

## The Younger Generation Is Choosing Life

BY Lisa Andrusko

With as many staunch allies as the pro-abortion movement has in the media, when even reporters recognize that pro-abortionists have a problem, the situation must be dire indeed. Such is the case with the undeniable shift of youth out of the pro-abortion camp and into the ranks of the pro-life movement.

Of particular significance is the number of young women speaking out for life. Symbolic of this reluctant media recognition of the obvious was an article in the March 30, 2003, New York Times.

Practically the house organ of the pro-abortion movement, the Times ran a Sunday Style front-page article with the revealing headline, "Surprise, Mom. I'm against abortion." An August 2005 Glamour magazine article was like a matching bookend. The article's tantalizing lament was "The mysterious disappearance of young pro-choice women."

And who should bemoan this shift? None other than Alexander Sanger, chairman of the International Planned Parenthood Council (and grandson of Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger). Mr. Sanger looked at the current numbers and told Susan Dominus, the author of the Glamour article, that he "finds them unbelievably shocking."

The numbers he is referring to are the poll results showing that opposition to abortion is growing among young people. Glamour cites CBS News/New York Times polls where the percentage of young women ages 18 to 29 who said abortion should be available to anyone who wants one (the situation as it is now) dropped 21 percentage points in 12 years: from 49 percent in 1993 to 35 percent in 2003 to 28 percent in 2005.

The same polls show that opposition to abortion among these women has grown since 1993. In 2005, 40% of the young women thought abortion should be available but with stricter limits and 30% thought abortion should not be permitted.

This clear evidence of a much-heightened pro-life sentiment among young people is shown in the sidebar that appears on this page.

### Why the Younger Generation Is Choosing Life

Most longtime feminists, the Glamour article notes, have no choice but to acknowledge the downward trend in support for abortion. However, they appear to have come up with a palatable reason to explain away the dwindling ranks of abortion supporters: "Young women don't know how good they have it," they tell themselves.

These abortion supporters try to convince themselves that when these young women realize that Roe could be overturned, they will come running back to the pro-abortion camp. However, as the article points out, "is it that young women are taking legal abortion for granted? Or are they just changing their minds about it?"

Dominus interviewed many college students around the country. Although she still found students who remain in favor of abortion, young people pointed out the large number of factors that have come together to help make them part of the largest pro-life generation yet.

### Roe Survivors Speak Out

Abortion supporters assume that those who grew up knowing only legalized abortion would automatically want to keep unrestricted abortion. In fact, a lifetime of abortion may be having the opposite effect. Since the Roe decision of 1973 over 46 million babies have been aborted, a number equal to one-fourth of the generation currently in high school, college, and entering the workforce. These young people keenly recognize that they are not another statistic only because their mother decided not to abort them.

Hans Zeiger, a student at Hillsdale College and author of *Reagan's Children*, examined the growing pro-life beliefs of the young people born between 1981 and 1989. These "Reagan babies are standing up for the Roe babies," he wrote. For them, abortion is not a matter of choice; it's a matter of life and death.

Zeiger quotes Frederica Mathewes-Green, a former abortion supporter and now pro-life feminist: "It's not surprising that this change would begin with the young. After all, it is their generation that is under attack: anyone under the age of twenty-nine could have been killed this way. A fourth of their generation was."

- "My classmates and I have never known a world in which abortion wasn't legalized. We've realized that any one of us could have been aborted. When I talk about being a survivor of abortion, I am talking about it from a personal place," says Kelly Kroll, a junior at Boston College, who calls herself a "survivor of the abortion holocaust" because she was adopted.  
--From "Surprise, Mom: I'm Against Abortion," by Elizabeth Hayt, *New York Times*, March 30, 2003

### It's a Baby Not a Choice

This younger generation is not only the first to grow up knowing only legalized abortion; ironically, it is also the first to grow up in an age where the humanity of the unborn child is becoming clearer and clearer and at an earlier and earlier age. For this generation, the first picture in their baby books is their sonogram, often taken very early in their first trimester of life.

Other medical advances, including surgery on babies still in the womb and the survival of preemies at an ever-younger age, make it harder to deny the humanity of the unborn child. "Everyone has seen a sonogram by now," says pollster Kellyanne Conway in the *Glamour* article. "These scientific images are shifting the debate."

- "The pro-life side figured out a long time ago that this is about children, whereas the pro-choice movement is focused on women and choice," acknowledges Tom Cosgrove, a communications consultant who has researched the opinions of youth for national pro-abortion groups.  
--From "Surprise, Mom: I'm Against Abortion"
- "Once they see the baby's heart beating and realize this is really a living creature, it changes their mind," says Tiffany about offering ultrasounds to women at pregnancy support centers. According to *Glamour*, practitioners at pregnancy support clinics estimate that at least 50 percent of the women who see a sonogram image of their baby decide against abortion.

(Other articles indicate the percentage is much higher.)

--From "The mysterious disappearance of young pro-choice women," *Glamour*, August 2005

- "For them, abortion means violence against children. The meaning of abortion is changing, and as it does, minds change as well," says Frederica Mathewes-Green.

--From "Roe Babies and Reagan Babies," by Hans Zeiger, *OpinionEditorials.com*, January 21, 2006

### **Women Deserve Better**

Not only is the unborn child becoming more visible, but the emotional turmoil and physical complications women sometimes experience are also becoming more well-known. Groups such as National Right to Life's American Victims of Abortion as well as Silent No More and well-known women such as actresses Patricia Heaton and Jennifer O'Neill have worked long and hard to tell the world that abortion comes at a very heavy price and that women do indeed deserve better. The pro-life belief that society can—and should—help both mother and child resonates strongly with the young generation.

- "The existence of abortion means that we're not doing enough to help women. ... As it stands, there are three options: one, carrying to term; two, adoption; three, abortion. We have to enable women to choose between one and two ... some choices are wrong," says Christian Senner, a 21-year-old Georgetown University student.

--From "Youth march against abortion," by Liz Fox and Lydia McCoy, *Scripps Howard News Service*, January 22, 2003