

Some Abortion Facts

Many Americans do not grasp the astoundingly immense number of abortions which are being performed each year. So some information is needed.

Abortion was legalized on a national level in the 1973 Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision. The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), the special research affiliate of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (the nation's largest provider and promoter of abortion) provides the most complete statistics on abortion.

Here is some of this information. But keep in mind that the statistics are probably understated. One former abortion manager reveals that there are local abortion mills which find it convenient do not to list all their abortions. In this way neither they nor participating physicians need to report income taxes on part of their income.

The annual number of abortions has more than doubled and, since 1989, has been "estimated" at 1,600,000 per year in the United States alone.

The total number of abortions from 1973 through 1993 is estimated at 31,460,374 (31.5 million). The current annual figure of 1.6 million baby deaths equals 4,383 abortions per day. This is 182 abortions per hour, 3 per minute, or 1 abortion every 20 seconds.

All this is heart-sickening. How do these figures compare in various parts of the nation?

Almost all abortions are performed in metropolitan areas. In 1988, only 27,000, or 1.7 percent, occurred in non-metropolitan counties. This is significant statistic, be-

cause, when abortions wring their hands and plead for more abortion mills "because there is no abortion provider in 83 percent of U.S. counties in 1988."

According to AGI, the national abortion ratio in 1988 was 28.6. That means that 28.6 out of every 100 known pregnancies ended in abortion. About three out of every ten unborn babies in the United States is intentionally killed. Yet the only ones put in prison are those who protest it too vigorously.

The AGI figures indicate that the abortion rate was the highest in 1980-1981, and then leveled off to a slightly lower figure. But it may be that some of the local abortion mills perfected their methods for underreporting abortions. (One mill uses a ticket system. The doctor is given a ticket for each abortion, just before it is performed. At the end of the day, he turns in the tickets and is given a certain amount of money. But it is all done in such a way that both he and the mill can avoid reporting as many abortions as they together decide on.

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We mentioned earlier that, in 1988, the national abortion ratio in 1988 was 28.6 (28.6 out of every 100 known pregnancies ended in abortion). But there is also another rate: 27.3 (which is 27.3 abortions for every 1,000 women of child-bearing age [15-44]). Looking more closely at this second ratio, we find that the four states with the most abortions were California (45.9), New York

(43.3), Hawaii (43), and Nevada (40.3). But the highest of all was the District of Columbia, with an abortion rate of 163.3. Wyoming (5.1) and South Dakota (5.7) had the fewest.

The above average can be written as a ratio (28.6) or as a percentage (28.6%).

Now let us compare this U.S. abortion rate of 28.6 with that found in western Europe: Americans are having more abortions than the peoples of Europe, but perhaps our reporting system is somewhat better. Western European countries ranged from 10 to 20. For example, England and Wales had a rate of 14.2 in 1987.

Unmarried women had an abortion rate of 46.2 abortions per 1,000 women of childbearing age, which was almost five times higher than married women, who had a rate of 9.3 that same year.

Teens aged 18 and 19 had the highest abortion rate of any age group: 63.5 abortions per 1,000 women of that age. Women aged 20 to 24 had the next highest rate: 54.2. Both were much higher than the national average of 27.3.

In every year since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, non-white women aborted at twice the rate that white women did. In 1988, the abortion rate was 21.2 for white women and 57.3 for non-white women.

Looking again at the U.S. national abortion ratio, which is 28.6 (28.6 women had abortions for every 1,000 known pregnancies), we find that women aged 40 or more ended 43.9 percent of their pregnancies. Teen aged 15 and 19 had the second highest percentage (40.7).