

FACTS AND TRENDS

Abortion is not good for America. In the broadest sense, it teaches us that violence is an acceptable way to deal with difficult life problems. It teaches us that human beings are only valuable if they meet certain criteria, and it teaches us that the strong have a legal right to kill the weak. You needn't look far to find the connection. When the unique value of individual human life is trampled upon, society suffers.

Many advocates of abortion argue just the opposite. They say that aborting "unwanted" children will reduce child abuse, will reduce neglect, will reduce poverty, and will generally lead to happier families. A popular report from a few years back even argued that abortion is an effective way to prevent crime since it eliminates those who are "most likely" to commit crimes. Imagine that, human beings being executed for crimes they *may* commit in the future. That's a frightening social policy.

Since 1973, when abortion was federally legalized, child abuse has not decreased, child neglect has not decreased, homicide against children has not decreased. Abortion has not solved these problems, but it very well may be feeding the ideology that leads to them.

Here are some telling numbers.

The U.S. Department of Justice, *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*, reports in the October 2001 issue of *Juvenile Justice Bulletin* that "Homicide is the only major cause of childhood deaths that has increased over the past three decades." That time frame exactly corresponds with the federal legalization of abortion. The most severe case of child abuse, homicide leading to death, has steadily increased since abortion became legal.

Between 1984 and 1993, "the number of homicides involving teenage victims increased nearly 158 percent... and by 1993 reached a rate 29 percent higher than the Nation's overall rate. Even after declining from 1993 to 1997, the homicide rate for teenagers remained about 10 percent higher than the average homicide rate for all persons." In other words, children born in the 1970's, the decade abortion was legalized, who became teenagers in the 1980's were 29% more likely to be murdered than was the population at large. How is abortion helping them?

And not only are children born after the legalization of abortion more likely to be victimized by violence. They are also more likely to be the perpetrators. Despite a general drop in crime in recent years, the murder rate for 14 to 17-year-olds in 1997 was 94 percent higher than it was for 14 to 17-year-olds in 1984. Teenagers from 14 to 17 in 1984 were born prior to *Roe*, teenagers from 14 to 17 in 1997 were not. During that same time period, the murder rate for 25 to 34-year-olds dropped 27 percent.

In regard to younger children, Child Help USA tells us that "the rate of infant homicide reached a 30-year high in 2000", more than doubling "from 4.3 homicides per 100,000 children under age one in 1970 to 9.1 per 100,000 children under age one in 2000. This trend occurred during a period in which there was an overall decrease in infant mortality from all sources."

Anyone who sets out to examine the rate of child abuse in general over the last 30 years will find it a very difficult pursuit. Clear numbers are hard to come by. Nevertheless, there is enough information readily available to indicate that child abuse is not going away. Thirty years of legal abortion has done nothing to

drive the numbers down. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services gives us these statistics, tracking the frequency of child abuse through the 1990's and into 2000. "Year-by-year maltreatment rates since 1990 are as follows: 1990, 13.4 per thousand; 1991, 14.0; 1992, 15.1; 1993, 15.3; 1994, 15.2; 1995, 14.7; 1996, 14.7; 1997, 13.8; 1998, 12.6; 1999, 11.8; 2000, 12.2." The report goes on to say that, "Although the recent reported levels are lower compared to the peak years, HHS Assistant Secretary for Children and Families Wade F. Horn said the number of maltreated children in America 'remains unacceptably high and stands as an affront and a challenge to all of us.'

American Humane, a national organization working to prevent cruelty, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children and animals, reports that for the year 2001, 50% of child abuse victims were white, 25% were African American, 15% were hispanic. "These rates have remained consistent for the past several years," the report states. This ethnic abuse rate, is almost exactly parallel to the ethnic abortion rate, indicating that there could be a real connection between abuse and abortion. It is not hard to theorize. The abortion industry has targeted and successfully induced minority communities into a disproportionately high abortion rate. It makes sense that the fallout of this indoctrination, this devaluation of human life, would be a disproportionately high rate of abuse.

In the end, it is only logical to conclude that societies who are willing to kill their children before birth will be far more likely to abuse them after birth. Does legal abortion contribute to an increase in child abuse? Yes or no, it certainly does not prevent it, and in the truest sense, abortion *is* child abuse, and it is the severest form of abuse in existence.