

ABORTION FACTS

Since 1973, legal abortions in the United States total over 62.5 million.¹ From 1973 through 2017, abortions have occurred at an average daily rate of 3,534. A 2005 study found that over 93% of legal abortions are done primarily for social reasons, and only about 7% for physical reasons (sometimes self-diagnosed) like threat to the mother's life, fetal deformity, rape or incest.² A more recent study collected data from 954 women at 30 abortion facilities across the U.S. from 2008-2010. The women responded to two open-ended questions asking why they wanted an abortion. Twelve percent mentioned health-related reasons, some of which were again self-diagnosed.³

The American woman's womb was legally declared a free-fire zone by the Supreme Court's January 22, 1973 rulings. These rulings allow abortion up to the moment of birth for virtually any reason.⁴ The rulings were based on legal, historical, medical and social falsehoods.⁵ When valid questions have been asked, polls indicate that a majority of Americans have never supported Roe v. Wade's policy of abortion on demand throughout the nine months of pregnancy. An early review of 5 polls starting in 1975 found that, with the exception of saving the mother's life, only 7-13% of respondents favored legal abortion in the third trimester.⁶ A review of 12 biannual Gallup polls from 1996-2018 found only 8-14% of Americans believed abortion should be legal in the third trimester.⁷ More recently, although the wording of their questions differ, the following 2019 polls found these percentages of Americans would allow elective abortion in the third trimester: Marist (Jan. 8-10:15%), YouGov/AU (Feb.6-7:20%), Rasmussen (May 17:12%), Harvard-CAPPS-Harris (May 29-30:6%). The Marist poll in January 2020 found 21% of Americans agreed that abortion should be "available to a woman anytime during her pregnancy." (Note: This way of framing the question leaves "the life of the mother" reason an open consideration, which may have influenced some respondents). Marists' January 2021 poll saw the percentage drop to 15%. Finally, when Students for Life of America polled 800 younger (18-34) registered voters in January 2021, 19% responded in the same way.

Although 92.2% of legal abortions in 2018 were done within the first 13 weeks of gestation,⁸ the remaining 7.9% equals 39,979 of the 619,591 legal abortions reported by the CDC, a daily rate of 109.5 done after the first trimester, with 14.6 of these per day being done at or after 21 weeks of gestation, when the fetus is likely to be viable.⁹ (Note: Although some seem to assume that "earlier abortions are not as bad," you are equally dead in whatever trimester you are killed).

According to the CDC's report, in 2018 of those women having legal abortions,

- 85.2% were unmarried,
- 38.7 % were white, 33.6% were black, 20.0% were Hispanic, and 7.7% were other races,
- 40.2% were having a second or higher order abortion. The Guttmacher Institute reports that in 2014,
- 51% of aborting women were using contraceptives when they conceived.¹⁰

In the first 45 years (1973-2017) after Roe v. Wade, the CDC reported that the maternal death toll from induced abortion was:

- 447 (86.1%) from legal abortion
- 57 (11.0%) from illegal abortion and
- 15 (2.9%) from abortions whose type was unknown.¹¹

Three separate studies have shown that the CDC underreports maternal abortion deaths by 30% to 419%. Its coding system makes it difficult to accurately attribute maternal deaths to legal abortion.¹²

Because of a 1976 Supreme Court ruling, a minor child can have an abortion without her parent's consent. Some 37 states require parental involvement in a minor's decision to have an abortion, although a judicial bypass can still keep parents in the dark in many cases.¹³ Moreover, persons accompanying the minor may misrepresent their relationship to her, and some abortion clinics have been known not to ask about their

relationship. It is the parents' moral, legal, and financial responsibility, of course, to deal with any mental or physical trauma sustained by their daughter as a result of her secret abortion.

The best estimate of the total induced abortions (legal + illegal) occurring in 1966, the last year before the abortion movement began having legislative impact, is 125,000.¹⁴ Since permissive laws began to be passed in 1967, therefore, induced abortions have increased 7 to 13 fold, depending on years compared. The number of maternal deaths due to abortions of all types (legal, illegal and spontaneous) in 1966 was 189.¹⁵ By 1972, the year before Roe v. Wade, it had decreased to 90.¹⁶ The idea that prior to Roe v. Wade thousands of women died each year from abortion is a myth. It is also a myth that abortion is safer for the woman than childbirth.¹⁷

When valid questions have been asked, poll data indicate that a majority of Americans have never supported the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade policy of abortion on demand throughout the nine months of pregnancy.¹⁸

The abortion debate has politicized social science and history. Claims that English Common Law recognized a right to abortion before and after our country's founding, and that the fetus' right to life was of little concern in early law are inaccurate. The same is true of the claim that the main reasons for passing abortion laws in the 1800s were to protect the health of women, to enhance the medical profession's status, to enforce gender roles, and to respond to new waves of immigration. While some of these motives played some role in the initiation of 19th century laws, a main reason was the desire to protect human life from conception, a biological process better understood after the discovery of the mammalian ovum in 1827. Abortion was a relatively safe procedure during this period, at least as far as short-term effects are concerned. (See endnotes 17-24).

Research over the last five decades has shown that legal abortion has several long-term negative effects on women's health. For example: Seventy-nine percent of 70 large-scale studies of women in Asia, Europe, Australia and the U.S. report **a link between abortion and an increased risk of breast cancer**.²⁵ Lifetime risk of abortion for the average American woman has increased from 1 in 12 in 1970 to 1 in 7 in 2006, the period when abortion became increasingly available. One study found breast cancer rates in the U.S. climbed more than 40% between the mid 1980s and 1998. Only the women under 40 in the study (Roe v. Wade being passed in their fertile years) experienced an increase in breast cancer rates.²⁶

Similarly, **ectopic pregnancies** increased almost fourfold between 1970-1989, corresponding to the increase in abortions. These pregnancies were associated with 13% of maternal deaths during this time.²⁷

More than 120 studies find induced **abortion increases the incidence of prematurity and low birth weight in subsequent pregnancies**.²⁸ Prematurity is associated with increased infant deaths and incidence of childhood developmental problems and diseases, such as cerebral palsy. Subsequent miscarriage is also associated with abortion. Thus, **legal abortion may negatively affect the health of subsequent wanted children**.

A comprehensive analysis of 22 of the world's best large studies of abortion's impact on women's **mental health** found that legal abortion was associated with the following increase in risks: anxiety disorders 34%, depression 37%, alcohol use/abuse 110%, marijuana use/abuse 220%, suicide behaviors 155%.²⁹

These data indicate that abortion is not "reproductive health care," but rather, anti-reproductive health endangerment. The one reproduced is killed, and his/her mother's physical and psychological health and that of her subsequent children is endangered.

Finally, each of us was a human zygote, embryo and fetus at one stage in our life, just as we were infants, children and adolescents later on. The life of an individual human being begins at fertilization, when sperm joins egg. The question, then, is: Should we allow some human beings to kill other human beings to solve personal or social problems, or should we seek solutions which enhance the lives of all, born and unborn?

Endnotes

1. National Right to Life Educational Foundation, "Abortion Statistics: United States and Trends." 2020. See also Raymond J. Adamek, "Incidence of Induced Abortion in the United States," Available from Right to Life of Northeast Ohio at rtlofneo.com. (Click on Issues, then Abortion and scroll down to the title). National abortion estimates by Guttmacher and the CDC are usually at least 1 to 3 years behind the present.
2. Lawrence B. Finer, et al. "Reasons U.S. Women Have Abortions: Quantitative and Qualitative Perspectives," *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* 37:3 (September 2005) 110-118.
3. Rachel K. Jones, Elizabeth Witwer and Jenna Jerman, "Abortion Incidence and Service Availability in the United States, 2017," Guttmacher Institute (September 2019) online.
4. *United States Supreme Court Reports* 35L Ed 2d, pp. 183-184, 212-213.
5. See Justin Dyer, "Fictional Abortion History," www.nationalreview.com (December 24, 2012) 1-6 (Online); Susan E. Wills, "Abortion History Myths: The Sequel," www.nationalrighttolifenews.org (December 26, 2012), Clarke D. Forsythe, *Abuse of Discretion: The Inside Story of Roe v. Wade*, New York: Encounter Books, 2013, and two items available from Right to Life of Northeast Ohio by Raymond J. Adamek, "Roe v. Wade: A Bad Decision Yields Terrible Consequences," and "Roe v. Wade: A Faulty Legal Decision." See also, Joshua J. Craddock, "Protecting Prenatal Persons: Does the Fourteenth Amendment Prohibit Abortion?" *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy* 40:2 (2017) 539-572. A brief summary of Craddock's article occurs in Raymond J. Adamek, "Roe v. Wade's Days are Numbered," *Celebrate Life Magazine* (Fall, 2017) 9-11.
6. Raymond J. Adamek, "30-Plus Years of Abortion Polls: What Have We Learned?" Ad Hoc Committee in Defense of Life, 2002.
7. Lydia Saad, "Trimester Still Key to U.S. Abortion Views," Gallup (June 13, 2018).
8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Abortion Surveillance: United States, 2018." Pg. 7 and Table 9. Readers should be aware that the CDC report notes that California, Maryland and New Hampshire did not submit abortion data for 2018. It is estimated that they performed about 19% of all U.S. abortions in 2017.
9. A recent article noted that at least 5 medical studies from 2014-2019 have reported that over half of infants born at 22 weeks can survive if given intensive care. See David Prentice, "Premature Babies as Young as 22 Weeks Old are Surviving More Frequently," www.LifeNews.com, (November 15, 2019).
10. Guttmacher Institute, "Induced Abortion in the United States," (September 2019) Fact Sheet, p. 3 online.
11. Table 23. See complete citation in endnote 8 above.
12. See K. Sherlock, *Victims of Choice*, Akron, OH: Brennyman Books, 1966 and Mark Crutcher, *Lime 5*, Denton, TX: Life Dynamics, 1966 and David C. Reardon et al., "Deaths Associated with Abortion Compared to Childbirth," *Journal of Contemporary Health Law & Policy* 20:2 (2004) 279-327.
13. Guttmacher Institute, "Parental Involvement in Minor's Abortions," State Laws and Policies as of 2/1/2020.
14. Cynthia McKnight, *Life Without Roe*, Washington, D.C. Horatio R. Storer Foundation, 1992, and *The Effects of Changes in State Abortion Laws*, Washington, D. C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1971, p.4.
15. National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the U.S. 1966*, Vol. II Mortality, Part A, Washington D.C. 1968, pp. 1-40.
16. Centers for Disease Control, "Abortion Surveillance – United States, 1984-1985," *MMWR* (Sept. 1989) 38 (SS-2) p. 43.
17. Priscilla K. Coleman, David C. Reardon and Byron C. Calhoun, "Reproductive History Patterns and Long-Term Mortality Rates: a Danish, Population-Based Record Linkage Study," *The European Journal of Public Health*, doi:10.1093/eurpub/cks107 (September 5, 2012) 1-6 and the Reardon citation in Note 12 above.
18. Raymond J. Adamek, *Thirty-Plus Years of Abortion Polls: What Have We Learned?* New York: The Ad Hoc Committee, 2002, and R. J. Adamek, "American Public Opinion Regarding Late Term Abortion" S. Euclid, OH: Human Family Research Center, 2/1/2011. More recently, although the wording of their

questions differs, the following 2019 national polls found these percentages of Americans who would allow elective abortion in the third trimester: Marist (Jan. 8-10: 15%), YouGov/AUL (Feb. 6-7: 20%), Rasmussen (May 17: 12%), Harvard-CAPPS-Harris (May 29-30: 6%).

19. Robert M. Byrn, "An American Tragedy: The Supreme Court on Abortion," *Fordham Law Review* 41 (May 1973) 807-862, especially 814-835. See also Joshua J. Craddock's excellent work cited in endnote 4 above.
20. Robert A. Destro, "Abortion and the Constitution: The Need for a Life-Protective Amendment," *California Law Review* 63: 1250-1351, especially 1267-1282.
21. Thomas W. Hilgers and Dennis J. Horan, *Abortion and Social Justice* N.Y.: Sheed & Ward, 1972, especially 120-127, 301-313.
22. Stephen M. Krason and William B. Hollberg, "The Law and History of Abortion: The Supreme Court Refuted," in J. Douglas Butler and David F. Walbert (eds.) *Abortion, Medicine and the Law* (3rd edition) N.Y.: Facts on File, 1986, 196-225.
23. James C. Mohr, *Abortion in America* N.Y.: Oxford Univ. Press, 1978, especially 18-19, 30-31, 65, 164-166, 173-174.
24. Ramesh Ponnuru, "Aborting History," *The Human Life Review* 22:1 (Winter, 1996) 35-42.
25. Coalition on Abortion/Breast Cancer, www.AbortionBreastCancer.com Search "Epidemiological Studies."
26. H.L Howe, et al. "Annual Report to the Nation on the Status of Cancer, 1973-1998, Featuring Cancers with Increasing Trends," *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* 93(2001): 824-842.
27. Tatiana E. Goldner, et al. "Surveillance for Ectopic Pregnancy—United States, 1970-1989." *MMWR* Vol. 42, No. SS-6, December 17, 1993.
28. Byron Calhoun, "Abortion and Preterm Birth: Why Medical Journals Aren't Giving Us the Real Picture," International Organizations Research Group, Briefing Paper No. 9 (April 28, 2012).
29. Priscilla K. Coleman, "Abortion and Mental Health: Quantitative Synthesis and Analysis of Research Published 1995-2009," *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 199 (2012) 180-186. Online, doi:10.11192/bjp.bp.110.077230. For the impact of abortion on the suicide rates of American women, see David C. Reardon, et al., "Deaths Associated with Pregnancy Outcome: A Record Linkage Study of Low-Income Women," *Southern Medical Journal* 95:8 (August 2002): 834-841, and Natalie P. Mota, et al., "Associations Between Abortion, Mental Disorders, and Suicidal Behavior in a Nationally Representative Sample," *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 55:4 (April 2010): 239-246.

For more documentation of the physical and psychological effects of abortion on women's health, see "Legal Abortion Harms Women," available from Right to Life of Northeast Ohio's website under Issues: Abortion, or call for a hard copy (330) 762-2785. See also Dr. Angela Lanfranchi et al., *Complications: Abortion's Impact on Women*, Toronto: De Veber Institute, 2013.

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