



Pro-Life Apologetics 101

This guide will present you with the most common critiques and criticisms of the pro-life position and walk you through informed, Christ-like responses that will reflect truth and soften hearts.

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This document is intended for use as a reference guide. Because some critiques and criticisms of the pro-life position fall in multiple categories, some questions and answers appear more than once.

Is the pre-born child a person?

1. “We don’t know when life begins.”

Science has long proven that a new human life begins at the moment of conception. From that first moment, the newly created human being is distinct from the mother, bearing a unique genetic code. According to the “Father of Modern Genetics,” Dr. Jerome Lejeune, “To accept the fact that after fertilization has taken place, a new human has come into being is no longer a matter of taste or opinion...it is plain experimental evidence.”¹

The former Genetics Department Chair at Mayo Clinic²; the National Bioethics Advisory Commission³; and distinguished professors at Harvard⁴ and many other leading universities agree.

Even if it were unknown when life begins, the only reasonable approach is to err on the side of caution. Imagine that a hunter saw movement in a bush and fired his gun, killing a fellow hunter. “I didn’t know it was my friend; I thought it might be a deer,” would not be an acceptable defense. If there is any question of whether an embryo or fetus might be a human being, the only acceptable approach is to proceed as though it is.

2. “It’s not a baby. It’s a fetus/blob of tissue/clump of cells. It’s only an inch and a half long. Are you seriously telling me that’s a human?”

If a pre-born child is a clump of cells, so are you. The only difference is that you’re bigger!

But, while pre-born children might be smaller or look different when compared with grown adults, their size does not change their existence as human beings. They are still unique individuals with their own distinct genetic code. While babies, toddlers, children and teenagers all continue to grow, they do not become more human. Their lives do not become more valuable as they get bigger.

Historically, it has always become easier to justify exterminating a particular class of people when that class of people can be dehumanized. Terms like “fetus” (which is simply the Latin word for “offspring”), “blob”, or “clump” are often meant to dehumanize a pre-born child so that abortion is deemed acceptable. In reality, a pre-born child’s heart starts beating at just 18 days, and brain waves are detectable not long after!

¹ <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/10/24/the-miracle-of-human-development-life-begins-long-before-shes-born/>

² <http://www.madisoncatholicherald.org/makingadifference/6393-how-marvelous-is-the-miracle-of-life.html>

³ Cloning Human Beings, Report and Recommendations of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission. Rockville, MD: GPO, 1997, Appendix-2

⁴ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/life-begins-at-conception-science-teaches/>

Don't let the linguistic engineering fool you. A pre-born child doesn't magically become human as she passes through the birth canal. She is human from the moment of conception and will remain human for the rest of her life.

3. **"My body, my choice." or "A woman has the right to do as she pleases with her body."**

There's a saying that, "My right to swing my fist ends where your nose begins." That adage applies to abortion: your right to do what you choose with or to your body ends where the body of your child begins.

Even if it were true that there can be no restrictions on a woman's right to do what she wishes with her body, the fetus is NOT the woman's body. The fetus is a pre-born child, a new and distinct human being with his or her own set of DNA from the moment of fertilization. The heart (which begins beating less than three weeks after fertilization) that's stopped by an abortion is not the mother's heart. The brain waves that can be detected just weeks after conception are not from the mother's brain.

A woman isn't warned about the dangers of drinking alcohol, smoking, and riding roller coasters while pregnant because these activities will hurt *her* body. Rather, these activities pose a danger to the tiny human being residing within her.

4. **"It's not a life; it's a *potential life*."**

When discussing a pre-born child, abortion advocates often claim, "It's not a life; it's a potential life." The line suggests that the baby is not a human life until passage through the birth canal.

This is nonsensical. Pre-born children spend their nine months in the womb growing, moving, and being nourished. If they don't, they die. How could something that is "not a life" grow? Or be nourished? Or move? And how could something that's "not a life" die?

Sure, the day-to-day routine of a pre-born child isn't the same as daily life for an adult. But that doesn't mean the baby is just a "potential life." It means the baby is a life with potential!

5. **"The fetus isn't a baby because it depends on its mother."**

Abortion advocates often try to dehumanize pre-born children, claiming that fetuses enjoy neither their own existence nor rights until they can exist independently of the mother. But independence is both arbitrary and difficult to define. A newborn baby continues to depend on her parents for food, shelter, clothing and many other needs. Even teenagers continue to depend on their parents to meet basic needs.

Furthermore, the elderly and people with disabilities are often dependent on family members and caretakers. In fact, the vast majority of people are dependent on others in some way to survive! Shouldn't we care for and protect our fellow human beings who are most vulnerable and dependent? And, of all human relationships, shouldn't a child's dependence on her mother be respected, protected and cherished the most?

6. "I'm opposed to abortion after the first trimester/second trimester/viability, but before that point, it's a woman's choice."

Given that science has established that life begins at fertilization, it is an arbitrary and unjust form of discrimination to allow the killing of a human being at *any* stage of development.

A second-trimester baby is the same person she was the last day of the first trimester. A third-trimester baby is the same person he was the last day of the second trimester. The baby old enough to survive outside the womb is the same person she was before becoming old enough to survive a preterm birth. (On top of that, developments in medical technology continue to push the point of viability earlier!) And a newborn baby is the same person he was just moments earlier in the womb.

The turning of a calendar page or passage through the birth canal does not change the essential human nature of a human being.

7. "The Supreme Court said the fetus is not a living being, and Roe vs. Wade is the law of the land."

Actually, the Supreme Court deferred on the issue of whether a pre-born child is alive, writing, "We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins. When those trained in...medicine, philosophy, and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus, the judiciary, at this point in the development of man's knowledge, is not in a position to speculate as to the answer."⁵

Of course, science had long since concluded that life begins at fertilization. But, even if the Court was sincere in its decision, the only responsible approach is to err on the side of *not* killing an innocent human being.

Finally, even if the Supreme Court had concluded that pre-born children are not alive, the Court's record on human rights doesn't exactly make it a trustworthy authority on the issue. After all, this is the same Court that once decided, "In the opinion of this Court, slaves [and their descendants] had no rights which the white man was bound to respect. The negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit."⁶

⁵ <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/410/113/case.html>

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnmSKVGlulQ>

8. “A fetus is not a person because it lacks consciousness, self-awareness and transcendent thought.”

The argument that a pre-born child lacks the attributes necessary for personhood assumes—without giving a reason why—that there can be human beings who are not human persons.⁷ Is it true that one cannot be a person without behaving as a person?

At first, this argument might sound convincing, but with a little examination, it quickly falls apart. Philosopher Peter Kreeft notes that there is a clear difference between what a person *does* and what a person *is*.

One cannot function as a person without being a person, but one can surely be a person without functioning as a person. In deep sleep, in coma, and in early infancy, nearly everyone will admit there are persons, but there are no specifically human functions such as reasoning, choice, or language.⁸

The principle applies to other stages of life as well. Old age, Alzheimer’s Disease and disability might rob a person of certain uniquely human capabilities, but those who suffer from those conditions don’t cease to be persons. And, even among people who are in possession of all their human faculties, the differences in ability that exist naturally from person to person mean that some people are able to exercise those faculties at higher levels than others. But nobody suggests that a member of society who is more intellectually gifted than another is somehow more of a person.⁹

⁷ https://www.issuesetcarchive.org/issues_site/resource/archives/klisdorf1.htm

⁸ <http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics-more/personhood.htm>

⁹ https://www.issuesetcarchive.org/issues_site/resource/archives/klisdorf1.htm

Women's rights and abortion

1. **"The rights of a woman supersede the rights of a fetus because she's *already alive or already here.*"**

This line suggests that a pre-born baby is not alive before birth. But this claim is absurd. Pre-born children spend their nine months in the womb growing, moving, and being nourished. If they don't, they die. How could something that is "not a life" grow? Or be nourished? Or move? And how could something that's "not a life" die?

Both the mother and child are clearly alive. And though a pre-born child might not be visible without an ultrasound machine (yet), she clearly and certainly exists.

So when someone argues that the rights of a woman who is "already alive" or "already here" trump the right to life of her child, it's really an argument that all human beings are not equal and that a person who is bigger, more established and more powerful has a right to do violence toward a person who is smaller, more vulnerable and without a voice.

2. **"Women have a *right to choose.*"**

Certainly, women (and men) enjoy the right to choose many things. We might choose what clothes to wear, what to have for dessert, what profession to pursue for a living, or whom to marry.

But some choices are never acceptable.

No human being has the right to abuse, own, steal from or kill another person. Just as we would not accept a plantation owner claiming the right to *choose* to enslave other human beings, no woman has the right to choose to end the life of her child.

3. **"Women should not be subjected to *forced birth.*"**

In recent years, the pro-life position has gained favor in the court of public opinion as medical evidence, scientific advances, and the stories of women scarred by their abortion experiences have exposed abortion for what it is: the brutal ending of a unique human life at its most vulnerable stage.

Abortion is cruel, and as more people learn how it harms both mother and child, the abortion industry has increasingly sought to turn the tables and paint the pro-life movement as the side of the debate that hurts women. The "forced birth" meme is an attempt to paint pro-lifers as bullies who oppress women by "forcing" them to give birth.

The argument is patently absurd. As a recent article on care-net.org explains, it would be laughable to describe prohibitions on assault and battery as "forced physical restraint

laws” or speed limit regulations as “forced drive slowly laws.” These statutes simply restrict people from acting in a way that is likely to harm others. If opposition to abortion means being “pro-forced birth,” does opposition to infanticide make a person “pro-forced parenthood?”¹⁰

PODCAST: [Fear-mongering and personal attacks: What Planned Parenthood's rhetoric reveals about the abortion industry](#)

4. **“Abortion is necessary to promote *women’s equality*.”**

Abortion supporters often claim that a woman’s ability to conceive and bear a child renders her unable to compete with men in school and the workforce. Under this inverted worldview, a woman’s reproductive abilities are actually looked upon as a *disability*—a disability that can only be remedied by abortion and contraception.

But the notion that a woman (who can bear children) must become more like a man (who cannot) to achieve equality suggests that women are inherently defective.

This is sexism at its worst.

It’s also an insult to the countless women who have achieved professional, academic and artistic success while raising children. Instead of telling a woman she’ll be inferior to men unless she kills her child, we should encourage, support and celebrate her for her unique ability to create human life *and* to pursue her dreams.

5. **“Women with financial problems need abortion so they can escape poverty and pursue their dreams of a better future.”**

Pregnancy can be startling news for a woman facing financial difficulties. But it’s important to remember that while abortion ends the pregnancy (and the life of a child), the financial problems will remain after the procedure is completed. Abortion is a “band-aid” solution that doesn’t solve—and often worsens—the underlying struggles of women and families.

Fortunately, a strong movement of pregnancy centers exists to help a woman both overcome her difficulties *and* confidently welcome her baby into the world. These centers provide or refer for material support, parent education, counseling, medical care, housing, and anything else a pregnant woman might need to get through her pregnancy and beyond—all at no charge. These programs help provide for short-term needs, but they also aim to empower women and families to escape the situations that led them to consider abortion in the first place so that they can emerge from their pregnancies stronger and poised for a brighter future.

¹⁰ <https://www.care-net.org/abundant-life-blog/three-myths-of-the-pro-life-movement-exposed>

To find out about available help from a pregnancy center where you live, visit OptionLine.org.

PODCAST: [What abortion-vulnerable women really want](#)

6. “Trust women. Abortion is a difficult decision and women don’t take it lightly.”

Pro-lifers rightly decry our society’s cavalier or whimsical acceptance of the destruction of human life. Abortion advocates often try to reframe the discussion by conceding that terminating a pregnancy is a difficult personal decision. Their goal is to demonstrate that they don’t take abortion lightly—that women who have abortions have thought about the decision carefully, and pro-lifers need to trust that they came to the conclusion that was right for them.

The problem with this logic is that it suggests that an immoral decision becomes just simply by deliberating it carefully. But it would be absurd to say, “Beating my wife isn’t a decision I came to lightly. It was a difficult personal decision that I came to only after a great deal of serious thought.”

If anything, deliberate violence is even *more* morally problematic than violence committed in a moment of passion. Our society recognizes this distinction by making a first-degree murder (characterized by premeditation and planning) a more serious charge than second-degree murder (which is not planned in advance).

A frightened woman who panics and procures an abortion is a much more sympathetic figure than one who accepts that abortion ends an innocent human life but decides it’s worth it anyway.

Furthermore, if abortion doesn’t end an innocent human life, there’s no reason it should be a difficult decision. Nobody needs to make a moral decision about having wisdom teeth extracted or a mole removed. By admitting abortion is a serious issue, abortion advocates tacitly admit it kills a child.

Is abortion essential health care?

1. **“Without legal abortion, women will resort to unsafe, back-alley abortions like they did before abortion was legalized.”**

Dr. Bernard Nathanson, founder of NARAL, America’s leading pro-abortion lobbying organization, admitted to fabricating this myth long ago: “The figure we constantly fed to the media was 10,000 [lives lost to unsafe, illegal abortions each year]. These false figures took root in the consciousness of Americans, convincing many that we needed to crack the abortion law. Another myth we fed to the public through the media was that legalizing abortion would only mean that the abortions taking place illegally would then be done legally.”¹¹

In 1972, almost all illegal abortions were done by doctors. Interestingly, the abortion industry is now working to enact legislation that would allow non-doctors to perform abortions. And Planned Parenthood has pioneered the practice of dispensing dangerous RU-486 abortion drug cocktails without a physical exam. The only physician a webcam abortion patient sees is on a screen, appearing remotely from miles away. In reality, the abortion industry is leading the way in making abortion more unsafe for women.

We don’t legalize stealing cars just because there will always be people who steal cars anyway. And it doesn’t follow that legalizing the stealing of cars would have no effect on the number of cars stolen.

PODCAST: [The ugly truth behind Planned Parenthood’s webcam abortion scheme](#)

2. **“Abortion is *health care*.”**

“Abortion is healthcare,” abortion supporters claim. The assertion is often made in support of mandates requiring medical providers to provide abortion or health insurance programs to pay for it. This claim is also sometimes used to frame the abortion debate and make pro-lifers appear unreasonable. When people consider what abortion is and what it looks like, they are horrified. It’s much easier for the abortion lobby to win public sympathy for “health care.”

Healthcare and medicine are designed to maintain or restore the proper functioning of a person’s body. But abortion does the exact opposite. A woman’s body and her reproductive system are designed for pregnancy. Abortion’s sole purpose is to thwart or break that proper functioning.

Abortion advocates sometimes suggest that abortion is needed in cases where a mother’s health is threatened by her pregnancy. In such a case, support for abortion might sound

¹¹ <http://www.wnd.com/2002/12/16344/>

compassionate. However, according to the research from the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute, when women’s concerns for their “personal health” motivate the decision to have an abortion, the common health condition cited is “feeling too ill during the pregnancy to work or take care of their children.”¹² A woman feeling ill during her pregnancy deserves our support, not abortion. A child’s life is much too high of a price to remedy feeling ill—especially given the multitude of health problems associated with abortion.

Even when a pregnancy is accompanied by more severe (or even life-threatening) complications, the direct killing of a pre-born child is never acceptable and is never necessary to save the life of the mother. There may be extreme cases where legitimate medical treatment inadvertently harms the pre-born child in order to save the life of a mother, but this is not the same as abortion.

3. “Abortion is a *safe and legal* medical procedure.”

Abortion is NOT safe.

According to University of Michigan Clinical Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology Elizabeth Shadigian, one in ten women experience immediate complications (20 percent of which are life-threatening) following an abortion. complications include infection, hemorrhage, pulmonary or amniotic fluid embolism, injury to the reproductive organs and other internal organs, hospitalization, possible hysterectomy, future pre-term birth, placenta previa and the death of the woman, among others.¹³

Abortion also carries a connection to mental health problems and substance abuse. Even after factoring in numerous demographic considerations, post-abortive women were found to be significantly more likely to face depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and abuse of drugs and/or alcohol.¹⁴ According to research from the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, post-abortive women face an 81 percent increased risk of mental health problems.¹⁵

PODCAST: [So...just how safe is “safe, legal abortion?”](#)

4. “Abortion is a personal decision between a woman and her doctor.”

The United States Supreme Court established a “right of privacy” in the 1965 Griswold

¹² <https://www.guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2005/reasons-us-women-have-abortions-quantitative-and-qualitative-perspectives> retrieved via <http://studentsforlife.org/prolifefacts/what-abortion-the-health-of-the-mother/> on August 29, 2017

¹³ Shadigian, Elizabeth, M.D. “Reviewing the Medical Evidence: Short and Long-Term Physical Consequences of Induced Abortion”, testimony before the South Dakota Task Force to Study Abortion, September 21, 2005, available here. Retrieved from <http://www.aul.org/health-risks-of-abortion/> on August 23, 2017.

¹⁴ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/new-study-confirms-higher-risk-of-mental-health-disorders-after-abortion/>

¹⁵ <http://bjp.rcpsych.org/content/199/3/180>

vs. Connecticut case striking down prohibitions on contraception¹⁶ as well as its 1973 decision legalizing abortion in all 50 states.¹⁷ Since then, abortion advocates have insisted that this supposed right to privacy means a woman may have an abortion at any time for any reason, without exception.

Obviously, there are situations where an individual's privacy must be respected. But it's absurd to suggest that a right of privacy is universal and without exception. Nobody would suggest that someone has the right to abuse a child as long as it's done privately.¹⁸

Interestingly, many of the same abortion advocates who argue that abortion is a matter "between a woman and her doctor" increasingly seek to leave pro-life physicians out of the equation. The ACLU has sued Catholic hospitals for refusing to perform abortions.¹⁹

¹⁶ http://www.pbs.org/wnet/supremecourt/rights/landmark_griswold.html

¹⁷ <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/410/113/case.html>

¹⁸ https://www.issuesetcarchive.org/issues_site/resource/archives/klisdorf1.htm

¹⁹ <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/434045/aclu-abortion-catholic-hospitals-choose-be-pro-life-despite-its-lawsuit>

Addressing the hard cases (rape and incest, life of the mother and more)

1. “A rape victim shouldn’t be forced to carry her assailant’s baby.” (The rape and incest argument)

Sexual assault is a terrible crime, and rape victims deserve our compassion and support. But to end the life of a child conceived in violence is an act of misguided compassion. Abortion cannot un-rape a woman; it merely adds one act of violence to another.

While abortion supporters suggest that assault victims *need* abortion, studies show that more than two thirds of pregnant rape victims choose life, and nearly 80 percent of those who chose abortion regretted their decision.²⁰ Post-abortive rape survivors have actually reported that the abortion was more traumatic than the assault.²¹ Joan Kemp, a rape crisis center counselor, said, “I am familiar with no case of incest-related abortion that did not make matters worse for the victim.”²² These women’s voices should be heard. Rape victims resent being used as political pawns to justify abortion.²³

Rather than a solution for victims, abortion is a tool used by the rapist because, by destroying the child, abortion also destroys the evidence of his crime.^{24 25 26} This can lead to forced abortions.²⁷ There can also be intense pressure from family members for an assault victim to have an abortion.

[Click here](#) for a video with additional information.

2. “Abortion saves lives.” (The life of the mother argument)

While there are cases where legitimate medical treatment (for example, chemotherapy for a mother with cancer) might *unintentionally* end a pre-born child’s life, the death of the child is an unwanted side effect. The direct killing of a pre-born child, however, is never acceptable and it’s never necessary to save the life of the mother.

According to former abortion provider Anthony Levatino, “In most such cases, any attempt to perform an abortion ‘to save the mother’s life’ would entail undue and dangerous delay in providing appropriate, truly life-saving care. During my time at Albany Medical Center, I managed hundreds of such cases by ‘terminating’ pregnancies

²⁰ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/raped-women-who-had-their-babies-defy-pro-choice-stereotypes/>

²¹ <https://www.lifesitenews.com/opinion/the-abortion-was-worse-than-the-rape>

²² The ‘Hard Cases’ of Abortion. 2000 retrieved via <https://cdn.givecloud.co/s/files/1/0000/0283/files/pub017-stay-woke-01.jpg> on December 3, 2019.

²³ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/rape-victims-like-me-should-not-be-pawns-in-the-abortion-debate/>

²⁴ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/care-no-matter-what-planned-parenthood-sends-child-back-to-rapist-after-abortion/>

²⁵ <http://www.journalgazette.net/news/local/State-yanks-doctor-s-license>

²⁶ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/california-pedophile-used-planned-parenthood-abortion-to-cover-rape/>

²⁷ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/rape-victims-family-beats-kicks-force-abortion-8-month-old-baby/>

to save mothers' lives. In all those cases, the number of unborn children that I had to deliberately kill was zero."²⁸

As far back as 1967, Alan Guttmacher, M.D., "the father of Planned Parenthood," wrote, "Today it is possible for almost any patient to be brought through pregnancy alive, unless she suffers from a fatal illness such as cancer or leukemia, and, if so, abortion would be unlikely to prolong, much less save, life."²⁹

The goal of medicine should be to try to save both patients. When abortion is seen as a legitimate response to a health challenge, not only does it end a human life; it lessens medical professionals' incentive to try to treat health conditions during a pregnancy.

PODCAST: [A visit from former abortionist Anthony Levatino](#)

3. "Abortion is needed to protect women's health."

Abortion advocates sometimes suggest that abortion is needed in cases where a mother's health is threatened by her pregnancy. In such a case, support for abortion might sound compassionate.

However, according to the research from the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute, when women's concerns for their "personal health" motivate the decision to have an abortion, the common health condition cited is "feeling too ill during the pregnancy to work or take care of their children."³⁰ A woman feeling ill during her pregnancy deserves our support, not abortion. A child's life is much too high of a price to remedy feeling ill—especially given the multitude of health problems associated with abortion.

Even when a pregnancy is accompanied by more severe (or even life-threatening) complications, the direct killing of a pre-born child is never acceptable and is never necessary to save the life of the mother.

4. "Aborting disabled babies is compassionate because it prevents suffering."

In much of the world, the abortion rate for children diagnosed with Down syndrome has reached 90 percent. Iceland's nearly 100 percent abortion rate for children with Down

²⁸ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/former-abortionist-abortion-is-never-medically-necessary-to-save-the-life-of-the-mother/>

²⁹ "Abortion – Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," in *The Case for Legalized Abortion Now* (Berkeley, Calif.: Diablo Press, 1967). Retrieved from <https://www.nrlc.org/archive/abortion/pba/HowOftenAbortionNecessarySaveMother.pdf> on August 23, 2017.

³⁰ <https://www.guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2005/reasons-us-women-have-abortions-quantitative-and-qualitative-perspectives> retrieved via <http://studentsforlife.org/prolifefacts/what-abortion-the-health-of-the-mother/> on August 29, 2017

syndrome has been celebrated as accomplishing the near eradication of Down syndrome.³¹

But there's a difference between eliminating disabilities and eliminating people with disabilities. In many countries, obesity has become a major public health concern. Would we accept eradicating obesity by killing people who are obese? From the mythical "Fountain of Youth" sought by explorers of old to new medical technologies striving to slow the aging process, people have long sought a way to fend off old age. Would we still want to end old age if ending old age meant killing the elderly?

There is no doubt that disabilities can cause suffering. But does that suffering mean that life isn't worth living? Does the suffering one might experience outweigh life's joys and blessings? Is suffering the defining characteristic of the life of a person with a disability? Is a person with a disability less human than an able-bodied or able-minded person?

Of course not! One look at the radiant smile of a person with a disability—perhaps the triumphant joy of a Special Olympian relishing a victory—reminds us that happiness isn't found in the absence of suffering; it's found in overcoming suffering with love.

Often when we suggest that abortion helps prevent suffering, we're not referring to the suffering of the child but that of the family members. Undoubtedly, the parents of a child with a disability carry a heavy burden. But let's not pretend that aborting that baby to avoid that burden is an act of compassion toward the child.

It's been said that the true measure of a society is found in how it treats its most vulnerable members. Do we succumb to despair and end the lives of those with special needs? Or will we choose to serve and cherish those who need our assistance even when it's difficult?

5. "It would be worse to be abused or neglected. Abortion is a compassionate decision when a child will be born into poverty or a troubled home."

There's a tragic irony in suggesting a baby is better off aborted than abused. After all, abortion is the ultimate form of child abuse.

Obviously, child abuse and neglect are among the worst crimes imaginable, and both poverty and troubled home lives can certainly create difficult situations. But we cannot end suffering by killing those who suffer. To do so only deadens the conscience of society and establishes a culture where violence is seen as a legitimate solution to problems. Perhaps, that's why post-abortive women are 144 percent more likely to physically abuse their surviving children.³²

³¹ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/down-syndrome-iceland/>

³² Acta Paediatrica. 2005. Retrieved via <https://cdn.givecloud.co/s/files/1/0000/0283/files/abortion-is-harmful.jpg> on December 3, 2019.

Children with difficult upbringings can and do triumph over their circumstances all the time. To abort these children is to succumb to a despair driven by an inability to believe it's possible to overcome a challenging situation. Instead, we should do everything in our power to help children and families thrive.

Responding to pro-abortion slogans and catchphrases

1. **“Every child should be a loved and wanted child.”**

When you no longer want your old record collection or your old blue jeans, it's okay to get rid of them because they are *things*. But it is never acceptable to get rid of *people* we don't want. Killing is not the solution for our indifference.

We would never accept trying to end homelessness by killing the homeless. We would never aim to end drug addiction by killing drug addicts. Neither can we ensure that every child is wanted and loved by killing the children who aren't.

Yes, every child *should* be loved and wanted. But if a child isn't loved and wanted, the solution isn't to eliminate the child. The only just answer is to eliminate our indifference and choose to love and want the child.

2. **“Women have a *right to choose*.”**

Certainly, women (and men) enjoy the right to choose many things. We might choose what clothes to wear, what to have for dessert, what profession to pursue for a living, or whom to marry.

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4. **"My body, my choice."**

There's a saying that, "My right to swing my fist ends where your nose begins." That adage applies to abortion: your right to do what you choose with or to your body ends where the body of your child begins.

Even if it were true that there can be no restrictions on a woman's right to do what she wishes with her body, the fetus is NOT the woman's body. The fetus is a new and distinct human being with his or her own set of DNA from the moment of fertilization. The heart (which begins beating less than three weeks after fertilization) that's stopped by an abortion is not the mother's heart. The brain waves that can be detected just weeks after conception are not from the mother's brain.

A woman isn't warned about the dangers of drinking alcohol, smoking, and riding roller coasters while pregnant because these activities will hurt *her* body. Rather, these activities pose a danger to the tiny human being residing within her.

5. **"Keep your rosaries off my ovaries."**

A staple chant at pro-abortion rallies for decades, the admonishment to "keep your rosaries off my ovaries," suggests that by opposing abortion, you are imposing your religion on another.

But the truth that a new, unique and unrepeatable human being comes into existence at the moment of fertilization is neither a religious statement nor an article of faith. It's a fact that is verified by empirical science. Experts in the field of modern genetics³³-- including the former Genetics Department Chair at Mayo Clinic,³⁴ the National Bioethics Advisory Commission,³⁵ and distinguished professors at Harvard³⁶ and many other leading universities--agree that the zygote, embryo or fetus is a unique, living human being.

Yes, Rosary-praying Catholics and Christians of all types are moved by their faith to defend the victims of abortion. But the evil of killing innocent human beings isn't just a Christian doctrine. It's a universal principle of the natural moral law that transcends

³³ <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/10/24/the-miracle-of-human-development-life-begins-long-before-shes-born/>

³⁴ <http://www.madisoncatholicherald.org/makingadifference/6393-how-marvelous-is-the-miracle-of-life.html>

³⁵ Cloning Human Beings, Report and Recommendations of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission. Rockville, MD: GPO, 1997, Appendix-2

³⁶ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/life-begins-at-conception-science-teaches/>

religions, cultures, languages and national borders.

6. “The world is overpopulated.”

For hundreds of years, fear-peddlers have claimed that the world’s overpopulation would lead to mass starvation and widespread catastrophe. But those fears have yet to be realized.

People around the world do suffer from hunger and malnutrition—but not because there are too many people competing for limited food supplies. According to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization and the World Food Programme, there is enough food for everybody to be well-fed; the problem is that not everybody can access it.³⁷ Limiting the world’s population growth will do nothing to solve problems with food distribution.³⁸

According to the Population Research Institute, because there is no set definition of overpopulation, those who claim it’s happening rely on anecdotes—usually from crowded cities. However, cities aren’t crowded because people are “recklessly reproducing.” In fact, the fertility rate is actual lower in urban areas. In reality, cities are crowded because people choose to live there, often for jobs, schools, and cultural opportunities. But, while cities might be crowded, the rest of the world is decidedly not. In fact, every family in the world could have a house and yard and fit on a landmass the size of Texas.³⁹

PODCAST: [Combating climate change with...abortion?](#)

³⁷ <https://youtu.be/OXrN9HhnCcM>

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ <https://youtu.be/vZVOU5bfHrM>

Answering critiques about pro-lifers

1. **“Pro-lifers don’t care about women in need. They care only about pre-born children—and only until those children are born.”**

Actually, pregnancy help centers dramatically outnumber abortion centers. These centers provide or refer for material support, parent education, counseling, medical care, housing, and anything else a pregnant woman might need to get through her pregnancy and beyond—all at no charge. The staff members and volunteers at pregnancy help centers establish long-lasting relationships with the women and families they serve.

Pregnancy help centers usually receive no government funding. That means that all of the help provided to women and families in need is done through the generosity of pro-lifers who donate to establish and sustain pregnancy help centers around the world.

To find out more about the help available from a pregnancy center where you live, visit OptionLine.org.

2. **“How many unwanted babies have you adopted?”**

Pro-abortion passersby at 40 Days for Life vigils often ask this question, suggesting that a person cannot take a pro-life stand without offering to adopt the child scheduled to be aborted. These hecklers don’t realize (or perhaps don’t *care*) that many 40 Days for Life volunteers have expressed a willingness to adopt children who would otherwise be aborted.

Certainly, it is courageous and laudable to offer to adopt children in need, but not every pro-lifer is in a position to adopt a child. That doesn’t mean abortion is acceptable. After all, nobody would suggest that you can’t oppose child abuse unless you adopt every abused child. Nobody would suggest that you can’t oppose the murder of an 11-year-old unless you try to adopt the 11-year-old.

Furthermore, many pro-lifers who aren’t able to adopt do their part by supporting pregnancy help centers, which exist to help birth mothers and fathers succeed at parenting or make adoption arrangements.

To find out more about the help available from a pregnancy center where you live, visit OptionLine.org.

3. **“Why don’t you feed the homeless or take care of kids who have already been born?”**

Pro-lifers spend their time praying at abortion facilities because the pre-born children we strive to protect are uniquely vulnerable, lacking a voice to speak in their own

defense.

The truth is that most 40 Days for Life participants' commitment to serving their neighbors goes beyond the pro-life movement. Many also give their time and money to help provide food, medical care, educational opportunities and housing to those in need.

The critique that we should serve "people who have already been born" suggests that "the homeless or kids that have already been born" are somehow more human or more valuable than children who have not yet been born. But pre-born children—though small and hidden—are still unique individuals with their own distinct genetic code. While "kids that have already been born" continue to grow, they do not become more human or more valuable as they get bigger.

Ultimately, pro-lifers look forward to the day abortion ends so we can spend more time serving those who have been born. After all, nobody gets heckled serving in a soup kitchen.

4. **"40 Days for Life is unbiblical. Scripture says, 'And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing...on the street corners to be seen by men. Truly I tell you, they already have their reward. But when you pray, go into your inner room, shut your door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen.'"**⁴⁰

It's important to consider context when citing Scripture. Jesus was admonishing people who pray in public so that they will be held in esteem by others. But when you pray in front of an abortion facility, there's no risk of winning the praise of the world. You're more likely to be laughed at.

We should pray from home. We should pray at church. But if we are to serve the least of our brothers and sisters, we need to go where they are. Just as it's not possible to feed the hungry or provide shelter to the homeless from our bedrooms, we can't direct women in crisis to our pregnancy help centers without going to them. Without volunteers present on the sidewalks, more than 16,000 women would not have chosen life since 2007.

5. **"You have no right to come here to judge and harass women."**

It's true. We *don't* have a right to judge or to harass anybody.

Fortunately, 40 Days for Life participants don't do either of those things. They take to the streets to peacefully and prayerfully end abortion where they live by praying for abortion-bound women one at a time. There's no judgment and no confrontation.

⁴⁰ <http://biblehub.com/matthew/6-6.htm>

Instead, 40 Days for Life volunteers serve as the last line of defense before a woman makes a choice she can't unmake...and as the first sign of mercy after an abortion. If 40 Days for Life weren't a truly loving approach, more than 16,000 women—many of whom have retained long-term relationships with pro-life advocates—would not have chosen life during abortion center prayer vigils. And if 40 Days for Life were judgmental, more than 190 abortion workers would not have experienced conversion, left their jobs and begun a walk with Christ through 40 Days for Life.

6. “40 Days for Life is *political*.”

Because politicians and public officials have taken it upon themselves to legalize, promote and fund abortion, there is a common misconception that it's merely a political issue. This is a mistake with deadly ramifications.

The value of human life is universal, and no government has the authority to deny any individual person's right to life. Any law that says otherwise is an unjust law, and people of conscience are bound to reject and disobey it. From slavery to state-sponsored genocides, history is filled with horrific injustices. It's not an interest in partisan politics that has moved heroic people of goodwill to resist those injustices, but a recognition of the dignity of all human beings.

7. “Abortion is just one issue. Instead of focusing on abortion, the pro-life movement should take a *seamless garment* approach and include issues like war, capital punishment, contraception, immigration, poverty and the environment.”

It's true that there are many issues that impact and even threaten human life around the world. But as the saying goes, “You can do *anything*, but you can't do *everything*.” Just as an organization dedicated to feeding the hungry would become less effective at distributing food to those in need if its mission expanded to addressing abortion, a 40 Days for Life campaign can most effectively serve women in crisis by exclusively focusing on their needs.

As the leading cause of death around the world, abortion is a major crisis in communities all over the globe. That's why 40 Days for Life leaders and volunteers enter the pro-life mission field. But while 40 Days for Life focuses on one issue, its hundreds of thousands of volunteers worldwide typically *do* take a broader approach. In addition to serving self-sacrificially in the pro-life movement, many also heroically serve others through a variety of other service projects, ministries and apostolates.

PODCAST: [Is abortion just another social justice issue?](#)

8. “You have no right to impose your religious beliefs on others.”

That a new, unique and unrepeatable human being comes into existence at the moment of fertilization is neither a religious statement nor an article of faith. It's a fact that is verified by empirical science. Experts in the field of modern genetics⁴¹--including the former Genetics Department Chair at Mayo Clinic,⁴² the National Bioethics Advisory Commission,⁴³ and distinguished professors at Harvard⁴⁴ and many other leading universities--agree that the zygote, embryo or fetus is a unique, living human being.

Yes, Christians of all types are moved by their faith to defend the victims of abortion. But the evil of killing innocent human beings isn't just a Christian doctrine. It's a universal principle of the natural moral law that transcends religions, cultures, languages and national borders. Christians, Jews, Muslims, people of other religions, and even atheists oppose abortion despite holding differing (or even a lack of) religious beliefs.

Striving to end abortion isn't the imposition of a religious belief; it's a recognition of the humanity of the pre-born child—and the rights endowed to all human beings.

⁴¹ <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/10/24/the-miracle-of-human-development-life-begins-long-before-shes-born/>

⁴² <http://www.madisoncatholicherald.org/makingadifference/6393-how-marvelous-is-the-miracle-of-life.html>

⁴³ Cloning Human Beings, Report and Recommendations of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission. Rockville, MD: GPO, 1997, Appendix-2

⁴⁴ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/life-begins-at-conception-science-teaches/>

Responding to myths about Planned Parenthood

1. “They don’t do abortions here!”

More than half of Americans don’t know that Planned Parenthood provides abortions⁴⁵ despite the fact that the organization is America’s leading abortion provider and ends hundreds of thousands of lives annually.⁴⁶

It is true that not every Planned Parenthood office *performs* abortions. But every Planned Parenthood office does *sell* abortions. It is just as important to pray, bear witness, and offer support to women at the point-of-sale as it is at the location where the abortion will actually be performed.

2. “Only three percent of Planned Parenthood’s services are abortions.”

When Planned Parenthood claims that abortion makes up only three percent of its client services, the abortion giant is “cooking the books.” Former Planned Parenthood employee of the year, Abby Johnson, has exposed the accounting “gimmick,” describing how Planned Parenthood “strategically skewed [the three percent figure] by unbundling family planning services so that each patient shows anywhere from five to 20 ‘visits’ per appointment (i.e., 12 packs of birth control equals 12 visits) and doing the opposite with abortion visits, bundling them together so that each appointment equals one visit. The resulting difference between family planning and abortion ‘visits’ is striking.”⁴⁷

That’s obviously absurd. It would be like opening a lemonade stand—a stand that only serves lemonade—and saying that lemonade is only a small percentage of the services you provide because, “Well, you’ve also got the cup provision, the lid service, ice and straws. Lemonade is only 20% of our program.”

In reality, an estimated 60 percent of Planned Parenthood’s annual income—nearly \$200 million—is generated by abortion provision.⁴⁸

PODCAST: [Inside the numbers: Planned Parenthood’s annual report](#)

3. “But Planned Parenthood does a lot of good!”

Planned Parenthood does provide services beyond abortion, but no amount of cancer screenings can erase the horror of killing even one innocent baby. The taking of innocent life simply cannot be offset by any other perceived good.

⁴⁵ <http://www.lifenews.com/2013/04/29/poll-55-of-americans-dont-know-planned-parenthood-does-abortions/>

⁴⁶ <http://protestpp.com/docs/DefundPPTalkingPoints.pdf>

⁴⁷ <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/153699-exposing-the-planned-parenthood-business-model>

⁴⁸ <http://protestpp.com/docs/DefundPPTalkingPoints.pdf>

Planned Parenthood’s non-abortion services are meant to distract clients, community members and voters from the barbarity of abortion. Some of these other services don’t even exist. For example, while Planned Parenthood has clamored for taxpayer funding in order to provide women with mammograms, not a single Planned Parenthood facility was certified as a mammography facility.^{49 50} Planned Parenthood provides fewer than two percent of manual breast exams and less than one percent of pap tests in the United States.⁵¹ Meanwhile, the abortion giant provides nearly one third of America’s abortions.⁵²

4. “Tax dollars don’t pay for abortions in the United States.”

Planned Parenthood, America’s leading abortion provider, performs more than 320,000 abortions annually⁵³ and receives more than half a billion dollars in yearly taxpayer funding. While Planned Parenthood advocates argue that the funding covers non-abortion services, the truth is that money is fungible and transferrable. For example, federal grants for birth control distribution free up money that can be reallocated for abortion.

While taxpayer funding might not pay for the abortion procedure *directly*, it does pay for abortion *indirectly*. Tax dollars do cover many of the resources needed to perform abortions: medical instruments, staff salaries, the abortion facility building, and more. Furthermore, a number of states do directly fund abortion.

5. “Planned Parenthood doesn’t sell body parts. The videos suggesting otherwise were edited.”

In 2015, David Daleiden, Sandra Merritt and the Center for Medical Progress [CMP] released a series of undercover videos, exposing Planned Parenthood locations across the United States arranging to harvest and receive payment for organs from aborted babies. Planned Parenthood was quick to dismiss the videos as “faked” and hired a partisan opposition research firm to analyze them.⁵⁴

While numerous media outlets parroted claims that Planned Parenthood’s research firm proved that the videos were “manipulated,” the firm’s actual report stated that, “analysts found no evidence that CMP inserted dialogue not spoken by Planned

⁴⁹ <https://www.liveaction.org/what-we-do/investigations/mammogram-falsehoods/>

⁵⁰ https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/10/02/the-repeated-misleading-claim-that-planned-parenthood-provides-mammograms/?utm_term=.545b6f642a59

⁵¹ <http://protestpp.com/docs/DefundPPTalkingPoints.pdf>

⁵² <https://www.liveaction.org/news/new-video-debunks-planned-parenthoods-3-percent-abortion-myth/>

⁵³ <http://protestpp.com/docs/DefundPPTalkingPoints.pdf>

⁵⁴ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/faked-criminal-videos-planned-parenthood-lies-again-on-twitter/>

Parenthood staff.”⁵⁵ Later analysis from a digital forensic analysis company assessed that the CMP videos are “authentic and show no evidence of manipulation.”⁵⁶

While a great deal of public debate centered on whether Planned Parenthood was technically selling fetal body parts (as opposed to facilitating donations and charging a handling fee), there is no denying that the body parts harvested were real body parts from real babies.

6. “Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers exist to empower minorities and the poor.”

From the beginning, Planned Parenthood has pushed a eugenic agenda. In a column for the *New York Times*, founder Margaret Sanger wrote in favor of the “cultivation of the better racial elements in our society, and the gradual suppression, elimination and eventual extirpation of defective stocks — those human weeds which threaten the blooming of the finest flowers of American civilization.”⁵⁷ She also wrote a population control manifesto, which pushed to “keep the doors of immigration closed to the entrance of certain aliens whose condition is known to be detrimental to the stamina of the race” and “to apply a stern and rigid policy of sterilization and segregation to that grade of population whose progeny is tainted...”⁵⁸

Planned Parenthood hasn’t strayed far from these roots. The organization continues to pay tribute to Sanger annually with its “highest honor,” the Margaret Sanger Award.⁵⁹

Today, nearly 80 percent of Planned Parenthood offices are located in minority neighborhoods.⁶⁰ While only 2-4 percent of US zip codes have a majority black population, “almost 10% of America’s high-volume abortion clinics (performing more than 400 abortions per year) exist in those majority-black zip codes. Clinics in neighborhoods where non-whites are the majority, only around 15 percent of US neighborhoods, make up 40 percent of all abortion clinics in the United States.”⁶¹

⁵⁵ https://www.plannedparenthood.org/files/4214/4709/6038/Forensic_report.pdf

⁵⁶ <https://townhall.com/columnists/casemattox/2015/10/01/new-forensic-report-flushes-planned-parenthoods-highly-edited-talking-point-n2059788>

⁵⁷ <http://www.snopes.com/margaret-sanger-weeds/>

⁵⁸ https://www.issues4life.org/pdfs/1932_peaceplan_margaretsanger.pdf

⁵⁹ <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/about-us/newsroom/campaigns/ppfa-margaret-sanger-award-winners>

⁶⁰ http://www.protectingblacklife.org/pp_targets/index.html

⁶¹ <http://thefederalist.com/2016/02/18/yes-planned-parenthood-targets-and-hurts-poor-black-women/>