Sociology Senior Seminar Papers   Sociology

2018

Do Baby Boomers Want Another Baby Boom?: A Gendered Generational Analysis of Abortion Attitudes

Dyanna Washington
Skidmore College, dwashin1@skidmore.edu

Do Baby Boomers Want Another Baby Boom?:
A Gendered Generational Analysis of Abortion Attitudes

DyAnna Katherine Washington
Skidmore College

Word Count: 6039

Do Baby Boomers Want Another Boom?:
A Gendered Generational Analysis of Abortion Attitudes

ABSTRACT

Building on research conducted by sociologists on the predictors of abortion attitudes, through a secondary analysis of 2016 General Social Survey (GSS) data, with a total of 1571 respondents, I investigate the relationship between demographic identifiers, specifically age, sex, and religious fundamentalism, and approval rates of legal abortion. Using the age variable in GSS and drawing from Generational Cohort Theory, I isolate the generational cohorts baby boomers and millennials and hypothesize that baby boomers will approve of legal abortion in fewer instances than millennials. Moreover, I create Abortion Attitude Indexes from GSS questions on abortion, which enable me to separate the questions into two groups: hard and soft abortions. Drawing from Attribution Theory, I propose that there will be an overall higher approval of hard abortions than soft abortions across both generational cohorts. Ultimately, bivariate and multivariate analysis reported that age and sex are not statistically significant predictors of abortion attitudes. However, religious fundamentalism is moderately significant. Therefore, one hypothesis is supported that the more religiously fundamentalist an individual is, the fewer instances they are likely to approve of legal abortion.

Do Baby Boomers Want Another Boom?:
A Gendered Generational Analysis of Abortion Attitudes

Legal abortion has been and still is one of the most debated, contested, and controversial social issues. Over time, legislation at the federal and state level in conjunction with societal norm shifts have contributed to changes in attitudes about abortion among US Americans. Given the sociopolitical climate around the topic of abortion, it is not surprising that much scholarly work within the social sciences has been dedicated to the issue. Sociologists and social psychologists alike have taken advantage of this and conducted studies assessing the underlying causes of these shifts and pinpointing the factors that contribute to them. Societal stereotypes about age and aging lead to conclusions that older people and younger people tend to have contrasting opinions on social issues: older people having more conservative views and young people having more liberal views. While there may be some variance of opinions within these populations, age and generational differences provide an interesting lens to approach the debate regarding legal abortion.

Along with age, gender adds very specific considerations to the debate about legal abortion. For so long, abortion was viewed as a women's issue. Paired with the personal investment that some women have in the conversation regarding reproductive rights, many women's rights activists are women as well. However, it is not necessarily helpful to exclude men and other genders from this debate. Up until very recently, men were the lead policymakers on abortion legislation (Walzer 1990) which can in turn deeply impact societal views of abortion. Moreover, gender roles operate in very overt and covert ways within society which can facilitate some very contrasting views on the "roles" and "rights" of women and men in today's time. However, gender also operates very differently now than it did ten years ago. With the

heightened attention placed on the gender identity continuum, people are openly challenging gender norms and expectations, and pushing back on outdated hegemonies; the lines are arguably becoming more blurred and hard to draw in terms of gendered differences of opinion on social issues.

Studies in that past have linked attitudes about legal abortion to age. My goal is to use more recent data to draw more conclusions about how specific generational cohorts differ in their attitudes about legal abortion. Moreover, I will control for gender (sex) and religious fundamentalism to see how religiosity affects attitudes about abortion. My specific research questions are: are there distinguishable differences in the attitudes about legal abortion based on age? How, if any, do the comparisons of gendered differences of attitudes contrast conclusions made in the past? How does religious liberalism or religious fundamentalism affect a person's view on legal abortion? Do the circumstances in which the abortion take place affect how favorable or unfavorable attitudes are? I hypothesize that baby boomers (b. 1944-1964) will have less favorable views toward legal abortion and millennials (b. 1979-1999) will have more favorable views toward legal abortion. Additionally, female respondents and other respondents' attitudes on abortion; I predict female respondents will approve of abortion in more instances than all other respondents. The research questions explored in this study are as follows: "Are there distinguishable differences in attitudes about abortion between baby boomers and millennials?", "Do the circumstances in which the abortion is needed affect the outcomes of attitudes among baby boomers and millennials?", "Are there distinguishable differences in attitudes about abortion based on gender?", and finally, "Does religious liberalism and/or fundamentalism affect the number of instances a respondent will approve or disapprove of abortion?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Generational Cohort Theory

A generation is described as a "group of people born around the same time who therefore experience historical events at the same time in their lives" (Alwin and McCammon 2003). Moreover, a birth cohort is similarly described as "a group of people [born around the same time] who have shared some critical experience during the same interval of time" (Alwin and McCammon 2003). There has not been that much sociological research on how the sociopolitical and general social fabric of the US is affected by the aging of generational cohorts. However, there is a social belief asserting that as age increases, conservatism and/or more tenacious views and ideas increase; moreover, older people are believed to have more *stable* beliefs assuming longer life is connected to more life experiences (Alwin 2002; Krosnick and Arwin 1989). As a result, typically, younger generations are often categorized as being more liberal, ready for sociopolitical change, and unstable/inexperienced with their opinions. "What are the implications of population changes for social change in sociopolitical attitudes regarding controversial issues" (Danigelis et. al. 2007)? According to Mannheim (1952) and Ryder (1965), experiences from young adulthood or "the impressionable years" leave a mark on generational cohorts as they age (Danigelis 2007; Sears 1975; Visser and Krosnick 1998). Despite the sociopolitical gains that occurred during their young adult years, like the 1973 passing of the Supreme Court Case Roe v. Wade, I move into this research with the assumption that everyone was not as "progressive" as the political atmosphere of the time would have suggested. I am interested in the baby boomers who grew up in environments where abortion was strongly discouraged and disapproved of. With great political gains and movements for social change come great adverse

actions and counter-movements. It is with this in mind that I hypothesize that baby boomers will approve of medical, or *hard,* and social, or *soft,* abortions in fewer instances than millennials.

Attribution Theory

What is the driving force behind peoples strong and varying opinions on situations that have little or nothing to do with them? Attribution theory is a theoretical framework that captures peoples' association of accountability and assignment of sympathy, empathy, anger, and desires to help in "negative" situations. "According to this theory, the degree of personal controllability over the cause of a bad event influences others' emotional reactions and behavioral intentions toward the individual" (Weiner 1993, 1995; Weiner et. al. 1988; Sahar and Karasawa 2005). "Specifically, causes of a negative event perceived not to be under the personal control of the individual elicit pity or sympathy and intentions to help, whereas controllable causes give rise to anger and no help" (Sahar and Karasawa 2005). This theory provides a framework to assess why abortion would be approved in some cases or more instances and disapproved or approved in fewer instances than others. When the circumstances of a pregnancy are perceived to be within the control of the pregnant person, then there is less of a chance for respondents to approve of the need for an abortion. In contrast, when the circumstances are perceived to be beyond the control of the pregnant person, pity and sympathy ensue, which leads to more instances of approval. Within this research, I hypothesize that circumstances of *soft* or social abortions, that is, when the pregnant person wants an abortion because they don't want any more children, they are single/unmarried, or they are low-income and cannot afford another child, respondents will be approved in fewer instances than *hard* or medical abortions. Here, I assert that hard abortions are defined under the circumstances of pregnancy as a result of rape, a strong chance of a birth defect, or the health of the pregnant person is endangered.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generational Birth Cohorts

There has been much research in the field of sociology on the predictors of abortion attitudes among US Americans. There has not, however, been much research that singles age, a demographic variable, out as an independent predictor. Usually variables like religiosity, conservatism, gender, marital status, number of children, and education level are tested for their significance in determining attitudes about abortion. Most of these variables in the past have proven to be significant (Walzer 1994). Hess and Rueb (2005) concluded from their study that the more religious attendance increased, the less accepting of abortion a respondent was. Moreover, conservatism had similar effects – the more conservative a respondent was, the less likely they were to approve of legal abortion. However, the gap in the research regarding age leaves room for further analysis.

Birth cohorts, like baby boomers and millennials, have the power to enact social change through their development, replacement, and progression through history. Through this, collective opinions and social facts/phenomena can arise (Ryder 1965). By isolating generational cohorts, researchers are able to pinpoint specific trends and occurrences based on age. It is a known social stereotype that older people and younger people tend to have contrasting views on social issues. Older people are usually identified as getting more conservative as they age This hypothesis is often associated with secularism. Assuming that younger generations are more likely to be exposed to the more secular aspects of life than older folks, socialization leads to younger people having more accepting views toward abortion (Bahr 2003, Stickler and Danigelis 1999). By studying the societal norms of the times in which certain generational cohorts "came of age", Scott (1998) drew conclusions and picked out patterns that distinguished groups from

each other. Scott noted that, "[I]t was also argued that a generational difference would emerge, especially among women, with the post-pill cohorts showing far higher levels of support for abortion than the pre-pill generations." In my research, it may seem that baby boomers would in fact have more favorable attitudes toward abortion than millennials given the political and social climate during their birth. Scott goes on to conclude that, "[w]e also examined the claim that the more recent cohort who came of age in the conservative climate of the Reagan-Bush regime, might be less favorable to abortion than earlier cohorts" (Scott 1998:186). Other research has concluded that there is a small significance between age and abortion attitudes. Furthermore, a strong significant relationship was only expressed when other factors or variables were considered in addition to age, such as family ties and education level (Bahr 2003; Scott 1998). In addition to furthering these claims, in the future I would like to assess how the current political climate and "coming of age" of millennials influences their views on legal abortion.

Gender

Gender (sex) has a very influential and vital role in how people perceive the world. However, in studies on how gender affected attitudes about abortion, typically there are no significant gender difference in abortion attitude[s] (Misra 1998). This study followed cohorts of people over time and accessed how identities (race, gender, and age) affected their views on abortion. When paired with another identity, there was statistical significance in terms of gender. However, when tested alone there was not much variance between men, women, and other genders. While self-identified men surprisingly tend to be a little bit more pro-choice than self-identified women, women tend to indicate that abortion issues are more important to them. Moreover, women have clearer, but not necessarily stronger views about abortion than men (Misra 1998; Hertell and Russell 1999; Jalen et. al. 2002; Walzer 1994; Wang and Buffalo

2004). Walzer tests gender along with other sociodemographic variables like race, marital status, income, education, and religious affiliation to analyze how these predictors intersect and result in favorable or less favorable attitudes toward abortion.

Walzer concluded that there was no definitive answer as to whether abortion attitudes varied within a person because of their gender or because of the multiplicity and variation of identities and circumstances any given person may hold. For example, Walzer suggests that Black women may have been shown to have more favorable views toward abortion because of the intersection of race and gender. Through that intersection and possibly economic or education status, Black women have a particular lens that facilitates the ability to recognize more nuances in the material drawbacks or negatives of an unplanned pregnancy. This particular epistemological lens leads to more favorable attitudes toward abortion among Black women. Previous research has tested the effects of gender on abortion attitudes; most research still indicates that gender has little to no significant effect of determining attitudes about abortion. I plan to use more recent data to conclude that along with their age and religious affiliation, women will have more favorable attitudes towards abortion than men.

Religious Fundamentalism

By controlling for religious affiliation and using the fundamentalism (fund) variable in the GSS, I hope to gain a clearer understanding of how liberalism and fundamentalism in the realm of religion shapes attitudes about abortion. It is known that:

"[r]eligious traditions have played a key contributory role in perpetuating conflicts about this nettlesome issue. Yet most social science attention to abortion attitudes and policy has failed to consider the important cultural characteristics that affect members of diverse religious traditions" (Hoffman and Johnson 2005).

There are key differences between more conservative or fundamentalist groups and more liberal religious groups. Specifically, I would like to highlight the differences in opinion based on circumstances. There are "soft" and "hard" or as Hoffman and Johnson say, "elective" and "traumatic" (Hoffman and Johnson 2005) circumstances behind an abortion. It is worthwhile in my research to investigate this dichotomy even more. Hoffman and Johnson concluded that religious texts within Fundamentalist, Evangelical, and Catholic traditions were even influential in creating a divide between when it was acceptable for a woman to have an abortion. They describe how religious texts are used to promote certain social facts and explain social phenomena like "social moral decline". "This literature consistently points out that abortion for elective reasons – or what is often termed *abortion as birth control*—is by far the most common type. And, according to this literature, it is clearly an indicator of the moral decline of society" (Hoffman and Johnson 2005). Building off of this idea, using the data I would like to see if there is a clear split between the number of instances "soft" abortions are approved in comparison to "hard" abortions.

In a study on fundamentalist groups and support for civil liberties, Tuntiya (2005) makes an important claim that quantitative studies in the past have concluded that the conservative attitudes often attributed to fundamentalist religious groups is also attributed to the movement as a whole. Therefore, it is reasonable for researchers to assume that anyone who identifies their religious views as being more fundamentalist, is by default politically conservative as well. Tuntiya elaborates saying, "[a]nother stereotype that leads to expectations of political conservatism among fundamentalists is the belief in their unwillingness to adjust to the modern world." Tuntiya further cites Bensco, Silvia, Sugar, and Viney who "investigated how changes in social reality affect attitudes of religious conservatives and whether they would be likely to

recognize some of the conservative religious positions of the past". The authors conclude that "religious conservatism, like political conservatism, does not necessarily involve a continuity of positions between past and present" (Bensco et al. 1995). This point argues that fundamentalism does not necessarily make the fundamentalists' views or attitudes outdated or anti-modern.

The social psychological theory of symbolic predispositions and the symbolic politics model suggests that "individuals acquire learned affective responses or symbolic predispositions toward particular symbols during early socialization" (Sahar and Karasawa 2005; Sears et al. 1980). That is, people learn how to feel and react to phenomena throughout their lives from early socialization. The predispositions are then facilitated and brought to the forefront by symbols that occur later in life. For example, studies show that religiosity is negatively, although significantly related to abortion attitudes. The more religious an individual is, the less likely they are to approve of abortion (Cook et al. 1992; Hall and Ferree 1986; Harris and Mills 1985; Szafran and Clagett 1998; Wilcox 1990; Zucker 1999). Moreover, religiosity is deeply associated with the perpetuation of traditional gender roles (Luker 1984). Another lens to approach this analysis of symbolic predispositions asserts that:

[s]ymbolic predispositions, such as moral traditionalism, are systematically linked to responsibility perceptions, as well as being directly associated with abortion attitudes (Zucker 1999). Specifically, individuals with morally traditional beliefs tend to perceive a pregnant woman to have had more control over the cause of the unwanted pregnancy and blame her more than those with less traditional beliefs. This model indicated that symbolic predispositions and judgements of responsibility are systematically related. (Sahar and Karasawa 2005:286).

Of course, this varies depending on moral values and/or religious affiliation, however, religiosity and moral tradition are a significant determinants of abortion attitudes.

DATA AND METHODS

This study is a secondary analysis of survey data from the 2016 General Social Survey (GSS). The unit of analysis for this study is random samples of individuals in the U.S. The sample from the GSS only includes noninstitutionalized, adults (age 18 or over), who speak English or Spanish as a first language (Smith et al. 2016). The GSS is administered through face-to-face or phone interviews; there are three ballots of the GSS, Ballot A, Ballot B, and Ballot C. For further information on how the data were collected, see the Frequently Asked Questions menu on the National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey website: http://gss.norc.org/.

Data Source, Population, Sample

The GSS Core consists of demographic questions that are asked every year; core questions include but are not limited to the respondents age, sex, income, and race. Every year since 1977, on specific ballots, the GSS has asked a series of questions about abortion attitudes. Since I am comparing the differences of abortion attitudes based on generational cohort belonging, I restricted my analysis to respondents who fall within the baby boomer and millennial cohorts. After recoding and excluding missing data, the total of valid responses was 1571.

Measurements

The independent variable in this study is age. In the GSS, "age" is coded as an ordinal variable. Each age is associated with the same value up until age 88. After age 88, the variable is coded so that everyone 89 years and older is given the value (89). A value of (98) is "I Don't

Know" and (99) is missing data. With the age variable from the GSS, I was able to select subsets for baby boomers and millennials which are coded as dummy variables with the values (0) no and (1) yes. I selected the cases of respondents whose age was greater than or equal to 52 years old, and then whose age was less than or equal to 72 years old for baby boomers. Similarly, I selected cases of respondents whose age was greater than or equal to 18 years old, then less than or equal to 37 years old for the millennial generational cohort. Since there is no specific time span to indicate when the millennial generation starts or ends, following the model of the baby boom generation, I created my own twenty-year generational time frame where the youngest millennials were born in 1999 and the oldest born in 1979.

The dependent variables for this study are the Abortion Attitude Indexes that I created. Using the six specific questions that the GSS asks about abortion, I created two indexes to assess attitudes based on "medical", "traumatic", or "hard" circumstances and "social", "elective", or "soft" circumstances. The GSS asks: "Please tell me whether or not you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if. . . there is a strong chance of a birth defect (abdefect), the woman is pregnant as a result of rape (abrape), the woman's own health is seriously endangered (abhealth), the woman is married but does not want any more children (abnomore), the woman is single and does not want to marry the father (absingle), and the family is very poor and cannot afford to care for another child (abpoor)". Each of these variables is coded as: (1) yes, (2) no, (8) don't know, (9) no answer, and (0) not applicable. I made dummy variables from each of these so that (0) is no and (1) is yes. I also excluded the (8) don't know, (9) no answer, and (0) not applicable responses as missing data. I then created the two indexes by adding up all of the variables that apply to the index themes. Therefore, once added up, higher scores on the indexes will indicate more favorable attitudes towards abortion. The control

variables for this project is religious fundamentalism (fund) and gender (sex). In the GSS, the fundamentalist variable is coded as (1) fundamentalist, (2) moderate, (3) liberal, (9) not applicable. I recoded this variable to exclude the responses that are not applicable as missing data, then I reverse coded it so that respondents whose religious affiliation was more closely related to fundamentalism were coded as (3) and respondents who are more religiously liberal are coded as (1). There is no variable for gender in the GSS, so I use the sex variable. This variable is a dummy variable and it is coded as: (1) male and (2) female. I recoded this variable and created a new one so that (0) other and (1) is female.

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations of the independent, dependent, and control variables. The means for the dependent variables, which were 2.42 for Hard Abortions and 1.41 for Soft Abortions, respectively, tell us that on average, respondents approve of hard abortions in more instances than soft abortions. Figure 1. shows the response frequencies for the dependent variables. 69.6 percent of respondents approved of hard abortions in all instances compared to the 39.5 percent of respondents that approved of soft abortions in all instances. As shown, the average number of instances in which a respondent approved of legal abortion was nearly 3 for hard abortions and nearly 2 for soft abortions, respectively. Less than 10 percent of respondents approved of both hard and soft abortions in one instances, while between 8 percent and 12 percent approved of both in two instances. Finally, less than 10 percent of respondents approved of hard abortions in no instances. Figure 2. expresses the distributions of the generational cohorts; 37 percent of respondents are baby boomers and 29.7 percent are millennials. All other respondents qualify as "in-between" because they are neither baby boomers nor millennials.

Figure 4. displays the frequencies of religious fundamentalism among respondents.

As expressed in Table 2, bivariate correlations between four independent variables and the abortion attitude indexes indicate that there is a weak and negative, however, significant correlation between religious fundamentalism and how many instances an individual approves of legal abortion. This is true of both indexes, yet the Soft Abortion Index displayed a higher correlation. All other relationships were insignificant. As shown in Table 3., multivariate regression analyses of the abortion attitude indexes on all variables displayed the same results. By controlling for fundamentalism, the results display a significant, yet weak relationship between the variable and both Abortion Indexes. The standardized coefficient for the Hard Abortion Index and religious fundamentalism is -.108 in comparison to -.130 for the Soft Abortion Index. This reveals that there is a slightly stronger relationship between the Soft Abortion Index and religious fundamentalism than the Hard Abortion Index and religious fundamentalism. The R^2 for the dependent variables indicate that 1.8 percent of the observed variance of the Hard Abortion Index can be explained by the independent variables and 2.1 percent of the variance of the Soft Abortion Index can be explained by the independent variables of this study. Both regression models are significant at the $p < .01$ level (F=7.223, 8.486).

DISCUSSION

In this research, I sought to answer two main questions: are there distinguishable differences in attitudes about abortion between baby boomers and millennials, and do the circumstances in which abortion is needed affect the outcomes of abortion attitudes among baby boomers and millennials? The answer to the first question is no, age and generational cohort belonging are not significant predictors of abortion attitudes. Drawing back on the literature and past research, specifically Scott (1998) and Ryder (1965), the insignificant relationship between

generational cohort belonging and abortion attitudes could be explained by the impressionable years experienced by each cohort during young adulthood. Baby boomers came of age at the prime of the Supreme Court Case Roe v. Wade, which ushered in a paradigm shift in not only legal perceptions of abortion, but societal as well. I suspect that the insignificance could also come not from the political moment during the youth of the generational cohort, but instead, their current identity within their cohort. Some worthwhile questions to ask would be, "do baby boomers even identify with being baby boomers?", "do millennials feel a sense of community or cohesiveness across their birth cohort?" Based off of this research I would say no, but the real answer would require another study and a deeper analysis of age and aging.

The answer to the second question, however, is yes. This leads me to conclude that my original projections onto baby boomers, that they would be more conservative than millennials, can actually be projected onto religiously fundamental individuals. According to past research and literature, religious fundamentalism leads to more conservative and, possibly, unchanging societal opinions; this claim is supported by my results as well (Tuntiya 2005). Attribution Theory proved to be an accurate theory to assess this relationship; medical or hard abortions are more likely to be approved of instead of social or soft abortions. Since the blame for an unwanted pregnancy can be easily placed on the pregnant person for social abortions, it is easier for people to suppress empathy and instead express disgust and anger. In the future, researchers should conduct more research on abortion attitudes using more demographic and social identifiers like race, class, etc. Moreover, I would be interested to see how the number of children a respondent has, annual income, and education level would affect abortion attitudes.

CONCLUSION

Abortion is still arguably one of the most debated and polarizing social issues of the time. However, that polarization does not appear to come from age differences or sex as research from the 1960s to the 1990s would indicate. Generational Cohort Theory, which posits that generations experience attitudinal shifts as they age. I do not doubt that this may still be true, however, this relationship is not observable regarding age and abortion attitudes. I suspected that baby boomers, because of their older age and perceivably conservative worldview, would approve of abortion in few instances than millennials. It is surprising to me that there was no correlation. In other studies, though, age only became significant when other variables were added in as controls (Stickler and Danigelis 2002). Instead, the tension is one derived from religious fundamentalism and liberalism. Even though past research proposed that religious fundamentalism is not a final indicator of negative attitudes (Tuntiya 2005), these results indicate something different. As I suspected the more religiously fundamentalist an individual is, the fewer instances they will approve of abortion on the Abortion Attitude Indexes. The more fundamentalist an individual is, the less likely they are to approve of abortion. Even other variables like age and sex had no bearing on this relationship.

There were two prominent limitations during this study. The first being that the GSS does not have a variable that asks a respondents' gender. I realize that in exchange for a catchy hook in the title of this research, I have made the problematic misstep of equating gender identity and sex. Both identities exist on a continuum and it is important to acknowledge that to amplify and validate the livelihoods of respondents who do not identify on the traditional gender and sex binaries. In addition, even though I was able to isolate the birth cohorts I was interested in, since I dummied the variables I was unable to see which individual ages expressed the most variance

on the abortion attitude indexes. Even though the relationships were insignificant, I am still curious to know if the oldest of the baby boomers differed at all from the youngest; I wonder the same thing about the millennials.

For future research, I propose a longitudinal study of the effects of cohort aging on attitudes about social issues. With all the funding in the world, and the perfect dataset, I would like to follow a generational cohort and assess their opinions in 10 year increments; further, I would analyze the changes or the stagnancy. Moreover, a study on gender and its effects on social opinions would be worthwhile. Judging by the research produced over the past decades, both qualitative and quantitative, generally, gender seems to be an important consideration. With regards to quantitative research, once more surveys consider the nuances and nearly infinite options on the gender continuum, then there could be more accurate results and claims made about gendered difference on various topics. An issue, though, is that given the vastness of the gender continuum, it becomes more challenges to generalize about certain genders. However, I have no doubts that sociologists will continue to find ways to make sense of this world as realities, or what are perceived to be realities, continue to rapidly change.

REFERENCES

Alwin, Duane. 2002. "Aging, Cohorts, and Verbal Ability." *The Journal of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences* 56:S151-161.

Alwin, Duane., and Ryan J. McCammon. 2003. "Generations, Cohorts, and Social Change." In: J. Mortimer & M. Shanahan (Eds), *Handbook of the Life Course* (pp. 23-50). Springer, Boston, MA.

Bahr, Stephen J., and Anastasios C. Marcos. 2003. "Cross-Cultural Attitudes Toward Abortion: Greeks Versus Americans." *Journal of Family Issues* 24(3):402-424

Danigelis, Nicholas L., and Stephen J. Cutler. 2007. "Population Aging, Intracohort Aging, and Sociopolitical Attitudes." *American Sociological Review* 72(5):812-830.

Hall, Elaine J., and Myra Marx Farree. 1986. "Race Difference in Abortion Attitudes." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 50:193-207.

Hess, Jennifer A., and Justin D. Rueb. 2005. "Attitudes Toward Abortion, Religion, and Party Affiliation among College Students." *Current Psychology* 24(1):24-42.

Hertel, Bradley R., and Mark C. Russell. 1999. "Examining the Absence of a Gender Effect on Abortion Attitudes: Is there really no Difference?" *Sociological Inquiry* 69(3):364-381

Hoffmann, John P., and Sherrie Mills Johnson. 2005. "Attitudes Toward Abortion among Religious Traditions in the United States: Change or Continuity?" *Sociology of Religion* 66(2):161-182.

Jalen, Ted G. 1998. "Changes in the Attitudinal Correlates of Opposition to Abortion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 27:211-228.

Jalen, Ted G., David D. Damore, and Thomas Lamastch. 2002. "Gender, Employment Status, and Abortion: A Longitudinal Study." *Sex Roles.* 47(7/8):321-30.

Krosnick, Jon A. and Duane F. Alwin. 1989. "Aging and the Susceptibility to Attitude Change." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.* 57:416-25.

Luker, K. 1984. *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Misra, Ranjita and Bhagaban Panigrahi. 1995. "Change in Attitudes Toward Working Women: A Cohort Analysis." *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy.* 15:1-20

Misra, Ranjita. 1998. "Effect of Age, Gender and Race on Abortion Attitude." *The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 18(9/10):94-118.

Ryder, Norman B. 1965. "The Cohort as a Concept in the Study of Social Change." *American Sociological Review* 30(6):843-861

Sahar, Gail, and Kaori Karasawa. 2005. "Is the Personal Always Political? A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Abortion Attitudes." *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 27(4):285-296.

Sears, David O. 1981. "Life-stage Effects on Attitude Change, Especially Among the Elderly." *Aging: Stability and Changes in the Family* 4:183-204.

Scott, Jacqueline. 1998. "Generational Changes in Attitudes to Abortion: A Cross-National Comparison." *European Sociological Review* 14(2):177-190.

Smith, Tom W, Peter Marsden, Michael Hout, and Jibum Kim. General Social Surveys, 1972-2014 [machine-readable data file] /Principal Investigator, Tom W. Smith; Co-Principal Investigator, Peter V. Marsden; Co-Principal Investigator, Michael Hout; Sponsored by National Science Foundation. --NORC ed.-- Chicago: NORC at the University of

Chicago [producer]; Storrs, CT: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut [distributor], 2015.

Strickler, Jennifer, and Nicholas L. Danigelis. 2002. "Changing Frameworks in Attitudes Toward Abortion." *Sociological Forum* 17(2):187-201.

Szafran, Robert F., and Arthur F. Clagett. 1988. "Variable Predictors of Attitudes Toward the Legalization of Abortion." *Social Indicators Research* 20(3):271-290.

Tuntiya, Nana. 2005. "Fundamentalist Religious Affiliation and Support for Civil Liberties: A Critical Reexamination." *Sociological Inquiry* 75(2):153-176.

Visser, Penny S., and Jon A. Krosnick. 1998. "Development of Attitude Strength Over the Life Cycle: Surge and Decline." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 75(6):1389-1410.

Walzer, Susan. 1994. "The Role of Gender in Determining Abortion Attitudes." *Social Science Quarterly (University of Texas Press)* 75(3):687-693.

Weiner, B. 1993. "On Sin Versus Sickness: A Theory of Perceived Responsibility and Social Motivation." *American Psychologist.* 48(3):957-965.

Weiner, B. 1995. *Judgements of Responsibility: A Foundation for a Theory of Social Conduct.* New York: Guilford.

Weiner, B, Perry, and Magnusson. 1988. "An Attributional Analysis of Reactions to Stigmas" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.* 55(2):738-748.

Wang, Guang-zhen, and M. D. Buffalo. 2004. "Social and Cultural Determinants of Attitudes Toward Abortion: A Test of Reiss Hypotheses." *Social Science Journal* 41(1):93.

Westoff, Charles F., Emily C. Moore and Norman B. Ryder. 1969. "The Structure of Attitudes

    Toward Abortion." *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly/Health and Society* 47(1):38.

Zucker, G. 1999. "Attributional and Symbolic Predictors of Abortion Attitudes. *Journal of*

    Applied Social Science. 29:1218-1256.

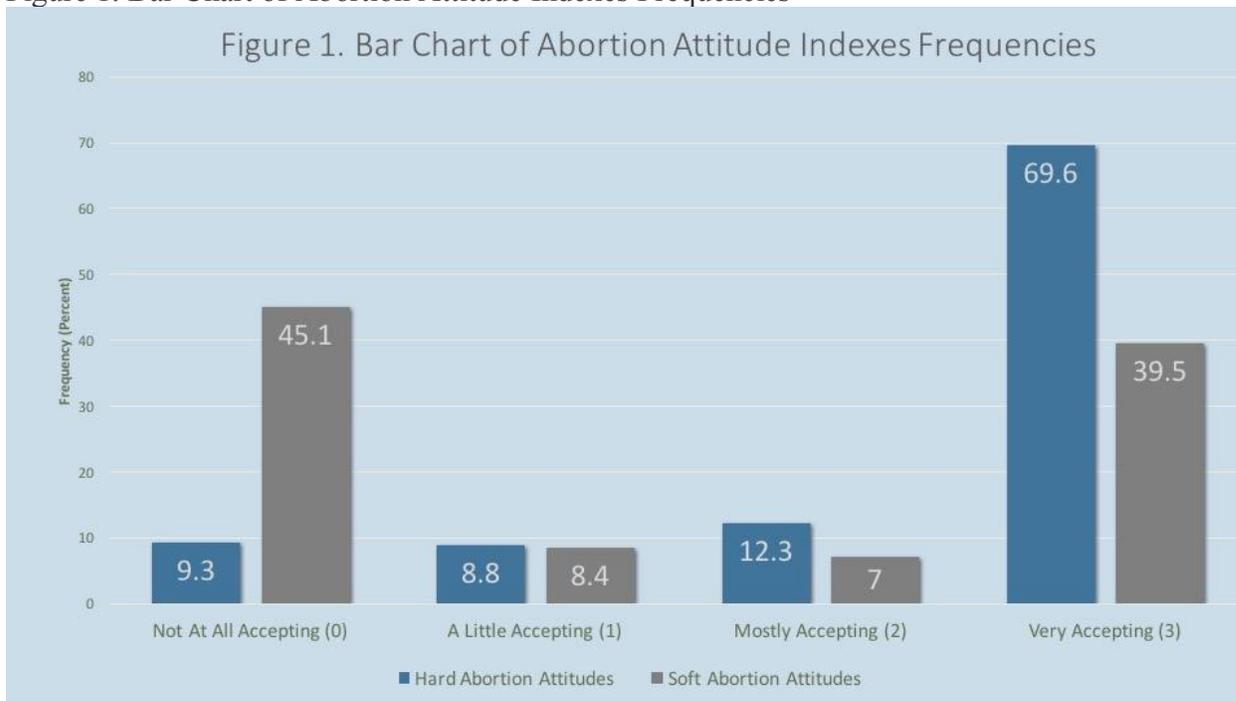Figure 1. Bar Chart of Abortion Attitude Indexes Frequencies

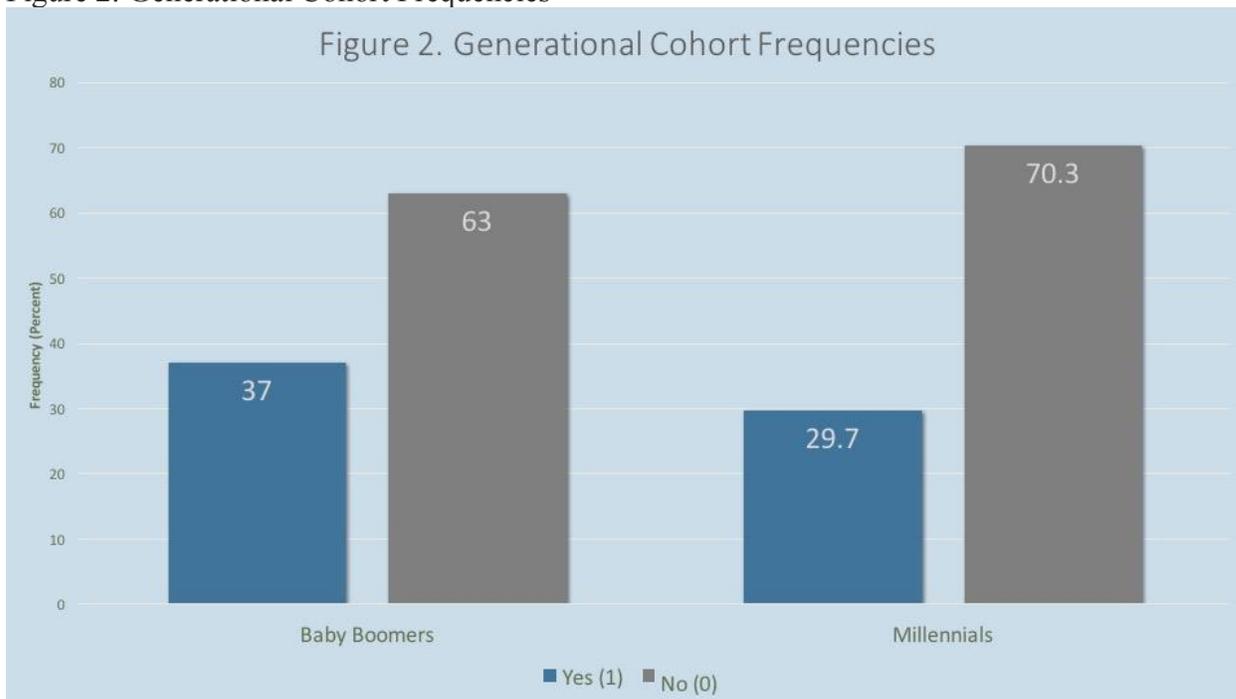Figure 2. Generational Cohort Frequencies

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of All Variables

Variables	Means	Standard Deviation
Hard Abortion Index	2.42	.989
Soft Abortion Index	1.41	1.391
Boomer	.37	.483
Millennial	.30	.457
Female	.55	.498
Fundamentalist	1.83	.985

Table 2. Correlations (r) between Hard and Soft Abortion Indexes and Four Variables (Listwise Deletion, Two-Tailed Test, $n = 1571$)

Variable	Boomer	Millennial	Fundamentalist	Female
Hard Abortion Index	.005	.055*	-.114**	-.049
Soft Abortion Index	.045	.015	-.130**	-.023
Boomer	--	-.499**	-.055*	.021
Millennial	--	--	-.080**	-.025
Fundamentalist	--	--	--	.068**

** $p < .01$

Table 3. Regression of Hard and Soft Indexes and All Variables

Variable	Hard Abortion Index β	Soft Abortion Index β
Boomer	.045	.073
Millennial	.068	.041
Female	-.041	-.015
Religious Fundamentalism	-.108	-.130
R^2	.018	.021
F (4,1566)	7.233	8.486

** $p < .01$