

**An Analysis of the Abortion Fight's History, Facts, and Strategies in a Post-Roe v. Wade
World**

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Conservatives have several notable issues they care passionately about: stopping illegal immigration, ensuring 1st and 2nd Amendment protections, and upholding traditional family structures. But one issue in particular can galvanize the Right like no other: the issue of abortion. The right of the unborn to live has proven heavily divisive, and also offers a fascinating analysis of the leftward slide its opponents have undergone. In the 1990's, President Bill Clinton repeatedly told America his administration's stance on this issue: that abortion be safe, legal, and rare. Now, thirty years later, when former Planned Parenthood president Leana Wen echoed Clinton's perspective, she was heavily criticized by pro-abortion advocates for promoting this "harmful, stigmatizing" slogan. One person who lambasted Wen was Amelia Bonow, creator of the viral social media hashtag #ShoutYourAbortion.¹ In contrast to Clinton's statement that abortion was an unfortunate necessity, the modern Left encourages women to proudly proclaim their infanticidal tendencies, to demonstrate how they have been freed from "oppressive" forces like the patriarchy, the nuclear family, and morality in general. This moral freefall, combined with the fact that over sixty million babies have been killed in under fifty years, would somber even the most optimistic pro-lifer.²

However, in 2022, the state of American abortion politics was flipped on its head. *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark case that had established a "constitutional right to abortion", was overturned by the Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. Both sides of the debate viewed this development as an unadulterated win for pro-lifers. Finally, the outcome that conservatives had been marching, praying, and working towards for half a century had happened. But, contrary to what some liberals' bemoaning might have suggested, this ruling did not ban abortion itself in any sense. Rather, it returned the issue from the federal government's jurisdiction back to where it had been originally: the states. Yes, pro-life states can now heavily regulate or ban abortion, but pro-choice states still have the ability to legalize abortion throughout pregnancy, to ensure that minors may obtain an abortion without parental consent or even knowledge, and to subsidize the whole process on the taxpayer's dime. But surely, should not something pro-lifers fought so hard for and pro-choicers fought so hard against have a positive effect on the number of abortions performed?

Sadly, upon first glance, this appears to have not been the case. According to the Society of Family Planning (a pro-abortion group), in the twelve months following the *Dobbs* decision, the average monthly rate of abortion actually increased - a mere 0.2 percent, but still, that outcome is confusing and not optimal. While the number of abortions in states that enacted bans did drastically fall, it was more than made up for by an increase everywhere else. One possible cause is "abortion tourism", where women in states with bans would travel to more pro-choice states. Several abortion providers even set up clinics practically on the border of pro-life states for easy access. There is also the ever-growing availability of at-home abortion techniques, such

¹ Mary M. Olohan, "The Clintons Coined the Phrase 'Safe, Legal and Rare,' but Abortion Activists Say This Is Stigmatizing." *The Daily Caller*, October 20, 2019. <https://dailycaller.com/2019/10/20/clintons-tulsi-gabbard-abortion/>.

² Louisiana Right to Life. "National Abortion Statistics," August 22, 2017. <https://prolifelouisiana.org/national-abortion-statistics/>.

as pills.³ While these statistics are discouraging, this should not bring conservatives a sense of defeat. Rather, this should move them to reflection on all aspects of the abortion fight: its history, the argument for state versus federal abortion law, and what work there is still to be done. It is necessary to create a framework for where the right to life has been and is now, to have the best chance of protecting it in the future.

First off, an analysis of pre-*Roe* abortion regulations is called for. Surprisingly, they were not always terribly restrictive. For a few decades in the mid to late 19th century abortion was generally legal, at least until the fetus quickened (meaning the mother could feel it moving). However, that didn't last. The American Medical Association came out against abortion in the 1850s, followed soon after by the Catholic Church. The last straw was Congress' passing of the Comstock act in 1873, which prohibited abortion-inducing drugs, as well as contraceptives. Things stayed this way until the 1960s, when the rise of second-wave feminism led to increased pushes for abortion legalization. By the time *Roe* came before the Court in 1973, several states had already legalized abortion.⁴

It was at this point that two lawyers, Sarah Weddington and Linda Coffee, formulated a plan to make a "right to abortion" recognized across the nation. They based their case on the 1965 *Griswold v. Connecticut* case, where the Supreme Court had legalized contraceptives for married couples. This was on the grounds that they had interpreted the Constitution to imply a "right to privacy", despite having no explicit support in the document.⁵ This so-called right had then been used in *Eisenstadt v. Baird* to extend contraceptive access to unmarried persons.⁶ Coffee and Weddington's strategy was to carry out a class action lawsuit on behalf of all women in Texas (their home state) who might want an abortion in future. That meant they needed a named plaintiff, or someone who represented all the women whose interests were being ruled on.⁷

Enter Norma McCorvey – or as she came to be known, Jane Roe. McCorvey had already had two children, whom she had put up for adoption. In her third pregnancy, however, she wanted an abortion. At the time, of course, that operation was outlawed in Texas. Weddington and Coffee agreed to represent her pro bono, free of charge. They named Henry Wade, the Dallas County district attorney, as the defendant, and brought the case to federal trial court. They initially won, but Wade appealed, and the case worked its way up to the Supreme Court. The Court eventually decided to put forward different requirements for different trimesters: in the

³ Claire C. Miller and Margot Sanger-katz, "Despite State Bans, Legal Abortions Didn't Fall Nationwide in Year after Dobbs." The New York Times, October 24, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/24/upshot/abortion-numbers-dobbs.html>.

⁴ Craig LeMoult, "A Legal History of Abortion in the US, before and after Roe v. Wade." GBH, May 24, 2022. <https://www.wgbh.org/news/national/2022-05-24/a-legal-history-of-abortion-in-the-us-before-and-after-roe-v-wade>.

⁵ LeMoult, "A Legal History."

⁶ Candace Coletti, "Eisenstadt v. Baird - Case Summary and Case Brief." Legal Dictionary, October 29, 2018. <https://legaldictionary.net/eisenstadt-v-baird/>.

⁷ LeMoult, "A Legal History."

first trimester (where around 90% of abortions occur⁸) abortion couldn't be regulated at all. In the second trimester states could regulate abortion as long as they did not ban it completely, and in the third trimester (where less than 1% of abortions occur⁹) states could ban it, as long as there was an exemption for the life or health of the mother.¹⁰ It was official: *Roe* was now the law of the land.

In the decades that followed, several other cases moved the needle in one direction or another. *Doe v. Bolton* had expanded “health of the mother” to include non-physical wellbeing, such as emotional, familial, or financial. This essentially meant that a woman could get an abortion for any reason at all.¹¹ On the positive side, *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* required informed consent, parental consent for minors, and a 24-hour waiting period with information on abortion alternatives before the procedure could be carried out. The protection of life focus also switched from the third trimester to the viability of the fetus.¹² And *Gonzales v. Carhart* upheld the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act – which, it should be noted, was the first direct national restriction on any abortion.¹³ Through it all, *Roe* remained intact – at least until the summer of 2022.

Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization has its roots in the 2018 Mississippi Gestational Age Act. This law was based on a model from Alliance Defending Freedom and was specifically designed to ignite a legal process that would end in *Roe* being overturned.¹⁴ The act banned abortions after 15 weeks (exempting severe fetal abnormality or true medical emergencies). This is well before the age of viability, so “Women’s Health” filed suit in federal court against Thomas Dobbs, Mississippi state health officer. The initial suit was successful, but through petition, eventually made it to the Supreme Court. Of course, the Court’s decision is well known: *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* were overturned, and the states’ authority to make their own abortion laws was returned.¹⁵ Thirteen states had already passed “trigger laws”

⁸ Rachel K. Jones and Lawrence B. Finer. “Who Has Second-Trimester Abortions in the United States?” *Contraception*, December 15, 2011. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0010782411006251?via%3Dihub>.

⁹ Katrina Kimport, “Less than 1% of Abortions Take Place in the Third Trimester – Here’s Why People Get Them.” *The Conversation*, October 20, 2023. <https://theconversation.com/less-than-1-of-abortions-take-place-in-the-third-trimester-heres-why-people-get-them-182580>.

¹⁰ LeMoult, “A Legal History.”

¹¹ Judie Brown, “*Doe v. Bolton*.” *ALL*, September 5, 2017. <https://www.all.org/judie-brown-commentary/doe-v-bolton>.

¹² Meg Matthias, “*Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey*.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, January 2, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Planned-Parenthood-of-Southeastern-Pennsylvania-v-Casey>.

¹³ Candace Coletti, “*Gonzales v. Carhart* - Case Summary and Case Brief.” *Legal Dictionary*, April 16, 2017. <https://legaldictionary.net/gonzales-v-carhart/>.

¹⁴ Amy Littlefield, “The Christian Legal Army behind the Ban on Abortion in Mississippi.” *The Nation*, November 30, 2021. <https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/alliance-defending-freedom-dobbs/>.

¹⁵ Craig Newton, “*Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* (2022).” *Legal Information Institute*, February 22, 2023. https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/dobbs_v._jackson_women%27s_health_organization_%282022%29.

that would immediately ban or restrict abortion if *Roe* was overturned.¹⁶ While all states make an exception if the mother's life is in immediate danger, fourteen states have otherwise banned the practice completely, many have made their laws more restrictive, and several have laws ready to go that are currently being held up by legal injunctions.¹⁷

Now, since *Dobbs* has been law for over a year, a decent analysis of its effect on abortion numbers can be carried out. As previously stated, the Society of Family Planning found that abortion rates actually went up in the twelve months following *Dobbs*, with the monthly average rising by around two hundred procedures. This does not include abortions performed outside the medical system, such as a woman using abortion pills provided to her by a friend. The main outcome of *Dobbs* was not a shift in numbers as much as location: abortion numbers went down to almost zero in states with very strict bans, but rose everywhere else – especially in pro-choice states directly bordering pro-life ones. Besides these abortion havens, online-only clinics are causing an increase in at-home medication abortion.¹⁸ So what do these troubling statistics portend for the future of the pro-life movement?

First off, there is something to be said for the spiritual side of this. It is certainly a blessing that *Roe* is no longer official national law, and that state lawmakers can act on the consciences of themselves and their constituents to protect life. God's judgment on this country may well have been staved off by an iota. But then again, maybe not, if Americans just continue to do away with their babies in a different way. Some people may suggest fighting for control of state legislatures, so as to enact bans more broadly, and eventually bring the numbers down. While that is a good strategy in theory, in practice it may not be so simple. States are either firmly entrenched on one side or another, or are purple states that could overturn rules the other party put into place if power switches. As for states becoming more conservative, that is also unlikely. Political migration is a real phenomenon: red states are getting redder, and blue states are getting bluer.¹⁹ At best, conservatives might induce even stronger regulation where some form already exists, but major abortion havens are unlikely to change their stripes – and given that some women have already traveled over twenty hours to kill their babies, the problem is clearly

¹⁶ Elizabeth Wolfe, "13 States Have Passed So-Called 'trigger Laws,' Bans Designed to Go into Effect If *Roe v. Wade* Is Overturned." CNN, May 3, 2022. <https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/03/us/state-abortion-trigger-laws-roe-v-wade-overturned/index.html>.

¹⁷ Annette Choi and Devan Cole, "See Where Abortions Are Banned and Legal - and Where It's Still in Limbo." CNN, October 30, 2023. <https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/31/us/abortion-access-restrictions-bans-us/index.html>.

¹⁸ CBS News. "Abortions in the U.S. Rose Slightly after States Began Imposing Bans and Restrictions Post-Roe, Study Finds," October 26, 2023. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/abortion-rose-after-roe-dobbs-restrictions-study/?ftag=CNM-00-10aab7e&linkId=244081540>.

¹⁹ John Burnett, "Americans Are Fleeing to Places Where Political Views Match Their Own." NPR, February 18, 2022. <https://www.npr.org/2022/02/18/1081295373/the-big-sort-americans-move-to-areas-political-alignment>.

motivational rather than locational.²⁰ But to address this, conservatives first must ask themselves some tough questions.

To start with: was the Supreme Court's decision to return the issue to the states actually Constitutionally sound – and if it was, is it worth going against the Constitution if a federal ban at a certain point would save more lives? For the first question, there are a few approaches. From an originalist perspective, it is most likely that the Founders never imagined or would've approved of a right to abortion being enshrined in any law at any level. While some may have been Deists, or had messy personal lives, all recognized how vital it was for America to be based on Christian principles. But if it were a debate at the time, the issue likely would not have been federal, as the 10th Amendment says that if the Constitution does not grant a power to the federal government, or ban a power from the states, the power resides with the states or the people. As the Constitution does not mention abortion, it most likely would be a state issue or a proposition to be voted on by the people. If the originalist viewpoint is rejected, the deciding qualification would be if abortion was defined as murder. This audience likely needs little convincing that it is. If so, it would almost definitely be a state issue, as standard murder laws are within a state's jurisdiction, while federal murder laws are limited to specific murders like that of a federal official, murder while on federal territory, and so forth.²¹

Another key factor to consider is what a federal abortion law would look like practically. There are already some on the books that are not outright bans. The Hyde Amendment prohibits federal funds from paying for abortions (except for rape, incest, or life of the mother) and, despite not being a permanent law, has continued to be renewed by Congress since 1976. This is extensive, since it covers health services like Medicare and Medicaid.²² But there is no official federal law either banning or codifying general abortion access – though some aim to change that. Lindsey Graham has proposed national fifteen-week bans in Congress.²³ The law did not go into effect, but there have been repeated efforts by some to have Congress regulate abortion rather than states. There are two ways it could theoretically do that: one, it could use the Commerce Clause that banned any abortion that utilizes a device or medication that has been a

²⁰ Jamie Yuccas, "States with Abortion Rights Expect to See Surge in Out-of-State Patients - and Protesters." CBS News, June 24, 2022. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/states-with-abortion-rights-surge-of-out-of-state-patients-and-protesters/>.

²¹ Neil Shouse, "Is Murder a Federal Crime?" Shouse Law Group - Criminal, Immigration, Injury & Employment Lawyers, November 16, 2023. <https://www.shouselaw.com/ca/blog/murder/is-murder-a-federal-crime-7-ways-it-can-be/>.

²² Louise Norris, "What Is the Hyde Amendment?" Verywell Health, November 15, 2016. <https://www.verywellhealth.com/what-is-the-hyde-amendment-4111739>.

²³ Nick Mordowanec, "Lindsey Graham Abortion Bill Explained: What We Know about Nationwide Ban." Newsweek, September 13, 2022. <https://www.newsweek.com/lindsey-graham-abortion-bill-explained-what-we-know-about-nationwide-ban-1742537>.

part of interstate commerce. The other possibility is to define fetuses as persons, and therefore worthy of protection under the 14th Amendment.²⁴

While all these efforts sound good enough, there are significant drawbacks. First of all, any abortion ban that managed to make its way through Congress would likely be heavily watered down. Even with Graham's proposed fifteen-week ban, it bears reminding that over 90% of abortions take place before that point anyway. Moreover, it is unlikely that such a law would mean state laws that were more restrictive would no longer apply. Therefore, states would be making most of the decisions regarding abortion anyway. And finally, political power in D.C. swings back and forth very often. Just as easily as one Republican Congress and President would pass this law, a more abortion friendly administration could easily reverse the legislation one way or another. That is why having the states as a guard against that kind of event is so vital, so that not all the pro-life eggs are in one basket, as it were.

So, while the Supreme Court was right to return the issue to the states, the question remains – did it do any good? In some ways, yes. Despite the overall rise, there were some bright spots. In the six months following *Dobbs*, abortion numbers came in 32,000 under what was predicted.²⁵ If that number stayed consistent, maybe 100,000 lives have been saved by now. Not all women who would otherwise get an abortion maneuver around their states laws to do so. And while the fact that abortion numbers still rose is sobering, they would have risen significantly more had *Dobbs* not happened. Also, to argue that abortion becoming more limited created a “run” on abortion like toilet paper in March 2020 is not based on common sense. It is difficult to imagine a pregnant mother who was going to keep her child changing her mind based on the decision of nine justices that likely did not affect her life in any other way. It is, however, within the realm of believability that a mother who planned on abortion might not go through with it if it suddenly became less convenient and she was not in a desperate position. So, the rise of abortion numbers after *Dobbs* is most probably a prime example of correlation not equaling causation. Rather than being discouraged, pro-lifers should rejoice in every life saved, and double their efforts after having gained a large victory. The worst thing they could do at this moment is become complacent.

Before going out and campaigning for the unborn's right to life, conservatives must also be armed with all the facts concerning this topic. One aspect that could receive more focus is how abortion, beyond its obvious killing of a baby, has a negative effect on the mother as well. For instance, there is a large amount of evidence that suggests a link between getting an abortion, and poor mental health. A psychological analysis from Cambridge University gathered research on this topic from a fifteen-year period, and found that “[w]omen who had undergone an abortion experienced an 81% increased risk of mental health problems” than women who had not

²⁴ Isaac Chotiner, “How the Supreme Court Could Approach Federal Laws Upholding—or Banning—Abortion.” *New Yorker* (New York, N.Y.: 1925). June 28, 2022. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/how-the-supreme-court-could-approach-federal-laws-upholding-or-banning-abortion>.

²⁵ Deidre McPhillips, “There Were 32,000 Fewer Legal Abortions in the US in the Six Months after the Dobbs Decision, New Analysis Suggests.” *CNN*, April 11, 2023. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/04/11/health/abortion-decline-post-roe/index.html>.

had an abortion. What's more, almost 10% of the problems were directly shown as attributable to abortion, to say nothing of more subtle factors. In the end, the study concluded that abortion has an association with a 55-138% increase in risk to mental health.²⁶ A similar study from Finland analyzed pregnancy-based suicides. Compared to the average annual suicide rate of 11.3 per 100,000, the rate associated with giving birth was 5.9, the rate for miscarriage was 18.1, and the rate for induced abortion was a whopping 34.7. Abortion had raised the suicide risk for all age groups.²⁷ These findings, at the very least, cast doubt on the claim that abortion is safer than having a tonsil removed.²⁸

But beyond just the mental aspect, the physical must also be considered. There is concrete scientific backing for the claim that abortion increases a woman's chances of having breast cancer. The idea is that "abortion of a first pregnancy interrupts the growth and changes which enable the breast to produce milk, leaving the breast at a heightened risk of cancer." The breast cells, denied the opportunity to fully develop, are stuck in transitional states, which makes the risk of them becoming cancerous exceptionally higher.²⁹ The rate of breast cancer has been on the rise in groups such as poor women, and young African-American women – which, coincidentally, are the groups most likely to obtain abortions.^{30,31}

But what are the new fronts in the abortion fight where conservatives could redirect their energy previously used campaigning for *Roe*'s overturn? One possibility is volunteering at a crisis pregnancy center. These organizations provide medical care, resources, and compassionate support for vulnerable women who need those things dearly. They offer desperate expecting mothers an alternative to making a choice they very likely could regret for the rest of their lives. Naturally, this means that the Left is waging an all-out war against them. Politicians like Elizabeth Warren have demonized these centers as spreading abortion disinformation and "torturing pregnant persons", seemingly incapable of saying "pregnant women".³² California

²⁶ Priscilla K. Coleman, "Abortion and Mental Health: Quantitative Synthesis and Analysis of Research Published 1995–2009." *The British Journal of Psychiatry: The Journal of Mental Science* 199, no. 3 (2011): 180–86. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.bp.110.077230>.

²⁷ M. Gissler, E. Hemminki, and J. Lonnqvist, "Suicides after Pregnancy in Finland, 1987–94: Register Linkage Study." *BMJ* 313, no. 7070 (1996): 1431–34. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.313.7070.1431>.

²⁸ Elizabeth Warren, "If You're Not Worried about Justice Kavanaugh Overturning *Roe v. Wade*—You Should Be." *Marie Claire*, July 25, 2018. <https://www.marieclaire.com/politics/a22540680/brett-kavanaugh-roe-v-wade/>.

²⁹ EWTN Global Catholic Television Network. "The Link between Abortion & Breast Cancer." Accessed February 19, 2024. <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/link-between-abortion--breast-cancer-11985>.

³⁰ Katie Watson, "Abortion as a Moral Good." *Lancet* 393, no. 10177 (2019): 1196–97. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(19\)30581-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(19)30581-1).

³¹ Cecilia Lenzen, "Facing Higher Teen Pregnancy and Maternal Mortality Rates, Black Women Will Largely Bear the Brunt of Abortion Limits." *The Texas Tribune*. June 30, 2022. <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/06/30/texas-abortion-black-women/>.

³² Liz Wolfe, "Elizabeth Warren Wants to Shut down All of the Country's Crisis Pregnancy Centers." *Reason Magazine*, July 14, 2022. <https://reason.com/2022/07/14/elizabeth-warren-wants-to-shut-down-all-of-the-countrys-crisis-pregnancy-centers/>.

sued two pregnancy centers over their distribution of an abortion reversal pill that, when used properly, saves the baby's life over sixty percent of the time. The state's official reason for this is that the pill's safety has no credible scientific backing, despite the fact that the state has no problem with abortion pills that are designed to kill.³³ And within a month after *Roe*'s reversal, thirty-nine pregnancy centers, as well as twenty-seven churches, were attacked by pro-abortion advocates. The justice system has by and large chosen to ignore these attacks, probably viewing them as mostly peaceful protests.³⁴ It is very telling that the "pro-choice" side hates whenever any choice that is not abortion is offered up.

While pregnancy centers offer amazing services, sometimes more long-term help is needed. That is where maternity homes come into play. 73% of women who undergo abortions list an inability to afford the child as a reason.³⁵ On top of that, many prospective mothers would have to find a new place to live, and have limited access to medical care. Maternity homes help to alleviate those burdens, by providing temporary housing, prenatal care, education opportunities, and other highly needed resources. People who want to work in this area can serve as staff or even host families.³⁶ Altogether, both pregnancy centers and maternity homes dispel the myth that pro-lifers disregard the mother and only care for the child.

Alongside serving expectant mothers, another way to help the cause of life is public demonstrations. One option of how to do that is to hold an actually peaceful protest at abortion clinics. Women who seek abortions often are in a conflicted state of mind, and every effort should be made to convince them to reconsider before entering those clinics and making a choice they can't undo. (Ironically, the silver lining to at-home abortions becoming more prevalent is the option for the woman to access abortion reversal pills if she changes her mind, something traditional abortion centers certainly would not allow). The vital thing to remember, though, is not to be too aggressive in demonstrations. An overly judgmental, condemning attitude would only serve to harden the mother's heart to the pro-lifer's pleas. And, as with any action that protects the unborn, this practice is under attack. While America is not yet at the level of Britain (where simply praying silently near an abortion clinic can end with an arrest³⁷), there still is a fair amount of risk involved.

While some American's ideas of religious persecution are laughable considering what Christians in other nations go through, make no mistake, this country is on the road to becoming

³³ Talia Wise, "CA Sues Faith-Based pro-Life Pregnancy Center over Abortion Reversal Pill - Here Are the Facts." CBN, September 28, 2023. <https://www2.cbn.com/news/us/ca-sues-faith-based-pro-life-pregnancy-center-over-abortion-reversal-pill-here-are-facts>.

³⁴ Micaiiah Bilger, "There Have Been 76 Attacks on Churches and Pregnancy Centers, Not One Attacker Has Been Sent to Prison." Lifenews.com, July 22, 2022. <https://www.lifenews.com/2022/07/22/there-have-been-76-attacks-on-churches-and-pregnancy-centers-not-one-attacker-has-been-sent-to-prison/>.

³⁵ Watson, "Abortion as a Moral Good."

³⁶ Brittany Smith, "What's a Maternity Home and How They're Helping Women Choose Life." Save the Storks, September 2, 2020. <https://savethestorks.com/2020/09/what-is-a-maternity-home/>.

³⁷ Lois McLatchie, "Charity Volunteer Arrested, Charged for Silent Prayer 'Thoughtcrime' near Abortion Facility." ADF UK, December 20, 2022. <https://adf.uk/woman-charged-for-thoughtcrime/>.

that way. Several groups of people have recently been arrested, tried, and convicted under the FACE Act, for nothing more than a peaceful demonstration of Christians' beliefs regarding abortion. This law, which is rapidly approaching its thirtieth anniversary, prohibits three things: the use of physical force, threat of physical force, or physical obstruction to interfere with a woman attempting to enter an abortion facility. Now, the law also bans the same kind of action against a place of religious worship, but all that provision does is highlight how a biased justice system can easily choose to only uphold the part of the law that it likes.³⁸ For the high crime of laying in front of an abortion clinic door, one protester is facing up to eleven years in prison and a \$350,000 fine.³⁹ This is a day and age where rioters burn businesses, topple statues, and deface priceless art with impunity, and receive a slap on the wrist. The ones that are actually punished are those who stand up for a baby's right to life. Truly, there needs to be a radical realignment of America's values.

If, under these (manifestly unfair) circumstances, abortion centers seem like too risky a place to publicly demonstrate, there are also various opportunities elsewhere. Perhaps the most well-known is the annual March for Life. The famous gathering of pro-lifers from across America, which started the year after *Roe v. Wade*, has been going strong for over half a century. The March has attracted various high-profile speakers, from actors to athletes to presidents.⁴⁰ This very school has had a growing role recently, with Liberty University students leading the March for the first time last year, on its fiftieth anniversary.⁴¹ The organization also hosts state marches across the country, recognizing that the fight for life requires every corner of America to stand together.

And, while those are the most well-known ways to support the pro-life cause, there are some more unusual examples as well. Michigan native Maison Des Champs is one notable example. The so-called "pro-life Spider-Man" has free-climbed skyscrapers from New York to San Francisco, all to raise awareness and money for pro-life causes. He has repeatedly been arrested for doing so, but perseveres in his daredevil endeavors.⁴²

There is one alternative to abortion that, while certainly effective, requires far more commitment than all these other options: adopting a baby. If the birth mother is unable to take

³⁸ LII / Legal Information Institute, "18 U.S. Code § 248 - Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances." Accessed February 15, 2024. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/248>.

³⁹ Madeline Osburn, "Five Pro-Lifers Found Guilty of FACE Act Violations for Protesting at Late-Term Abortion Facility." *The Federalist*, August 29, 2023. <https://thefederalist.com/2023/08/29/five-pro-lifers-found-guilty-of-face-act-violations-for-protesting-at-late-term-abortion-facility/>.

⁴⁰ Feroze Dhanoa, "March for Life 2018: Trump, Paul Ryan Address Rally (VIDEO)." *Patch*, January 19, 2018. <https://patch.com/district-columbia/washingtondc/march-life-2018-start-time-speakers-road-closures>.

⁴¹ Sydney Jaxtheimer, "Liberty University Students to Lead National March for Life Rally in D.C." *WLSL* 10, January 19, 2023. <https://www.wsls.com/news/local/2023/01/19/liberty-university-students-to-lead-national-march-for-life-rally-in-dc/>.

⁴² Stepheny Price, "'Pro-Life Spiderman' Arrested after Climbing Las Vegas Sphere during Super Bowl Week." *Fox News*, February 7, 2024. <https://www.foxnews.com/us/pro-life-spiderman-arrested-after-climbing-las-vegas-sphere-during-super-bowl-week>.

care of her child, this is a sad but ultimately redemptive choice. This is a tremendous responsibility, and should not be undertaken unless one has the means, mindset and motivation to care for the child. However, adoption has served as a way to make many families more whole, whether helping a couple who is unable to conceive, or welcoming the child into an already established family of brothers and sisters. Some organizations even offer birth mother scholarships to help offset the setback the pregnancy may have had on the mother's education. And all the costs of adoption are covered by the adopting family.⁴³ This is in contrast to abortion, which can cost anywhere from hundreds to a few thousand dollars, which insurance does not always cover.⁴⁴ Now, there is one problem with this idea. Most pregnant women intuitively know that the decision to give up their baby for adoption would cause them a good amount of emotional turmoil. Besides, they might not want to go through with the famously painful process of giving birth. That probably accounts for the discrepancy in the numbers of women who give up their child for adoption vs have an abortion: around eighteen to twenty thousand versus around nine hundred thousand a year.⁴⁵ That is why it is so crucial to inform women about the negative effects that abortion can have on them, as those facts are both less widely known and heavily covered up by mainstream sources.

In conclusion, the abortion fight is heavily complicated and multi-faceted. It can easily become discouraging, seeing as how even with the most prominent abortion fight won, the numbers are still not going down. However, now is not the time for despair, but for strengthening our resolve. With *Roe* out of the way, the fight can move to the states, and pro-lifer's efforts can be refocused on a variety of different strategies. There are legitimate ways to argue against abortion both for the sake of the baby and of the mother. And whether it's working to support both the mother and the baby, publicly demonstrating an allegiance to the cause of life, adopting a precious child, or even climbing a skyscraper, the pro-life movement has a way for anyone to contribute. The fight is well worth it to ensure that every baby, made in the image of God, has a right to live.

⁴³ American Adoptions, "American Adoptions - 24 Reasons for Choosing Adoption over Abortion." Americanadoptions.com. Accessed February 19, 2024. <https://www.americanadoptions.com/pregnant/reasons-for-adoption-instead-of-abortion>.

⁴⁴ Unplanned Pregnancy |, "How Much Does an Abortion Cost?" Unplanned Pregnancy, August 22, 2017. <https://unplannedpregnancy.com/abortion/facts-about-abortion/abortion-costs/>.

⁴⁵ Mary L. Kelly, Ashley Westerman, and Sarah Handel, "Sociologist Says Women Are More Likely to Choose Abortion over Adoption." *NPR*. December 3, 2021. <https://www.npr.org/2021/12/03/1061333491/sociologist-says-women-are-more-likely-to-choose-abortion-over-adoption>.

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