

40 years  
*after*  
*Roe v. Wade*

*Six women  
reflect on tragedy  
and hope.*



Thank you for choosing this important resource. Our booklets are designed for grassroots activists and concerned citizens—in other words, people who want to make a difference in their families, in their communities and in their culture.

This booklet highlights the courageous and inspiring stories of women leaders who have dedicated their lives to protect unborn children and their mothers. Their experiences and opinions are their own, but we are all unified in heart and purpose. I join them in mourning the loss of 55 million precious lives over the past 40 years since *Roe v. Wade*. I join these women, also, in fighting to protect the dignity and opportunity of each unborn child and every mother in need.

FRC has a wide range of papers and publications related to the protection of unborn children and the health of the family. To learn more about other FRC publications and to find out more about our work, visit our website at [www.frc.org](http://www.frc.org) or call 1-800-225-4008. I look forward to working with you as we bring about a society that respects life and protects marriage.

President  
Family Research Council

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## *Fighting* **for Life**

One cold, wet day in San Jose, California, at the age of nine, I found something called the *Handbook on Abortion* by Dr. and Mrs. J.C. Willke. Curious, I opened it. In shock, I quickly shut the book and pushed it away. And then I opened it slowly and looked again. I was looking directly at the picture of a tiny child, maybe ten weeks old, with tiny arms and legs, who had been the victim of an abortion.

Right then I knew it was ugly and wrong. But over the next decade I grew in my understanding of the gravity and urgency of this holocaust of unborn children, of our duty to protect them, and of my desire to help.

I began investigating the abortion industry as a college freshman at UCLA with my friend James O'Keefe. "UCLA doesn't support women who are pregnant," I was told by the head nurse at my campus student health center when I posed as a pregnant student seeking pregnancy counseling. She instead gave me information about two local abortionists to contact.

After such startling discoveries at the campus health center, James and I were eager to expose the abortion giant—Planned Parenthood.

Our idea—to investigate the abortion industry at the ground level—wasn't new. In 2002 Mark Crutcher, of the pro-life group Life Dynamics, ran a study that surveyed over eight hundred Planned Parenthood clinics and National Abortion Federation affiliates. James and I wanted to find our own way to expose the corruption and bloodshed. Months after our first investigation of the UCLA health center, we went undercover to two Los Angeles Planned Parenthood clinics.

I posed as a young, scared, pregnant girl, fifteen years old, the victim of a twenty-three-year-old statutory rapist. The Planned Parenthood staff told me, into our hidden cameras: "Figure out a birth date that

works.” Lie about your age on the paperwork. Say you are older than you really are. We will give you a secret abortion, and no one will ever know.

The YouTube videos we made of our tapes went viral. Planned Parenthood threatened to sue me—an eighteen-year-old college freshman. With less than \$200 in my bank account, these threats might have seemed daunting if I had not had a deep sense that God, as he always does, would use this only for good.

And, of course, he did. Because of the threat of the lawsuit and the added media attention, I had my first O’Reilly Factor interview—and, after the bad press, Planned Parenthood did not pursue the threat of the lawsuit.

My summer vacations turned into summer research projects—undercover investigations into abortion clinics across the country. In the summer of 2007, we investigated six different Planned Parenthood development departments, talking with directors of development and other staff to see whether rumors of Planned Parenthood’s racism were true.

African-American women account for less than 13 percent of the U.S. population but submit to nearly 37 percent of all abortions. Approximately 80 percent of abortion clinics are located in minority neighborhoods. Although most people in our country do not know it, such a heavy abortion rate among minorities was planned and desired by the founders of Planned Parenthood, particularly by founder Margaret Sanger, an open racist and eugenicist.

Sanger is still revered by pro-abortionists. Are her policies still in circulation? We decided to investigate.

By phone, James posed as a racist asking whether he could donate to Planned Parenthood for the abortion of a black baby. Like the racism that James acted out, the response to these proposed race-based donations was horrific. No Planned Parenthood employee hung up the phone. All agreed to accept the donation or find a way to do so, and some made understanding remarks about the racism or showed

excitement about the race-based donation. In one conversation with a Planned Parenthood office in Idaho, when James said there were “way too many blacks,” the development director laughed and said, “Understandable, understand-able.”

I began to dream: A multistate inquiry to investigate child sexual abuse cover-up. Once the investigation was completed, a series of video releases, on the local level, to stir up controversy in each city or community as the overall national story built. With help from two close friends and my always-supportive parents, I prepared a budget and a project plan.

Miraculously, all the needs for the project were met. As I took my final exams, I juggled last-minute meetings with donors and interviews with potential investigative team members. Less than a handful of people knew about any of our plans, and even fewer knew details—all to preserve our ability to operate covertly. Our research team worked to chart out the investigation and develop briefs on every clinic and state. I researched and purchased police-quality undercover equipment and began training.

We were about to begin my most ambitious investigation—a probe deep inside the closed doors of Planned Parenthood called the Mona Lisa Project.

For this investigation I had to disguise myself by bleaching my hair platinum blonde because Planned Parenthood had put up warning posters—showing me as a natural brunette—in many of its clinics nationwide. I was nineteen years old, leading a team of other young people to travel nationwide in twenty-one days and go undercover into clinics posing as sex-abuse victims. I began each morning and ended each night in a hotel room, on my knees in prayer. Soon afterward I was sitting in the waiting room of a Planned Parenthood clinic, posing as a thirteen-year-old girl named Brianna.

A year later I began another multistate traveling investigation called the Rosa Acuna Project. Our team had been inside dozens of clinics in many states. I had sat through counseling sessions, seen women

with blood on their clothes, and heard the harsh words of abortion workers who cannot help but taste the evil of their work.

I'd become an expert on what everyday abortion workers say to women because I'd heard it firsthand and have trained and briefed investigators who go in and collect the evidence firsthand. In clinics nationwide, Planned Parenthood employees have said the heartbeat starts at eleven weeks, at twenty weeks, or when the baby is born. They have said that hands and feet don't form until right before the baby is born. They call the unborn child's heart just an electrical flicker, and they call the unborn child fetal matter, an alien, a tadpole, a cup of coleslaw—any number of dehumanizing names. The Rosa Acuna Project has documented these lies in a series of public video releases.

In fewer than four decades, America has permitted the slaughter of more than 50 million tiny children. There has never been another slaughter as unjust and widespread as abortion because never has a human society destroyed so many of its young.

People do not see the unborn as human beings equal in worth to ourselves or others—to a two-year-old toddler, for example. After all, fetuses and embryos cannot demand protection from us. They do not cry in front of us, or wail as a two-year-old might if he or she senses danger in a clinic waiting room. Their tiny vocal cords are hardly developed. We do not have to watch them hold out their tiny, newly developed hands. They are hidden in the bodies of their mothers. Because the unborn cannot beg us for mercy, many Americans may think that abortion is a tragedy, but a necessary one at times. Or many may think that abortion is a tragedy, but not their main concern.

We who know better must proclaim that the value of our unborn brothers and sisters is not based on what they give to society. It is based solely on the mysterious worth of their humanity, that mysterious imprint of the divine. To be human is enough. To be human should grant you a place of love and dignity in any family, any society, any nation.

Most people do not see clearly the evils of their own century, their own age. It is the history makers, the revolutionaries, and the visionaries who identify the failings, injustices, and opportunities of their century and work tirelessly to address them. Thanks to the revolution in media through blogs, Facebook, Twitter, webcams, and cell phones, everyone can create and distribute media. Like many other organizations, Live Action is seizing this opportunity to talk past the pro-abortion gatekeepers of previous decades and show the world the truth about abortion. Today, I aspire to do my part. I pray that many more, young and old, will join.

*A longer version of this piece appeared in the October 2010 issue of First Things under the title 'Fighting for Life.' It is excerpted here with permission.*



*Lila Rose*

**Lila Rose**, a recent UCLA graduate, has dedicated herself to building a culture of life and ending abortion. At age fifteen, Lila founded Live Action, a pro-life nonprofit which specializes in investigative journalism, media and youth education. As a freshman at UCLA, Lila founded the pro-life student magazine *The Advocate*, now the largest pro-life student publication in the country. Lila is a frequent guest on radio and television programs and was featured in a documentary, "Right on the Edge." Lila also serves on the board for the Queen of Angels Charitable Trust Foundation in Los Angeles, CA. Lila's work has received a number of awards and Lila is a national and international pro-life speaker.

# I am *Silent No More*

*It was 1976, I was 16 years old, and I had my abortion. I had it because I didn't want people to know I was sexually active. While I didn't really understand what an abortion was, I remember driving to the clinic and thinking, "this feels wrong, but it's legal, so it must be ok." Afterwards I felt relieved that my problem was gone. I drove to my sisters and cried myself to sleep. The next morning I woke up knowing that I had to go home and see my parents, so I pulled myself together, and decided to pretend the day before never happened. Denial. The next 19 years were spent denying that day in October. Except when I heard the word abortion, it felt like someone stabbed me in the stomach, and I'd look for alcohol to numb the pain.*

*God's grace broke me out of my denial one afternoon in February of 1995, when in the midst of doing routine chores; I felt my aborted baby's presence as I held a book in my arms. That day I faced a truth I had tried to ignore – I didn't just have an abortion, I aborted a child. My child, God's child, a child created to be a blessing. I instantly began to weep for what I lost, and that was the moment my healing and restoration began.*

As we observe 40 years of legalized abortion, I am personally observing 15 years of working in the “pro-life” movement. I remember the day my pastor asked me to apply for the Executive Director position at Anglicans for Life (known then as the National Organization of Episcopalians for Life). I said, “Absolutely not! I am a woman who had an abortion; pro-lifers will stone me.”

My pastor then asked me to pray about it. Eventually I said yes to him and to God, with the plan that I would keep my abortion experience private.

Well, that didn't last long, and I was invited to share my story at a National Right to Life Convention at a workshop that featured

Monsignor Mike Mannion. I sat in my room the morning of our presentation crying and asking God to make me sick so I could get out of sharing my abortion testimony. I was afraid of how the people who worked so hard to protect babies from abortion would respond to me as the murderer of my baby.

I was shocked by the compassionate and supportive response I got from everyone that day. Many folks in the room came up to me afterwards and whispered in my ear that they, too, had had abortions or that their wives or previous girlfriends had aborted their children. Hugs and tears helped me to begin to understand why God had called me to this mission field.

Many of those who spoke to me had not heard about the abortion after-care healing programs like Rachel's Vineyard or Forgiven and Set Free. I realized God could use my story to help others find forgiveness and healing like I had experienced. Each program is Christian-based, and healing is tied to accepting what Jesus Christ did on the Cross to redeem our sin of abortion.

I kept telling my story and five years later helped co-found the Silent No More Awareness Campaign along with Janet Morana from Priests for Life. The Campaign seeks to help people understand what abortion feels like emotionally, spiritually and physically. We explain how it impacts the mothers, fathers, families and society and we offer opportunities for hope and healing.

Now after ten years, 5,555 women and men have shared their stories publicly in 48 states and ten countries. People from 67 countries have registered their abortion pain and regret on the Campaign website.

Our stories have helped unpack the mystery behind a woman's choice to abort, so people—especially side-walk counselors in front of abortion clinics—are better equipped to respond to the real needs of a pregnant, abortion-minded woman.



When men and women with the Silent No More Awareness Campaign share their testimonies, they talk about how the abortion experience changed them. In turn, their stories help policy-makers, counselors and the general public understand that there are long-term emotional consequences. Each story helps dismantle the argument that abortion is a neutral experience for women.

Our stories also help others find help and have hope that they too can make peace with the pain that abortion has caused in their life.

In addition to the benefits discussed above, I have noticed that abortion testimonies are now regularly included at pro-life events. Leaders in the pro-life movement more frequently speak about caring for both the babies *and* their mothers. Our stories inspire creative ministries within the pro-life movement. Our stories remind people that, if we help the mother, she will be empowered to care for her child and less likely to choose an abortion.

In the early 80's, only a few women were sharing their abortion experiences. Some were members of organizations like Victims of Choice and the American Victims of Abortion. Other women were writing healing programs and Bible studies to help them cope with the pain they felt after abortion.

The advent of the Internet helped the two foundations that had been growing during the 80's and 90's to come together. When we began the Silent No More Awareness Campaign, many more women were ready to speak the truth. Through our own websites and blogs, we were able to publicize the Campaign well beyond the media gatekeepers. The more women and men who receive God's forgiveness and healing, the more they become billboards for the truth. Abortion not only kills our unborn children, it also leaves many of us with lifelong regret.

My prayer and hope is that more and more people join us in being *silent no more*. I pray that, as people hear about the problems abortion caused in our lives, the reality of abortion's destructive nature

will drown out the rhetoric of "choice." I pray that abortion will become unthinkable and an unacceptable solution for an unplanned pregnancy. Legal or illegal, abortion kills children and hurts women, men, and society as a whole. And that is why I am silent no more.



*Georgette Forney*

**Georgette Forney** is in her 15th year as President of Anglicans for Life and is the co-founder of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign, an effort to raise awareness about the harm abortion does to women and to let those who are hurting from abortion know help is available. Georgette had an abortion at age sixteen and later experienced healing, forgiveness and reconciliation after going through an abortion recovery program. She has spoken at many Pregnancy Resource Center banquets, pro-life conferences, conventions, churches, rallies, and university and college campuses. She served as the host for the television infomercial "Tilly." Georgette has testified before Congress regarding the impact of abortion on women's health and fielded numerous print, radio and television interviews for local, syndicated and national shows, papers and magazines. Georgette lives in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, with her husband of over 30 years; their daughter Rebekah designs accessories in Brooklyn, NY.

## Women *Deserve Better* than Abortion

As a young woman in the seventies, I heard the desperation of women and girls who felt driven to abortion after the *Roe v. Wade* decision. I heard about a boyfriend who said he loved his girlfriend until she told him she was pregnant. And parents who were embarrassed and drove their daughter to a clinic, saying they didn't want her to end up in a marriage like theirs. A schoolmate said she'd never be forced to place a baby for adoption again. When she found herself in the same situation, she realized she still couldn't raise a baby on her own. With underlying issues still unresolved, she ended up in an abortion clinic.

It was clear to me that the *Roe v. Wade* decision unleashed a great experiment on women. It now became a woman's duty not to inconvenience *us* with her pregnancy problems.

Rather than criminalizing those who had an abortion, I wanted to free women from abortion through solutions.

My first speech as a speech major in college was against abortion. My classmates gave me an "A-" with an "A" for content and a minus because they disagreed with my pro-life stance. A professor called me into his office to admonish me. "It's just a bunch of cells," he said. Well, aren't we all? I stood my ground.

I felt alone as a feminist who opposed abortion and alone as pro-lifer who dared to declare herself a feminist. I wanted nothing to do with the pro-life movement because, through the prism of the press, anti-abortion activists didn't seem to care about women.

I vividly remember the moment I first read—and then reread—the words "Feminists for Life" and "pro-woman, pro-life" in a 1994 issue of *Washington Post*. Finally I was *home*. Soon after, I was hired to lead this little-known group co-founded a year before *Roe* by Pat Goltz, who was thrown out of a NOW meeting for distributing pro-life literature.

Who knew that the early American feminists were pro-life? Thankfully Feminists for Life (FFL) historians had uncovered anti-abortion beliefs documented in Susan B. Anthony's *Revolution* and other suffragette publications. (My predecessor Rachel MacNair had already conceived a group called the Susan B. Anthony List to help elect pro-life women to Congress—both Democrats and Republicans.) So Feminists for Life set out to educate the pro-life and feminist movements and college students about America's rich pro-life feminist history.

I quickly learned there were others in the pro-life movement who cared deeply about women as well as children, especially those who worked in underfunded pregnancy resource centers. Unlike Planned Parenthood, they were quiet, apolitical, and had no advocates or marketing gurus. FFL partnered with centers, pro-life student groups, and others across the country to help those at highest risk. We urged them to "Question Abortion."

FFL began to memorialize women who died from legal but lethal abortion in a column of *The American Feminist*, "We Remember." Later, we published stories by women called "Voices of Women Who Mourn." We helped to put a face on the women who felt forced to sacrifice their children and themselves because it was "our body, our choice." In reality, it was now "our problem."

Answering the unmet needs of women is the motivation behind everything FFL does.

We advocated for poor and working-poor women without maternity and postpartum care or healthcare for their children, and for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence and coercion. But we asked ourselves, what more could FFL uniquely contribute?

A 1996 Gallup poll at the time revealed that when high school girls graduated, 47% were pro-life and 37% were pro-choice. But by the time they graduated from college, 73% were pro-choice. What happened?



I had been sharing our pro-life feminist history on college campuses across the country. Then a Board member shared her story of being pregnant as a grad student. “Without housing, childcare and maternity coverage, it didn’t feel like much of a free choice,” she said.

The light bulb lit. Little had changed on campus for pregnant women and student parents since my father graduated from college with me in his arms. The Guttmacher Institute confirmed what we knew anecdotally: many women choose abortion due to a lack of resources and support.

Abortion is a reflection that we have not met the needs of women and that women have settled for less.

For the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, I suggested pro-life advocates declare in unison, “Women deserve better than abortion.” A decade later FFL continues working to connect our slogan to its bigger meaning: *resources and support*.

We continue to listen to women—and look for FFL’s unique opportunities for impact.

Almost half of women who have abortions are college-age, so we created the first tools for schools: FFL’s Pregnancy Resource Survey, Pregnancy Resource Forums, a National Directory of Campus Resources, model policies, website, orientation materials, and communication strategies. Our on-campus solutions continue to go viral.

Many college-age mothers are in the workplace. We published strategies to make the workplace increasingly family-friendly. Sixty-nine percent of women driven to abortion are economically challenged. Sixty-one percent *already* are mothers. So we published our “Raising Kids on a Shoestring” resource guide.

As the only pro-life group to work on the Violence Against Women Act, and the only feminist to testify before the US House Judiciary Subcommittee in support of the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, we continue to focus on domestic violence, sexual assault, and sex

trafficking. Recently, FFL named Joyce McCauley-Benner among a dozen Remarkable Pro-Life Women who give voice to those who made exceptional choices when facing “hard cases” such as pregnancy resulting from rape. Joyce didn’t know who the father was, but she knew who the mother was and chose victory over violence.

FFL honors many different family structures for raising kids—married, single, guardianship and kinship care—and we also remember the birthmother. As former FFL board member Jessica O’Connor-Petts says, “Adoption is an empowering option for women.”

In an often polarized debate, no honest person can argue with the truth FFL first articulated: Women deserve better than abortion. All children deserve their chance at life.

FFL continues to seek opportunities for new and expanded life-affirming solutions. We refuse to choose between women and children. All people are equal. All choices are not.



*Serrin Foster*

**Serrin M. Foster** is the President of Feminists for Life of America and has led the organization since 1994. Serrin served on the National Taskforce Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, which worked to pass the Violence Against Women Act, and she also testified before the U.S. House Judiciary Committee in support of the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, also known as “Laci and Conner’s Law.” The creator of the Women Deserve Better than Abortion® campaign has been an outspoken opponent of pregnancy discrimination and has focused on developing on-campus resources and support for underserved pregnant and parenting students. In January 1997, Serrin moderated the first-ever FFL Pregnancy

Resource Forum<sup>SM</sup> at Georgetown University, which became a model for the country and in 2010 became the basis for Pregnancy Assistance Fund grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Serrin’s landmark speech, “The Feminist Case *Against* Abortion,” has been recognized as one of the “Great Speeches in History” in an anthology called *Women’s Rights*.

## I Once was Lost, but Now *I'm Pro-Life*

Sometimes I wonder what I would have named them. Would I have had two girls, or maybe a girl and a boy? I wonder if my daughter would have had my round cheeks or dark hair. Maybe my son would have had his dad's dark brown eyes or maybe been a good athlete. I'll never know. I killed two of my children by abortion. I utilized my choice to take their lives. I bought what the abortion industry was selling. I then turned around and sold those same lies for eight years. I ran a Planned Parenthood abortion clinic. I sold abortion to women at their most vulnerable time. I coerced them. I helped them kill their children.

Thankfully, I am also redeemed. I don't have to live with that shame and guilt anymore. I can use those terrible experiences to help save the lives of others.

For 40 years, we as pro-life advocates have treated clinic workers as lepers, those that we can't touch. But times are changing. We are now reaching out to clinic workers, just like people reached out to me. We are reaching them with compassion and the mercy and love of Christ. They are turning to the pro-life movement for help and we are answering their call.

When I left the pro-choice movement, I was certain that there must be a national organization out there to specifically reach out to clinic workers. I was shocked to find out there was none. I decided it was time to change that. In June 2012, I launched a ministry to reach out to clinic workers called, "And Then There Were None." Our goal is to help clinic workers to know Christ as their Savior and convert to the pro-life movement. When that happens, we will help them financially, spiritually, emotionally and legally. Since last June, we have had more than 40 workers turn to our ministry. These workers are the piece of the puzzle that has been missing all of these years. In fact, one of our former workers has already helped to shut down the clinic where she once worked.

As pro-life advocates, we have been working for 40 years, trying to figure out what goes on inside the abortion industry. Now we know, because of these former workers.

My goal in the pro-life movement has always been conversion: conversion of clinic workers, pro-choice politicians, pro-choice activists, churches that support abortion, and mothers in crisis. And yes, sometimes, we have to convert the hearts of our own pro-life activists. We must ask ourselves what it really means to be pro-life. Does it mean that we just don't like abortion? Or does it mean that we are willing to go that extra step? Are we willing to take a young pregnant woman into our home to care for her when she has no one else? Are we willing to give sacrificially to those who have nothing? Are we willing to set our superficial judgments aside and truly be Christ-like? Are we willing to show mercy when others condemn? Are we willing to develop a genuine relationship with a clinician who works in the abortion industry? Are we willing to get our hands dirty?

Being pro-life isn't always pretty. And it's not just about "saving babies." It is about saving persons: the woman, the baby, the man involved, the family, and the clinic worker. It is sometimes about putting someone else's needs above our own. It is about stepping out of the comfortable and moving into a place that is unfamiliar.

We can set the example as individual advocates. But I believe this care must start in our churches. It is time for a revolution that will begin with Christians. It is time to start talking about the sanctity of human life as much as possible. Is it comfortable to talk about abortion? Not always. Do people always want to hear about it? Not usually. But silence breeds apathy, and that is what we are soaked in—apathy. The greatest breeding ground for apathy seems to be in our churches. Why is that? God makes it pretty clear throughout Scripture that life is sacred. We aren't scared to talk about a slew of other "hot button" issues, but we tend to be silent on the number one

issue that has invaded our churches. According to the Guttmacher Institute, 72% of women seeking abortions come from churches. Actually, I think that number is low. As a Planned Parenthood employee, my colleagues and I performed very few abortions on women who claimed to be atheists or agnostic. No, many of them brought their Bibles and/or rosaries to their abortion appointments. Many would ask if we would pray with them before the abortion procedure began.

Many of my pro-life friends are surprised to hear that I sat in church every Sunday even while I worked in the abortion industry. I never heard anyone speak about abortion. I never heard my preacher speak about the sin of abortion or about the healing that can come through Christ. Members of the church knew where I worked, but nothing was ever said. Apathy keeps these church-going women coming to the abortion clinics over and over again. Apathy keeps abortion clinic workers sitting in the pews feeling comfortable with their work. The churches are silent. The majority of clergy are silent. And their silence is *deafening*. By not speaking up, these clergy are telling silent sufferers in their congregations that the sin of abortion is *too big* for God. That is a *lie*. Clergy who are silent on this issue are doing their congregation an incredible disservice. With 72% of abortions coming from the church, a sermon once a year during the Sanctity of Human Life month is not enough! People are hurting. They are in desperate need of healing and they have no idea where to go because the church is silent. We have become so concerned about offending others that we have forgotten how much our apathy offends God.

If you are in a church where your pastor or priest actively speaks on the sanctity of human life, I encourage you to thank him, and thank him often. It is not easy, but it is right. If you are not hearing a message about abortion and healing from the pulpit, I strongly urge you to go to your pastor and ask why. Share why this is important to you. Share relevant statistics with them. Share your heart. Just because your pastor is silent does not mean you have to be. If you are not praying outside of abortion clinics, start now. If you are not

trying to reach out to women in crisis and abortion clinic workers, now is your time. No one is beyond the mercy of Christ. Everyone's heart can change. Stand up for life. Stand up and speak up. Lives are depending on it.



*Abby Johnson*

**Abby Johnson** has always had a fierce determination to help women in need. It was this desire that led Abby to a career with Planned Parenthood and later caused her to flee the organization and become an outspoken advocate for the pro-life movement. Today, Abby is the Chief Research Strategist for Live Action Films, President and Founder of And Then There Were None, a ministry that reaches out to abortion clinic workers, and works with many different pro-life organizations. Abby lives in Texas with her husband and two children.

## “Over the Hill” at 40?

Forty years. I remember when I turned 40 just 3 ½ years ago, pondering the idea of being “over the hill,” midway through the projected 80-year lifespan. So, the pro-life movement in the U.S. is 40. Is it now “over the hill?” In another 40 years, will the movement have reached the end of its lifespan? Or will we now begin to gain momentum as we continue?

I recall speaking at a rally marking 25 years of *Roe v. Wade*. I realized that we were still far from overturning it, but encouraged my audience to hope that legalized abortion in the U.S. would come to an end by the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It just made sense—40 is a Biblical number. We have spent 40 years roaming in the desert wasteland of an aborting nation. Yet, here we are at 40, with no end in sight.

For me, time of is the essence. I am alive today because I was legally protected from abortion. I was conceived when my birthmother was abducted at knifepoint by a serial rapist. She went to two back-alley abortionists, and I was almost aborted. However, seeing the filthy conditions and experiencing the personal hostility of the abortionists themselves, she left in horror.

I absolutely would have been aborted if the procedure had been legal in Michigan at the time. My life was spared because I was protected by law. I was protected by pro-life activists and legislators who recognized that mine was a life worth saving. They were 100% pro-life, no exceptions, no compromise. I owe my life to these pro-life heroes, and that is why I, in turn, seek to do the same for others.

While in law school, I wrote a 43-page essay, “The Right of the Unborn Child Not to be Unjustly Killed – a philosophy of rights approach.” It has been the top-ranked philosophical abortion essay on Google for over a decade now. I wrote it because I always wanted to have a real impact by defending the lives of others. Feeling like my life was spared from a burning building, out of gratitude, I feel an

urgency to go back and save others who are similarly-situated. The most selfish thing to do would be to live a safe, quiet life.

It would also be safe to “go along to get along,” but I don’t believe that we can afford another 40 years of what has primarily been a failed strategy, full of compromise and disunity. Not all have compromised, but there has been and remains a schism within the pro-life movement regarding strategy. Some of my pro-life colleagues advocate for accepting the “rape exception” as pragmatic; others believe we must not discriminate and must not compromise on the basic premise that *all lives are worthy of protection*. Primarily, the advocates of compromise have had their way and own much of the legacy of the last 40 years. Yet we have to face an irreducible question: Does the source of a child’s conception, whether from the ideal (an act of marital love) or from the depraved (an act of violence) determine the humanness of a child and his or her right to life? However tragic the circumstances of conception, children like me are as human as you. We have value independent of our mothers, a value which should be affirmed by law.

In my home state, I’m proud to say that Right to Life of Michigan (RLM) has never accepted the rape exception, even when they were the lone affiliate to take that stand. RLM has strict PAC-endorsement criteria and will not approve legislation with a rape exception.

When RLM could not get the state ban on Medicaid funding of abortion passed without exceptions, they worked with legislators to change their hearts and minds. When some of those legislators still insisted on “the exceptions,” RLM’s PAC targeted them in their primaries, helped get 100% pro-life candidates elected, and then passed the critical legislation with no exceptions. Now, many other state pro-life organizations have adopted that model of upholding a comprehensive pro-life banner, and are taking ground as a result. Georgia Right to Life is a prime example of how taking an uncompromising position ended up being the most pragmatic strategy.



I have heard numerous times from other pro-life leaders that cases involving rape are just not our strong point, and that we need to secure victories and change minds where we can. But such a stance suggests that pro-life victory is impossible without compromising, as if it is impossible to convince legislators that such lives have value. In 2011, Gov. Rick Perry credited me with changing his heart on the rape exception. He said he could not look me in the eyes and justify the rape exception any longer; the very next day he signed the 100% pro-life presidential pledge from Personhood USA. Newt Gingrich did the same. Such consistent pro-life advocacy is not only possible, it is being achieved.

I stand with other pro-life advocates who were conceived in rape or became pregnant by rape. But too often, we are forgotten and marginalized, even by our friends. Rape and abortion are wrong for the same reason; they are both violent acts of aggression against another person. If you really care about rape victims, you should want to protect them from the rapist, and from the abortion, and not the baby. A baby is not the worst thing which can happen to a rape victim — an abortion is. My goal is to see our entire pro-life movement embrace this reality. Goals are only impossible when you don't try.

I have been involved in pro-life activism for decades and litigated numerous high-profile cases defending human life. I became frustrated by the lack of strategy for ending legalized abortion, other than voting for a pro-life president who would then, at least theoretically, appoint pro-life justices to the U.S. Supreme Court. But every presidential candidate who was being endorsed made the rape exception. This is why I was so excited when a Personhood Amendment petition drive was being brought in my home state of Michigan. Finally, there was a strategy I could embrace!

Over the last couple of years, as National Spokeswoman for Personhood USA and current Director of Save The 1, I've testified before legislatures on Personhood legislation and abortion bans. Typically, the sponsors of the legislation didn't think they had the

votes to get it out of committee. But after all of the testimony was taken, not only did they have enough votes, but in some states, formerly pro-choice legislators voted for the measure.

At times, the discussion about abortion primarily has been relegated to the pro-life closet, where it's been shelved. The pro-life movement can be a bit of "holy huddle," without relevance to the average American. But I believe that the conversation about personhood helps draw it out of the closet and thrusts it into the public forum for serious discussion. Legislation about personhood forces voters and lawmakers to think and vote. It is both pragmatic and uncompromising. Instead of treating children like me as cannon fodder, we become powerful testimonies to a God who can use horrible situations to bring good. I'd like to think that it's *Roe v. Wade* and abortion advocates who are "over the hill" at 40 and that it's our pro-life movement who is being rebirthed.



*Rebecca Kiessling*

**Rebecca Kiessling** is a pro-life speaker, attorney, and National Spokeswoman for Personhood USA. Honored by Feminists for Life as one of their internationally named "Remarkable Pro-Life Women," Rebecca has shared her personal story in churches, universities, and conferences across the world. She has served as vice-chair of a crisis pregnancy center for two years and on the advisory board of Michigan Nurses for Life and currently serves on the Advisory Board of Crossroads Pregnancy Center. As a family law attorney, Rebecca has taken four pro bono cases of international attention all involving the protection of preborn human life, including the "frozen embryo" case in Michigan. Rebecca has been married for 11 years, adopted 2 children, and home schools her 5 children.

## The *Power of One Person* in the Pro-Life Movement

As we prepare to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision making abortion legal in all of the United States, we face the somber reality of 55 million unique lives lost. But despite this enormous loss, we have reason to hope. Perhaps more than ever before, we need everyone who believes in the dignity of the human person to rally and persevere in his or her efforts to protect life.

Lately, I have sensed a palpable discouragement among those who actively promote a culture of life. Such discouragement is understandable. The abortion health insurance mandate, part of the regulations under the Affordable Care Act (known as *ObamaCare*) has left many feeling helpless to counter a real evil—a government requiring its citizens to ignore their conscience on life and death issues. The 2012 campaign season was rife with untruths about issues related to life and the election's results caused some on our side to lose the heart to tackle the most important issues head-on and with a spirit of truth.

But now, at this critical juncture, we who call ourselves pro-life must buoy our spirits and continue our work. We must protect the dignity of each human person. And while it may often appear that our work has little impact, nothing could be further from the truth. Every effort counts! A couple of real life examples of ordinary people whose pro-life works have helped build a culture of life in the United States vividly make that point.

A few years ago, I rode in a car with a woman I will call “Molly.” She shared a story about her efforts to protect the human dignity of the unborn. Molly regularly prayed in front of her local abortion clinic. On one rainy and cold day, she was feeling sick with a mild cold. Molly longed for the comfort of her warm home and bed, but

decided to persevere, stay and pray in front of the clinic. At one point, she talked with a woman seeking an abortion but felt like a failure when the woman still entered the clinic for the abortion. After what appeared to be a good deal of meaningless sacrifice, Molly went home.

Months later on a sunnier day, Molly again was praying outside of the clinic and received a visit from the rainy day “failed” client. Much to her surprise, the woman obviously was pregnant. She told Molly how she entered the clinic, fully intending to get the abortion. Once inside, the rainstorm was severe enough that it had knocked out the electricity. She was told she would need to come back another day for the procedure. The expectant mother understood this occurrence to be nothing short of divine intervention to save her baby's life. Because of rainy day intervention, she chose to carry her baby to term. So what had appeared to Molly to be a fruitless day was actually quite the opposite: a life was saved, at least in part, because of her efforts.

Another woman advocating for the unborn—or “preborn” as she preferred to say—is the recently deceased Nellie Gray. In 1973, Nellie was a newly retired 40-something government lawyer. She was appalled and shaken by the Supreme Court's decisions in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. Leading up to the first anniversary of these decisions, Nellie gathered a number of pro-life leaders in her Capitol Hill dining room to explore ways to appropriately commemorate such a terrible decision and the ensuing loss of life. This first meeting in 1974 led to the first March for Life.

Nellie Gray lived to the age of 88 and spent the latter part of her life advocating for the not-yet-born babies. Her last recorded phone call was about the March for Life; she has been called the “Joan of Arc” of the pro-life movement. Nellie often prayed for the conversion of those working in the abortion industry and she sometimes caught a rare glimpse of an answered prayer. During one of the March for Life rallies, Nellie was honored to have Bernard Nathanson tell his



story. Bernard, the former abortionist and architect of legal abortion in the United States, came to acknowledge the truth about abortion and it changed his work and his life.

Nellie never expected that abortion would remain legal for 40 years. Nor did she ever anticipate that the March for Life, the humble effort of an “ordinary” woman, ultimately would become the largest pro-life gathering in the world, influencing legislative and policy decisions in Washington, D.C. Her initially small efforts made a huge difference. Without Nellie Gray, we likely would not have an annual March for Life. We likely would not have the many legislative fruits that accompany the annual peaceful protest. I am humbled and honored to pick up the work that Nellie Gray started.

There are countless more stories of ordinary people who make a difference because they are committed to defending and protecting life in small ways. I encourage each reader to consider what more you can do to protect life. What prayers or loving acts can be offered to build a culture of life? What ways can we reverse defeat and rebuild enthusiasm for our cause?

We, the citizens of the United States, must have great hope. This hope is not of a superficial character, ignoring the real the tragedy of the 55 million unique human lives lost in the past four decades. It does not take away the pain of women who have chosen abortion. Rather, it is the kind of hope that shines brightly amidst the darkness of our culture. It is the hope that comes with truth, freedom, and love. Every one of us must do our part to protect the defenseless and make this hope a reality.



*Jeanne Monahan*

**Jeanne Monahan** was recently appointed to the role of President of the March for Life Education and Defense Fund. Previously Jeanne worked with the Family Research Council (FRC), where she focused on issues related to the inherent dignity of the human person, including abortion, women’s health, and end-of-life issues. Prior to FRC Jeanne worked for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Office of the Secretary and for the Catholic Church in a variety of positions involving educating on life issues, human sexuality, marriage, and family. Jeanne has made frequent media appearances and holds an undergraduate degree in psychology from James Madison University and a Masters degree in the theology of marriage and family from the Pope John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL



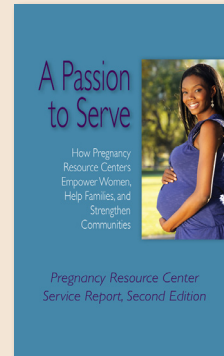
### The Best Pro-Life Arguments for Secular Audiences BC11E01

Abortion is unlike any other issue debated today. Millions of American women have aborted a child, and the pain, loss, and emotional need to justify what was done, both on the part of the mother and on the part of her loved ones, is strong and deep. This means that, in any debate, you may face an invisible thumb on the scale so that even the best logic will fail to persuade. The best you can do is arm yourself with the facts and deliver them in what you hope will be a winning way for your audience – meaning you will need to make your case, in most instances, not in the language of faith or religion but in the language of the post-modern secularist. This pamphlet outlines the best arguments from science, the law, and women's rights to advance the pro-life case against abortion.



### America's Abortion Provider: What Everyone Should Know About Planned Parenthood BC12H02

Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) receives roughly 46 percent of its budget from federal and state grants and contracts. Many Americans think of the PPFA as a benign or even benevolent healthcare agency advocating for patient "reproductive rights." This pamphlet will provide factual information about Planned Parenthood, detail its negative impact on women's health, and offer steps that concerned citizens can take to withhold taxpayer funding. Much of the information in this pamphlet is taken directly from Planned Parenthood's annual reports and fact sheets and is cited accordingly.



### A Passion to Serve - How Pregnancy Resource Centers Empower Women, Help Families, and Strengthen Communities BL11L01

Over the past 40 years a movement of women and men has created and sustained a vital service in an area of unsurpassed need. A mustard seed of concern for women facing unexpected pregnancies has blossomed into dynamic national and international networks of love in action. Today, through a massive commitment of personal time and professional services, the movement to provide pregnancy-related resources encompasses thousands of centers worldwide that bring aid and hope to millions of people each year. The scope of these centers varies but their mission is single-hearted: to communicate to women and their families that their lives are valuable and that their needs - emotional, psychological, medical, spiritual and practical - can and will be met. The global pregnancy resource movement now offers powerful community-based programs whose accomplishments are a story not yet fully told. The goal of this report is to provide to layman and professional alike, to the legislator and the citizen - to all people of goodwill - an account of the good that is being done in our midst.



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