

REFLECTIONS
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The Pro-Life Future is Bright

Sixty million abortions and counting! The number is staggering. Since *Roe v. Wade* legalized the willful termination of pregnancy, one of every four children conceived in the United States has been killed in the womb.

And what has been the response to combatting this barbarity? Encouraging, but not yet satisfactory!

The majority of adults in this nation still believe, as they did in the late 1970s, that most abortions should be legal, at least under certain circumstances. While seemingly little has changed in 44 years of pro-life effort, the breadth of the statement masks a notable shift in opinion by age group. In the 1970s, the 77 million Baby Boomers, born in the period 1946-1964, had come of age and were changing the nation's social values. Many of them became the revolutionaries of the 1960s and '70s, and the Yuppies of the 1970s and '80s. Self-centered and self-righteous, they engaged in free love, pursued radical feminism, considered marriage an option and made divorce socially acceptable. Children would not disrupt their life styles. Abortion was the answer.

In the succeeding years, their views on human life did not change significantly. They aged, however, so that as today's seniors they are much more supportive of abortion than the seniors of the 1970s.

Others raised in these years resisted the surrounding cultural pressures. They, and some of the "latch-key kids" they bore, became omnipresent parents who pushed their children to succeed, especially academically. Their children, born in the period 1981-2000, constitute the Millennial Generation. They are optimistic, focused, have strong views, and are much more pro-life than their earlier counterparts. In the early 1990s, only 14 percent of the 18-29 age group held that abortion should be illegal in all circumstances; 15 years later, 23 percent believed it should be illegal.

The latest cohort of children, born after 2000, appears to be equally committed to pro-life. Teenage pregnancy, birth and abortion rates are now at 40-year lows. Referred to as the iGeneration, they have been wedded to computers, cell phones and video games since their earliest years. For many, their first picture was taken via ultrasound in the womb, presenting them with the undeniable humanity of the unborn. They are flooded with digitally-delivered information and network and communicate almost constantly in "tweets" through social media. They know what they want and how to get it.

The Millennials have already shown that they are a Pro-Life Generation. From among their ranks are many of today's pro-life activists, disturbing the consciences of their elders, bringing the atrocities of abortion into public view, and expanding their numbers through outreach efforts in schools, colleges and universities. Those who identify as pro-life are intense in their commitment. A NARAL survey in 2010 found that 51 percent of young people who identified

as pro-life held that abortion was a very important voting issue. In contrast, among those who identified as pro-choice, the percentage plummeted to 26 percent.

What might this intensity gap among the young mean for society? Consider what a few passionate Millennials have and are doing.

Kristan Hawkins, as a sophomore in high school, volunteered at a pregnancy care center, then started a pro-life club at her school and did the same in college. In 2006, a year after graduating college, she was chosen to head Students for Life in America. In the past ten years, she has helped create 1,100 college and high school chapters, began Med Students for Life, Law Students for Life, and Pregnant on Campus.

Shawn Carney was a college freshman in 2001 when he was asked by a co-ed to pray with her in front of a Planned Parenthood clinic. He did, and three years later the two of them joined with David Bereit to found 40 Days for Life. In the last decade, the organization has conducted almost 5,000 campaigns in 44 countries, drawn 750,000 participants and saved 13,305 babies.

Lila Rose, in 2004 at the age of 15, founded Live Action, an organization devoted to educating the public about the savagery of abortion. She began by conducting undercover work to expose the operations of the worst abortion facilities. Now, she has built the largest social media following in the pro-life movement, with her recent Internet video discussing abortion procedures being viewed by 80 million people.

David Daleiden, at age 18, headed a chapter of Live Action. In 2013, he founded The Center for Medical Progress to do covert investigative journalism on the abortion industry. In the past few years, the Center released a series of videos exposing Planned Parenthood's sale of body parts from aborted children. This has resulted in several Congressional investigations and a growing number of states eliminating funding for the abortion organization.

Stephanie Gray began giving pro-life talks at the age of 18 as a college freshman. Upon graduation, she co-founded the Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform in 2001, and has given over 800 pro-life presentations, debated numerous abortion advocates throughout Canada, the United States and other countries, and has been a frequent guest on radio and television. Now, she has started a new ministry, Love Unleashes Life.

These and other committed individuals are changing society. Public attitudes are shifting. Pro-life advocacy is increasing. Pro-abortion support is declining. The annual number of abortions is now the lowest it has been since abortion was legalized in 1973. And, as a positive indicator of the future, the number of teenage pregnancies is at an all-time low and decreasing.

The signs are clear. Abortion in America will be outlawed, and it will occur within this generation – *if* we continue to work and pray for its demise.

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