

A Side Not Told

The issue of reproductive rights and the right of women to control their own bodies has been passionately contested for decades. As more and more Republican Governors and State legislatures pass onerous restrictions on abortion access, as well as the growing alarm that the US Supreme Court will reverse Roe vs Wade, the abortion debate is once again up front and center. But there is a side to this controversy that few have recognized, yet it is crucial to the future of this nation.

According to the National Right to Life website 63,459,781 abortions were performed between the years 1973-2019. By now that count has already reached 65 million based on preliminary data. Had those aborted fetuses been brought to term another 65 million people would be living in the US. But because population growth is exponential we have to factor in the impact of offspring as well. Suppose then we do a simple mathematical extrapolation to see the impact of these numbers.

It would be reasonable to assume that half of those roughly 65 million fetuses would have been females and if they had lived many would have had children of their own. Based on the current Total Fertility Rate, which is 1.78 births per woman of child bearing age, another 57.9 million (half of 65 million x 1.78) offspring would boost the combined total (65.0 + 57.9) to 122.9 or 123 million potential residents. Thus, based on this hypothetical model it is safe to say that had the original 65 million abortions not occurred the US Census could now be 397 million and with the offspring added that number could have exponentially exploded to an eye-popping 455 million instead of 332 million currently estimated by the Census Bureau.

Please note that these figures are not precise, for the timing of generational births and the possibility of early deaths, etc. are not taken into account. These kinds of statistical adjustments are best left to a capable demographer. But for now the back of the envelope calculations made are sufficient to make a very important point; doing away with a women's right to an abortion is a bad idea. And here are some of the reasons why.

To meet the needs of the population sizes just mentioned where would the water come from in this era of mega-droughts plaguing the Central and Western States? Also, to meet the development requirements of further sprawl, more land would have had to be taken out of agricultural production for homes, businesses, shopping centers, schools, roads, bridges, space for above and below ground utilities, parks and recreational facilities, etc. Not to mention a heavier dependence on foreign crops, the loss of wildlife habitat and the negative impact of more expansive congestion and crowdedness on our mental health. Studies have shown that quietude, open spaces, forests and other natural surroundings nurture our

well-being. Unfortunately all of this is at risk, as population growth, primarily driven by out of control immigration, continues to surge across the nation.

From my perspective the personal struggle to resolve an unplanned pregnancy is part and parcel of a greater national struggle to reach bio-sustainability in the face of ever-crushing growth.

Until Congress develops a national population policy that implements universal and affordable family planning along with well-moderated immigration and consistently enforced laws, the only effective tools left for restraining our numbers remains in the hands of contraceptive and abortion providers. If one of these tools or both is eventually outlawed, what then?

Having now seen the abortion issue from a demographic side, you can readily understand that should the Supreme Court rescind or severely restrict a "women's right to choose", it will have a profound impact not only on family size, but on the nation's size with critical quality of life and sustainability consequences. Needless to say, much is at stake for America when the Court renders its decision as expected sometime later this year.

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