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I. The Case Against Abortion / D. Philosophical / 8. "Women Will Do It Anyway"
<http://abort73.com/HTML/I-D-8-anyway.html>

“WOMEN WILL DO IT ANYWAY”

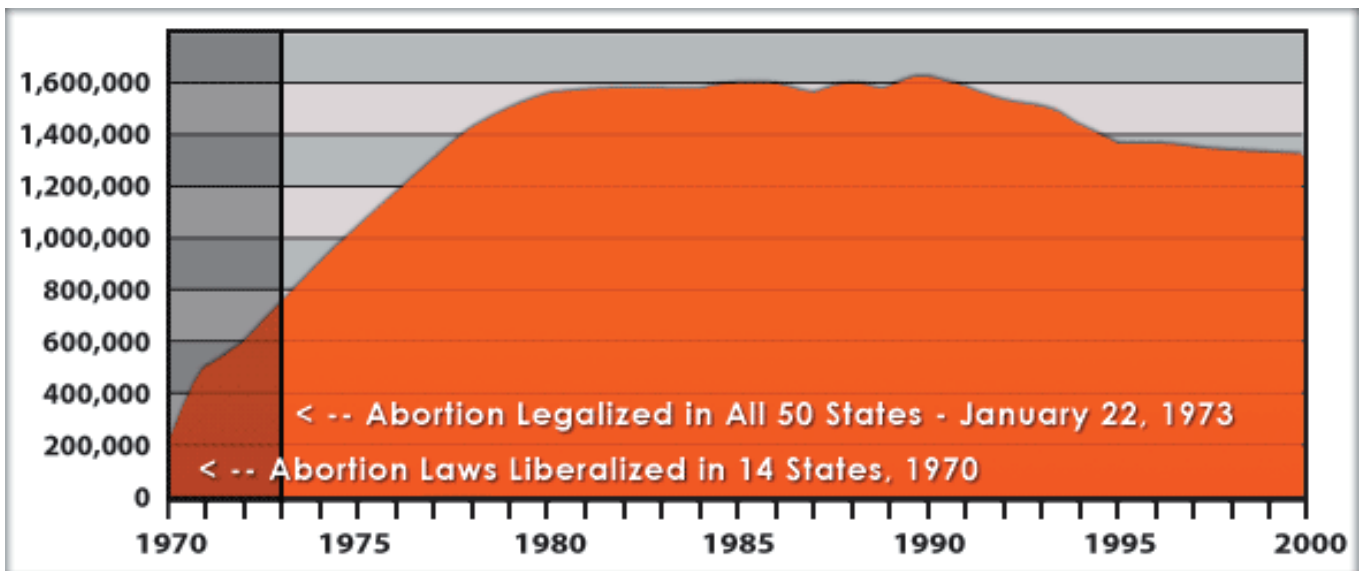
This final, last-ditch plea is essentially a concession that, yes, abortion is an act of violence. Yes, it kills a living human being. Yes, it is wrong, BUT... “women will do it anyway” (so it should be legal). Obviously, this is a very dangerous way to argue public policy, and it doesn’t work for two reasons.

First, every form of lawless behavior imaginable could be rationalized with this same, “people are going to do it anyway” nonsense. “Banks are going to be robbed whether it’s lawful or not so let’s make it legal.” “Women will be raped whether it’s lawful or not so let’s make it legal.” “People are going to run red lights whether it’s lawful or not so let’s make it legal.” The list could go on and on. Laws against anti-social behavior do not eliminate such behavior altogether, but they certainly drive the numbers way down.

Ostensibly, this argument is made in the name of safety. “If women can’t abort legally, they’ll do so illegally, and it will be much more dangerous for them.” While this claim is not true, even it were, nothing would change. Abortion would still be unjustified. Wouldn’t it be absurd to try and legalize armed robbery by arguing that granting such measures would make it much safer for the burglars to obtain what they’re trying to steal? Laws must protect the potential victim, not the potential assailant.

The second problem with this “women will do it anyway” argument is that it only holds true for a small percentage of the population. One need only look at the frequency of abortion since it was first legalized to see that the legality of abortion plays a huge role in establishing a woman’s willingness to choose abortion.

Annual Number of Legal Abortions (1970-2000)



If the legality of abortion didn’t influence a woman’s willingness to choose abortion, then we wouldn’t have seen such a massive increase in abortion frequency during the years following its legalization. And should abortion again be outlawed at a future date, it would cease to be a viable option for most American women. The evidence is clear, both as it relates to abortion and as it relates to all other anti-social behavior. Legislation cannot eliminate such behavior altogether, but it can drive the frequency way down, sparing countless innocent victims from the injustice that would otherwise be theirs.