# Feminist Dissonance

I recently started watching the sitcom The Middle again. Such a good show—clean and funny, starring Patricia Heaton, a pro-life Catholic who is active in Feminists for Life. To me, being a pro-life feminist makes perfect sense. So how do you explain so many who staunchly defend a practice so damaging to women? I doubt it's due to a lack of compassion or shortage of information. These women typically possess passionate and sincerely-held beliefs. I chalk it up to compartmentalization with a dose of willful ignorance, without which it would be nearly impossible to align the damage of abortion with the welfare of women.

In a bid to demonstrate how smart and capable women are, modern feminism seems to be about elevating self over anything (or anyone) that may stand in their way, citing the need to eliminate their unborn children in order to get ahead in life. Apparently, the irony escapes them. ShoutYourAbortion.com loves to highlight women who cannot be burdened by something as obsolete as pregnancy.

- "Thanks to my abortion, I will have a future." (Your unborn child is so happy for you.)
- "Abortion gave me a chance to focus on my own life." (Because focusing on 2 lives is just sooo annoying.)
- "My future was worth it, and I am more than just a vessel to produce new life." (More than, yes, but it's also the coolest thing we can do.)

If one were to *honestly* address how to defend both women and abortion, cognitive dissonance comes into play. And this is uncomfortable. Cognitive dissonance is "the mental stress or discomfort experienced by an individual who holds two or more contradictory beliefs, ideas, or values at the same time; performs an action that is contradictory to one or more beliefs, ideas, or values; or is confronted by new information that conflicts with existing beliefs, ideas, or values." The current feminist movement requires this type of denial to survive.

- The party line that single, childless women are happier is in direct contrast with what studies continue to show.
- Too many women regret their abortion to maintain the lie that they can go through this trauma unscathed.
- The cavalier fashion in which many approach this issue is dismissive of those who long for children.
- Women were designed for childbirth, so those who *decide* against it are forced to create an alternate perception of their purpose. But deep down? They know.
- Finally, science overwhelmingly supports the humanity of an unborn child. This must be discounted to promote the pro-choice narrative.

Feminists for Life uses the tag line, "Women deserve better than abortion." We do! I recently saw a tee-shirt that read, "Women's Rights begin in the womb." It's true! There is a desperate need for *true* feminism in our culture. To celebrate the unique, strong, and valuable qualities that comprise our femininity. Not to rival men, but to come alongside them and celebrate our differences. Pro-life women know this, pro-life men embrace it, and we don't have to apologize for it.

One interesting survey conducted by Secular Pro-Life asked its female followers how they would respond to this statement, "To be an anti-choice woman? You'd really have to hate yourself." Here are some responses:

- Raura D.: "I would say something along the lines of, 'Have you ever considered, it's not that a woman hates herself, but that she believes the intentional killing of an innocent life is wrong?' "
- Nichole L.: "I had two abortions and it was the worst experience of my life. I'm pro-life because I care about women."
- Ellen G.: " 'Do you really think it comes from a positon of hate?' Start there. The whole 'they just want to punish women' line comes next. It's surprising how many pro-choicers have never really considered that most pro-lifers actually believe a pregnancy involves a real baby."

- Nicole H.: “I’m not trying to start a fight…but I’m a humanitarian, and believe all humans have rights, including unborn babies. I know it’s a tough situation to be in, but I believe there is a way to help both the woman and the baby overcome their unique challenges.”
- Jackie C.: “I view it differently than you do. I see it as a human rights issue for unborn humans.”
- My Response: “It is precisely *because* I value myself and all women that I want what is best for them and their unborn children. Pro-life women are not cowering under a heavy-handed patriarchy; we are standing up boldly for those who cannot defend themselves.”