

Friends:

In March, Vanderbilt professor Carol Swain and I had a back and forth exchange in the *Washington Times* with the national president of Planned Parenthood and the research director of the Alan Guttmacher Institute.

Then on Friday, April 18, we published an Op-Ed on Planned Parenthood in the *Roanoke Times*:
<http://www.roanoke.com/editorials/commentary/wb/159505>.

Yesterday, the Vice-President of a 4-state Planned Parenthood complex responded:
<http://www.roanoke.com/editorials/commentary/wb/159505>

This is a letter of response we sent to the Roanoke Times today.

Letter to the editor

David Nova's commentary ("Working for the good of the public," April 25) charges we "grossly exaggerated" data regarding the percentage of abortions provided to black women. Yet we used data from the Alan Guttmacher Institute, the research arm of Planned Parenthood. According to Roanoke College professor of statistics William Ergle, our calculation of 683,000 black abortions (56% of the total) was "not grossly exaggerated but absolutely correct, based on the information provided." Interestingly, Nova presents no other statistics.

Nova says the explanation for these shocking statistics is that black women are three times as likely to have unintended pregnancies. Then why are they 4.8 times as likely to have abortions? The rate of unintended pregnancies falls short—significantly—of the rate of abortion.

Nova complains we don't offer solutions. Planned Parenthood has been in the driver's seat on reproductive health for thirty-five years, offering its services far and wide. Yet things have only gotten worse—sexually transmitted diseases are way up, abortions in the black community have skyrocketed, and even Nova talks about the "public health crisis." The Planned Parenthood "solution" has failed, yet we are supposed to be grateful for our \$8000 taxpayer support for its Roanoke clinic.

Nova claims Planned Parenthood focuses on prevention—of unintended pregnancies and abortions. Notice the implication—Roanoke Times readers who were not "intended" by their parents would be better off never to have been born. And if Planned Parenthood really wants fewer abortions, why does it fight so hard against parental notification bills? They would surely reduce the number of abortions.

Gerald McDermott, professor of religion, Roanoke College
Carol Swain, professor of political science and law, Vanderbilt University