

approached the court hearing apprehensive and anxious. To these minors, as to most people, the judge was an all-powerful authority figure. They knew he would make legal and moral value judgments about them. Being forced to go to court causes most teenagers to feel ashamed, to feel as if they had done something wrong. Having to discuss their sexuality and abortion decision with so many strangers adds only to the feelings of disgrace and guilt. For many Minnesota minors, the experience of going to court remains a troubling memory. Not surprisingly, minors in Minnesota were embarrassed to be at court. While there, they would "try to become invisible" by staring at the floor or standing facing the walls. They were afraid of being recognized by classmates or someone who knew their parents, upset and offended because they had to answer questions about their private lives. One teen explained, the thought of people who I didn't know, who I had never seen before, asking me questions about my personal life, wondering what I was, it was scary. Another became extremely upset during her trial testimony when she recalled her experience at her bypass hearing several years earlier. The court procedure was so nerve-racking for some of the young women that it made them physically ill. Some minors vomited in court, others came back from court wringing wet with perspiration and it was necessary to give some of them a sedative after they came back to the clinic. Many minors dreaded the court procedure more than the abortion itself. The Director of the Guardian Ad Litem Program in one Minnesota county who supervised over a 1,000 teenagers coming to court for a bypass hearing explained that, the teenagers we see in the guardian's office are very nervous, very scared. Some of them are terrified about court processes. They are often exhausted. They are upset about the fact they have to explain very intimate details of their personal lives to strangers. The federal District Court in Minnesota found, after trial, that the experience of going to court for a judicial authorization produces fear and tension in many minors. Minors are apprehensive about the prospect of facing an authority figure who holds in his...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...hands the power to veto their decision to proceed without notifying one or both parents. Many minors are angry and resentful at being required to justify their decision before complete strangers. Despite the confidentiality of the proceeding, many minors resent having to reveal intimate details