by many members seen as a forsaking of children. The first Chairman of FAMSA, Hans Olav Tungenesvik voted against the Oslo-agreement.
7 Conclusion

This master thesis set out as an examination of how the Norwegian abortion struggle has been narrated and understood in later histories. The history of this large-scale national event has no fixed narrative, but by the 2010s there seems to be two dominant stories. One narrative about the dramatic, but victorious struggle of the women’s movement, often as part of a larger narrative of increasing gender equality and another tragic narrative about secularization processes and conflicts between State and Church. The opponents lost in 1978, but the defeat escaped the collective memory. These narratives have regularly been reproduced by synthesizing historians.

As discussed in chapter two and three, there are good arguments for understanding and narrating the abortion struggle as an interrelated struggle between two opposing social movements. The women’s movement, with strong allies within the medical profession and within the media, was opposed by an antiabortion movement, rooted in Christian Norway, with medical and media networks to make use of. The women’s movement originating from an international wave of feminism, successfully forced their demands to the mainstream of Norwegian political debate from 1972. When the demand finally was transformed to a new bill in spring 1974, the opponents mobilized. The creation of FAMSA radicalised the movement for self-determined abortion and led to new waves of activism, I argued in chapter three that FAMSA had many of the characteristics of a social movements. Researchers of social movements may discuss definitions of movements versus counter-movements, but the dynamics of the two movements and the interactions between low- and high-politics in the Norwegian abortion struggle suggests that such a division is artificial. The origins of this movement are found in the counter-cultures of Western- and Southern Norway, in the moral-politics of KrF, and in a generation of Christian-socialist idealists.

The women’s movement and its allies were careful in framing their cause. Despite some voices claiming that abortion was a matter of convenience or a form of contraception, the central texts and speeches lifted the abortion issue to be about larger existential issues or structural injustices. They could find inspiration in Katti Anker Møller and other supporters of self-determination, who had formulated demands of women’s right to self-determination.

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619 Cassidy Interpreting the Pro-Life Movement 9
Nina Karin Monsen, Birgit Bjerck, Kitty Strand and Tove Nilsen were ideologues linking lack of abortion rights with suppression of women in society. They connected the panel of doctors to suppression and contempt of women and this framing could be exemplified by personal stories from abortion-seeking women. The problem would be solved by a new law. Berthold Grünfeld and Aud Blegen Svindland focused more on the legal, democratic and medical injustices, but these framings were overlapping. The abortion struggle, according to Birgit Bjerck, united emotions and principles.

The movement against self-determined abortion had its origins in the health professions, but the initiative to form a broader movement was taken by editor of Vårt Land, Håkon Fredrik Breen. The spontaneous movement set up an office and a board during a couple of weeks in May 1974 and aimed to stop the new law on self-determined abortion through the collecting of signatures. These were seen as legitimate expressions of the popular will. To mobilize as greatly as possible, FAMSA started out in the broadest of framings. Hans Olav Tungesvik was careful not to exclude anyone so the framing became the least common multiple: Opposition to free or self-determined abortion. In this framing, any argument would do, but some were more common especially the legal right to life found in the Declaration of Human Rights or in the Fifth Commandment. In my opinion, the consequential framing was the most common among the Norwegian antiabortionists in the 1970s. Arthur Berg, Per Lønning and Vårt Land repeatedly warned against cultural changes. Warnings of exploding abortion rates, cultural changes and moral decay were commonly used by Hans Olav Tungesvik and later by Otto Christian Rø. In the latest phase, Anne Enger tried, like Astrid Hauglin and Marthe Nerdrum to reformulate antiabortion to be a women’s issue, but it was too late to materialize in a new law.

The fear of change was maybe justifiable. The second wave of feminism brought deep cultural changes in gender roles. This was also noticeable in the antiabortion movement. Håkon Fredrik Breen and Hans Olav Tungesvik were inspired by the struggle against EEC-membership and copied the anti-EEC-strategy of including representatives from as many different political colours and social groups as possible. The inclusion of women, like Elise

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620 Hans Olav Tungesvik was happy to learn that the 1978-law on self-determined abortion did not in fact unleash a wave of abortions. He credited FAMSA for this and claimed the consciousness raising of the movement positively influenced the numbers of abortions in the subsequent years. Tungesvik Ei forfriskande livsreis 69
Klouman and Helga Gitmark resulted in a more sensitive political campaign. The most graphic material was avoided and women-discriminating rhetoric was reduced. The attempts to frame antiabortion as feminism or a women’s issue by Astrid Hauglin is another expression of the inclusiveness of FAMSA. This historical paradox illustrates the great force of the women’s liberation movement in Norway.

The framing of the women’s movement, claiming that the right of the woman to decide over her body and that restrictive abortion laws and demeaning treatment in the panels of doctors, was in a way confirmed by the framing of the antiabortion movement. The broad platform of FAMSA allowed the movement to argue against self-determined abortion in any possibly way. The most common arguments, the legal right of the foetus, the slippery-slope of morals and the theological principle of the fifth commandment, all ignored the status of women as suppressed in society. Astrid Hauglin was an exception, when she argued against self-determined abortion because it would harm women and enforce men’s sexual and reproductive irresponsibility. This may be a version of “othering”. Who was FAMSA fighting for? The unborn child had no voice, and abortion-seeking women were mostly silent. In such a debate, personal needs and desires are easily replaced by legal principles or ideas of an endangered culture. The second wave of feminism opposed the idea of integrationist gender equality and demanded liberation instead. Men could not liberate women on their behalf. Authorities like physicians, preachers, bishops, politicians and lawyers saw themselves as natural spokespersons not only in their professional fields but in all human matters. When women are absent or small minorities in these fields, the men feel entitled to speak on their behalf. The second wave of feminism did much to challenge such entitlements. The difficulty, or the inability, of seeing women as autonomous human had already been formulated by Simone de Beauvoir in 1949. In the introduction of the Second Sex in 1949, she traces the gender views of the Christian forefathers:

"And Saint Thomas in his turn decreed that woman was an “incomplete man,” an “incidental” being. This is what the Genesis story symbolizes, where Eve appears as if drawn from Adam’s “supernumerary” bone, in Bossuet’s words. Humanity is male, and man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation to himself: she is not considered an autonomous being.”

621 Hauglin Abortsaken og kampen for kvinnefrigjøring in Kloumann Bekken, Tungesvik(ed) Velferd for ufødte 81-98
622 Haukaa Bak slagordene 49-50
623 Beauvoir, Simone De. Det Annet Kjønn 15 Translation by Borde, Constance, Malovany-Chevallier in Beauvoir, Simone de The Second Sex New York: Vintage Books
Many of the antiabortion activists were authorities in their academic fields and repeatedly argued against giving common women the responsibility in matters of life and death. Society, thus themselves, had to decide. Under Anne Enger’s leadership, emphasis was on putting opinion polls showing that a majority of women was against self-determined abortion. Enger considered the women’s liberation movement to only represent a minority. This reframing in the late 1970s and early 1980s had little effect on antiabortion activism in the later decade, but contributed to delegitimize the women’s movement.

Why did then the women’s movement with its allies succeed in mobilizing so strongly? Firstly, for many of the supporters of liberalization, abortion was a deep, personal issue. Many had friends or family members who had to stand in front of the panel of doctors. Secondly, the movement had a clearly identified goal, not a diffuse cultural change. Self-determination in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy was a clear symbol of liberating women from suppressing social structures. Thirdly, there was a clearly defined opponent to overcome. The first activism of FAMSA was not so interlinked with the Church as in the last phase, but this was of less importance. The antiabortion movement represented suppression, patriarchy and guardianship over women. For the fourth, As Birgit Bjerck and other have noted, abortion was relevant for women in all classes. The issue transcended the conflict between a feminist framing and a Marxist one. There were ways for wealthy and well-networked women to get an abortion, but this option became a symbol of the injustices of the existing abortion law. This is linked with a fifth argument. The framing of the abortion issue as liberation from male guardianship, but also as a rupture with conservative Christian sexual morals made it more difficult for opponents to convincingly to come across as helpers instead of suppressors. Birgit Bjerck and Tove Nilsen emphasized the importance of dissolving the relation between sex and reproduction. Framings of political issues may be too broad and complicated. The women’s movement succeeded in keeping the issue understandable and straightforward. A sixth argument is the emergence of a women’s movement itself. All the women’s organizations with their different organizational structures provided numbers to put behind the demand for self-determined abortion. Many of the activists had useful verbal and writing skills and the post-war generation of women increasingly entered higher education. A seventh argument follows from this: many women sympathetic to the feminist cause, took jobs inside the health institutions and inside the media and became important allies for the

624 Folkeaksjoner mot fri abort Notat om forslag om kvinnemobilsering October 1978
women’s movement. Parallel to changing gender norms, radical physicians and nurses were challenging the health professions from inside the system. Astor Reigstad and Mons Lie reorganized SLF and were central in the period and natural alliance partners for the movement for self-determined abortion. The offices and clinics of SLF and Aud Blegen Svidland gave the cause a strong moral legitimacy. They were effectively helping women in a difficult situation. This was acknowledged by the opponents, and Torleiv Rognum became the founding father of AAN. A last argument was the cultural wrapping of a political cause. Novels, films and songs about abortion touched and engaged people in a deeper way. Feminists like Else Michelet, did not only appeal to a sense of justice, but also made listeners laugh.

For FAMSA and the rest of the antiabortion movement, there were few clear victories, but Elise Klouman, Hans Olav Tungesvik, Anbjørn Neerland and Odd Sverre Hove all remembered the collecting of 610.000 signatures as a great success. Otto Christian Rø was commander-in-chief when the war was lost, but he should be given credit or blame, depending on the reader’s viewpoint, for notoriously setting the agenda in the abortion debate. It is questionable if Hans Olav Tungesvik could have repeated the mass mobilization again in 1978. As the last leader of FAMSA learned, Norwegian society was tired of the debate after a decade of mobilizations. In the second half of the 1970s, the tree of antiabortion activism grew more branches. The emergence of Norwegian Pro Life in 1974 formalized resistance against abortion within the medical professions. NPV pushed a conscience clause or reservation right into the 1975 and 1978 laws. The founding of an AAN-office to help women with unwanted pregnancies gave the movement increased credibility, but it was too late to be used in the 1978 debate. The dissolution of FAMSA in 1981 was by the some seen as a victory for the women’s movement and the last sign of abortion opposition, but a new organization, FLM, individual direct action by Børre Knudsen and Ludvig Nessa, and political efforts by KrF, would keep the abortion debate going throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

What type of protests did the two movements have in their repertoires and how did they influence the abortion struggle? Women in the previous generation had raised the issue of

625 Vårt Land *Alle har ansvar for det ufødde liv* July 27, 2016 (accesed May 9, 2018) Telephone call with Elise Klouman May 4, 2018, Telephone call with Anbjørn Neerland May 3, 2018
626 Telephone call with Sven Magnus Løvik September 28, 2017
self-determined abortion, but political pressure was first established when a vocal and numerous women’s movement emerged in the 1970s. The first type of protest was the horizontal reaching-out to other women and sympathisers and expanded the group of protesters from a few activists to a mass movement. Secondly, the marches and rallies brought the organized activists and allied citizens together. The abortion day in 1973 with 1200 marching people was a great success. The flyers, brochures and books brought the struggle into people’s houses, schools and institutions. The collecting of signatures mobilized many activists, especially in Oslo and Trondheim, but this battle was lost since the opponents collected so many more. Little emphasis was put on signatures after this. Lobbying was a slower and tiring way of protest. Birgit Bjereck lobbied her network inside SV, Gro Nylander lobbied inside the Storting and the organizations sent a large number of letters to MPs, Ministers and Standing Committees. Direct actions like sit-ins and flash mobs made headlines, but were seen as indecent by many of the opponents. The protesters in Ullern Kirke were, nevertheless, supported by a broad alliance of artists, celebrities and politicians on the Left.

FAMSA tried to copy the strategy from the anti-EEC-struggle. They were successful in collecting signatures and the number 610,000 still resonates in antiabortion writing. This is however, a very expensive way of activism, since it takes a hierarchy of leaders to organize. This was expected though. The anti-EEC-movement spent between 20 and 25 million during six months of mobilization. The expenses were covered by loans and donations. Was collecting signatures the best strategy? The struggle of the anti-EEC-movement could be won. What could be the victory of FAMSA? Many voices suggested holding a national referendum, but this never materialized. The movement could only delay the liberalization of the law and when the laws were changed in 1975 and 1978 the right to reservation was the only way to protest the law. This strategy had been by NPV who was part of an international network of Christian, especially Catholic physicians. The reservation right was an effective way to stop abortions from taking place. The 610,000 signatures and Otto Christian Rø’s many articles and texts suggest that Norwegian antiabortion movement was a strong force and it indeed had many friends, but when self-determined abortion was passed and FAMSA was dissolved, antiabortion activism in Norway returned to older religious framings. Børre

627 Benum Overflod og fremtidsfrykt 22
Knudsen and Ludvig Nessa felt summoned by God, but they were no bridge builders like Hans Olav Tungesvik or Håkon Fredrik Breen or phone activist like Erling Sagedal.

Contention ought to be known for the larger public. Both movements applied protest forms that were well-known to a Norwegian audience, and they influenced each other. The protests documented in this study suggest that the women’s movement did more to develop new direct forms of protest. The response to the hard treatment of the activists in Ullern Church may suggest that the public had come to a better understanding of such activism. Arbeiderbladet also tried to exert direct influence on the public with the column “she was rejected”. Direct help to abortion seeking-women by the Clinic of Sexual Enlightenment was also a sort of protest to the current social order.

How to interpret the lack of contact between the movements? Few of the activists I interviewed recalled having close friends with the opposing view during the abortion struggle. Social-moral echo chambers can be a downside to grand-scale political mobilizations. Else Michelet and the magazine Sirene tried to initiate conversation with the opponents, but true dialogue was hard. The two brothers Ola Didrik Saugstad and Jens Saugstad is the exception to the rule, but their public debates began a decade later. The women’s organizations were also based on social separatism. No men were allowed in the consciousness raising groups or in the boards. However, Runa Haukaa underlined that there was opposition to self-determined abortion within the women’s movement, but these voices were few and largely outnumbered.

The abortion struggle was institutionalized through the clinics and offices offering women help in different ways. The Clinic for Sexual Enlightenment changed name to Sex and Society and AAN changed name to Amathea. Before Women’s day in 2016, Sex and Society and Amathea cooperated on a common resolution for expanding contraception services to youth below the age of 16. This historical paradox of the Norwegian abortion struggle is possible because the two clinics are no longer in a struggle with a clear “us” and “them”.

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628 Tarrow Power in Movement 29
629 Haukaa Bak slagordene 95
630 See appendix 1 and 2
631 NRK Vil gi gratis prevensjon til ungdom under 16 år
The resignation of Per Lønning and later by Børre Knudsen led to a crisis in the relation between State and State Church and vocal voices demanded separation of the two. It is possible that this conflict was inevitable and that the abortion issue only functioned as a trigger. Theologian Stephan Tschudi wrote in the early 1980s that no national Church had been so tightly connected to the State as the Norwegian one.\(^632\) This context suggests that the wrapping of the abortion struggle into a narrative about the Church, does injustice to the leading role of FAMSA in the antiabortion struggle. This narrative also seems to ignore the large crisis in the relation between the State Church and Norwegian women. The women’s action for opting out of the State Church and the criticism of the pastoral letters are expressions of this.

The law of conservation of energy is central concept of physics, saying that energy neither can be created nor be destroyed. Where did the energy of the abortion struggle go? Some of the rest mass of the women’s movement did go into living normal lives.\(^633\) For other Norwegian feminists, the energy was channelled into political struggles against porn and prostitution. For the antiabortion movement, the abortion struggle was an elevator into high politics. The abortion struggle helped Hans Olav Tungesvik, Kjell Magne Bondevik and Anne Enger into the political spotlight and Bondevik ended up as Prime Minister. This was to a lesser extent the case in the Labour Party. Tove Pihl was denied renewed nomination and Sonja Ludvigsen, Ruth Ryste and Astrid Murberg Martinsen, all central in the political work of passing a new law, are unfamiliar to the larger public today. Gro Harlem Brundtland stands out as an exception. She is most likely the only Environment Minister with abortion politics in the portfolio.

History seldom provides simple compact lessons, but I believe there is a larger picture of the abortion struggle: Every human being is born into a world where sexuality, birth control, gender roles and the meaning of childbearing are under constant negotiation and struggle. Births are not God-given, but are results from sexual desires, dreams, policies, technology, laws and love. For some women, a missing period is a dream come true, for others, it is a tragedy of enormous proportions. The Norwegian abortion-struggle is one prime example of

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\(^633\) Interview with Berit Hedemann February 19, 2018
one such negotiation. The reservation right debate in 2013 reactivated the energy of the abortion struggle. A cycle of activism arose and the government had to withdraw the proposal. The Norwegian anti-abortion movement had victories in the 1970s, but lost the main battle and were not able to mobilize in a similar way during the debate on the reservation right. On the other side, in Ireland, Argentina, Poland and many other countries, anti-abortionist movements have the upper hand.
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Conversation and e-mail with Agnete Strøm December 26, 2017
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Telephone call with Anne Enger, March 6, 2018
Telephone call with Odd Sverre Hove May 1, 2018
Telephone call with Anbjørn Neerland May 3, 2018
Telephone call with Elise Klouman May 4, 2018
Appendix 1: Timeline of organizations originating from the struggle for self-determined abortion.
### Appendix 3: Signature list by the Popular Action against Self-Determined Abortion

**FOLKEAKSJONEN MOT SELVBESTEMT ABORT**

Postboks 535, Sentrum - Oslo 1

**UNDERSKRIFTSLISTE**

Undertegnede sier Nei til selvbestemt abort i Norge. (Bokmål)
Underskrivne sier Nei til sjølvvald abort i Noreg. (Nynorsk)
Vuołlačalle ganna vuostai jiešmærredøggje aborta Norgast. (Samisk)

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(Underskriftslistene returneres til
Folkeaksjonen mot Selvbestemt Abort,
Postboks 535, Sentrum, Oslo 1
eller til Folkeaksjonens lokale tillitsmann.)
Appendix 4: Signature list by Women’s Action for Self-determined abortion in Trondheim

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<th>Navn</th>
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Initiativet til den underskriftsinnsamling er tatt av: Trondheim Kvinnesaksforening, Nyfeministerne og Kvinnefronten i Trondheim

listen avlevers til Turid Østgaard Shauenæs & Trondheim inner 30. mai
Appendix 5: Interview questions

1. Når var første gangen du følte deg engasjert i kvinnekamp / abortkamp?
2. Hvilken vil du beskrive din egen rolle hadde du i abortkampen / kampen mot abort?
3. Hva var det som gjorde at du ble engasjert i abortkampen/ kampen mot abort?
4. Hva påvirket ditt standpunkt i abortspørsmålet?
5. Hvilke metoder brukte du / dere for å nå fram?
6. Hvem samarbeidet du med?
7. Kan du fortelle om noen viktige hendelser i perioden frem mot selvbestemt abort?
8. Er det forskjeller i hvordan du ser abortsaken nå?
9. Aktivist: Fikk du selv noe tilbake for aktivismen din?
10. Aktivist: På hvilken måte innebar engasjementet en kostnad?
11. Hvordan har du fortsatt ditt politiske engasjement etter at selvbestemt abort ble innført i Norge?
12. Du var medlem av______. Var du uenig i argumenter eller i virkemidler som ble brukt i dine meningsfeller?
13. Hvordan ser du på dine politiske motstandere?
14. Hvilke argumenter ble brukt?
15. Har du noen tips til hvem jeg bør intervjue og hvilke spørsmål jeg eventuelt bør stille til dem?