



## Roe v. Wade - 47th Anniversary The Silent Holocaust of 60 Million Sons and Daughters

The protection of the life of the unborn child still remains a big battle in our nation. It is always great to hear the story of how a woman who was pro-choice had a conversion of heart and became unabashedly an advocate for the protection of the life of the unborn child. Such is the story of feminist Jo McGowan who wrote the following article that appeared some years ago in the *US Catholic Magazine*.

*Some years ago, an anti-abortion piece of mine was published in Newsweek magazine. I received nearly 300 letters in response to it, about 75% negative. The effect of such a concentrated choice onslaught was to push me into a Mario Cuomo stance: I remained “personally opposed” but was unwilling to impose my view (except by moral persuasion) on anyone else.*

*I had been moved and impressed by the compassion and intelligence of those who responded to my piece and felt challenged by the objections they raised to it. Their concerns for women were genuine, and their criticisms of pro-lifers rang true. I felt the movement could profit from hearing their voices.*

*Now, however, my thinking has changed dramatically. I feel like a born-again pro-lifer. I am solidly in favor of a constitutional ban on abortion and am ready to go on the offensive on this issue. I believe it is the most critical question of our times.*

*On the legal question, I took an anarchist position and argued that since laws do nothing to change hearts and minds, abortion shouldn't be banned—rather, pro-life efforts should be directed toward creating a world in which abortion is unnecessary. This kind of talk reassured my pro-choice friends (who do not care what you think about abortion as long as you don't try to make it illegal), and an uneasy peace was maintained.*

*I believed it was essential not to offend pro-choice women, to be scrupulously nonjudgmental, and to avoid confrontation as far as possible. I was particularly careful not to “sentimentalize” the issue by referring to the actual process of abortion and its effect on the baby.*

### *Don't Baby Women*

*I maintained this peculiar attitude fairly consistently for nearly ten years, with only occasional lapses into publicly stated outrage and repugnance. Now, however, I feel challenged in an entirely new way. The articles I read in the Human Life Review have forced me both to recognize the enormity of the situation and to re-examine my own behavior. Why have I been so reluctant to offend or alienate those on the other side of this issue?*

*On other issues, I am not so wishy-washy. When I picket at the Pentagon, for example, it doesn't occur to me that the unequivocal condemnation of war is unfairly judgmental of troops going to work. If what I am saying strikes a chord in them, they will feel terribly guilty; but I don't feel it is insensitive or out of line to say it.*

*The abortion issue is unique, but it is wrong to say that the usual moral standards do not apply. It is, in fact, insulting to women to let them off the hook so easily—as if to say that they are children and not accountable for their actions.*

*Indeed, it is possible to get so caught up trying to be sensitive to the woman and her suffering that we forget the baby altogether. But weighing a woman's situation, no matter how tragic, against a baby's right to life only makes sense if we believe the baby is indeed a baby.*

*I do believe it is a baby, and this belief becomes more burdensome every day. It is no longer acceptable to me to take a clever line about laws being ineffective and needing to change the world so that no woman ever feels an abortion is her only answer.*

*I can no longer say blithely that no one “likes” abortion and that the real solution is birth control. The situation is far too serious for such waffling non-statements. Indeed, if I have learned anything from the pro-choicer, it is this: we have to choose between life and death.*

*Pro-choicers are quite clear on this and their rhetoric has changed accordingly. References to abortion as a tragic necessity or an agonizing decision are rare now, and fewer and fewer women will admit to regretting their choice. Such language is condemned by the feminist writer Barbara Ehrenreich as “wimpy and defensive.” The distinctive feature of pro-choice writing today is its shoot-from-the-hips, no-apologies tone.*

Consider the following. Barbara Ehrenreich in the *New York Times* writes: "The one regret I have about my own abortions is that they cost money that might otherwise have been spent on something more pleasurable, like taking the kids to movies and theme parks.... Would I feel comfortable getting rid of a fetus in the first few months of its life? Yes, indeed. And I have done it without qualm."

Ellen Willis, senior editor at the *Village Voice*, writing in *Harper's*: "It's a good thing to have an abortion rather than to have a child you don't want. Women should feel good about it."

Traditional pro-lifers, of course, have never had any problems telling it like it is. The battle lines have been clearly drawn for some time, and both sides grow more firmly entrenched. The pivotal group now, I believe, is the liberal to left-of-centers who instinctively find abortion abhorrent but are reluctant to speak out for fear of appearing fanatic or right-wing.

A further reluctance is created by a real and compassionate understanding of the difficulties women with unwanted pregnancies must face. This understanding, however, can be an advantage in the abortion debate. One can use it to break the pro-life stereotype and to establish one's credentials.

Speaking personally, I know people generally assume that I am pro-choice. I am an outspoken feminist and politically active in left-wing-causes. When the subject of abortion comes up these days (and it generally does, because I see to it), there is usually dismay and consternation when I don't say the expected things.

I find, though, that because I have already been accepted as "one of us" (before actually passing the litmus test), my arguments carry more weight. The surprise of the unexpected keeps people's minds open a bit longer than usual.

### **The Awful Truth**

I find myself willing to make use of the graphic, ugly realities of abortion -- I want people to think hard about the enormous force that must be exerted to wrench a baby from its mother's womb -- they should know that this is not a piece of tissue that glides effortlessly into the waiting pan.

Abortionists destroying a second trimester fetus are exhausted at the end of the ordeal. I want people to consider what clinics do with all those small bodies, severed limbs and fractured skulls. I want them to imagine their own children coming across a dumpster full of such remains and then try to come up with some

explanation that would reassure their children and keep the nightmares at bay.

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### **Reflection Questions**

1. **What struck you most in the article?**
2. **Where do you stand on this controversial issue? How do you feel about your stance? Do other people know where you stand?**
3. **Was there anything in the above opinion piece that you had a problem with?**

### **Good News**

All statistics measuring abortion in the U.S. reached a "historic low" of 623,471 in 2016, according to the latest data from the CDC. That's down 2.3% from 2015, when there were 638,169 abortions. Total abortions have dropped 26% since the high in 1990. (Sadly, about 60,940,000 unborn babies have died since *Roe v. Wade* became law in 1973.)

(<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/us-abortion-rate-number-of-abortions-in-us-hits-historic-low-per-centers-for-disease-control-study-today-2019-11-27/>)

Nearly 28% of the 2016 abortions involved use of RU-486 rather than surgery. In the past few years, nearly 200 women in the U.S. alone have successfully given birth to healthy babies after undergoing the **Abortion Pill Reversal procedure**. **Hotline#:(877) 558-0333** ([abortionpillreversal.com](http://abortionpillreversal.com))

In 2019, conservative state legislators were able to enact 25 new abortion bans, primarily in the South and Midwest, prohibiting abortion after a specific fetal age, abortion methods, and for reasons for requesting an abortion (Sex or race selection, Down Syndrome, etc.) ([www.Gutmacher.org](http://www.Gutmacher.org))

As the number of abortion facilities and providers decreases, the number of Crisis Pregnancy Help Centers increases. Funding for Crisis Pregnancy Centers is mostly provided by donations from private individuals and churches. Many organizations provide free housing for women and their babies, like the three Genesis Houses in Melbourne. Ascension parishioners have supported these and other Pro-life organizations in the past.

Planned Parenthood and other abortion organizations do not offer anything for free.

Have a blessed week,

