

Never Again

BY **ROBERTA BRANDES GRATZ** • APRIL 1973

THIS WOMAN was the victim of a criminal abortion. Her body was photographed exactly as it was found by police in a bloody and barren motel room; exactly as it had been abandoned there by an unskilled abortionist. Becoming frightened when “something went wrong,” he left her to die alone.

The photograph is just one bit of evidence in the files of the Connecticut medical examiner who determined the technical cause of her death:

an air embolism resulting from the unskilled surgical procedure. But this visible evidence of butchery has come to symbolize far more than an individual case with an individual cause.

Because various abortion-law repeal and reform groups have used this photograph as one answer to the magnified fetus photographs so often displayed by antiabortion forces, this individual woman has come to represent the thousands of women who have been maimed or murdered by a society that denied them safe and legal abortions.

In January, the Supreme Court partially rewarded the long and courageous fight for women's right to choose by ruling that the state laws restricting early abortion were

unconstitutional. But the woman in this photograph cannot be brought back to life, nor can the many, many women whose lives have been lost or tragically damaged in the past.

We must not forget. Now that a part of the battle is over, it is important to honor its victims and heroines.

