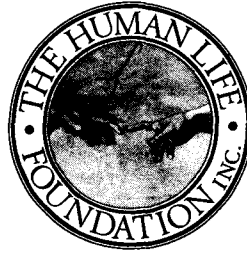


# the HUMAN LIFE REVIEW



FALL 1990

*Featured in this issue:*

Rita Marker on .....A Dutch Treat  
Mary Meehan on .....Abortion's Press Agent  
Chilton Williamson Jr. on ..... 'Greening' Abortion  
Brian Robertson on ..... Stay-at-Home Babies  
Jo McGowan on ..... Mini Moy Moy  
Faith Abbott on ..... The Story of Ruth  
Thomas Molnar on ..... Growing Up in War  
E. von Kuehnelt-Leddihn on ..... Race & Ethnicity

*Also in this issue:*

Richard Harwood • Paul Johnson • John Leo  
• Suzanne Fields • Stella Morabito •

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. . . FROM THE PUBLISHER

This issue completes our 16th year of “continuous” publication; not bad, considering that, back in early 1975, our goal was to get out *one* issue, and see what happened. After all, a totally non-commercial journal devoted to subjects most people don’t want to think about wasn’t exactly a sure bet. But our readership has grown steadily over the years (we welcome quite a number of new readers with this issue), despite the fact that *every* issue carries as many words as your average novel. The lesson is, we trust, that you can’t argue with success: there *is* a “market” for the life-and-death questions we discuss here, and we pray that it will keep right on growing until our nation *answers* those questions.

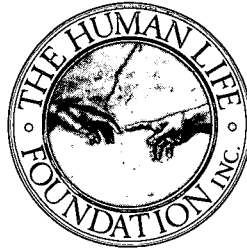
There is something else that makes this one special: our usual editorial mix includes both old and new articles—we’ve tried to bring our readers the best of what has appeared elsewhere, if we think it belongs in our “permanent record” of the Abortion War and related battles—but every article here is an original, reflecting another success: there is now more good fresh stuff available than we can handle. Even the appendices include one non-reprint, which we think demonstrates the kind of interest we’ve managed to generate. As we say, not bad.

Our special thanks to Miss Suzanne Fields and Mr. John Leo, for gracious permission to reprint their columns. Fact is, getting permission is not always easy. For instance, we faxed the *Washington Post* on May 31, requesting permission to reprint Mr. Richard Harwood’s column (see *Appendix A*). No answer. We tried again: same result. On June 25, we “suggested” that, if we couldn’t run Harwood’s piece, we’d certainly write about *that*; two days later, permission arrived. But then by the time you have read this issue, we think you will understand the *Post*’s reluctance.

We should note that, despite quite a number of requests for our last (Summer ’90) issue—which contained the main portion of Cardinal O’Connor’s “Abortion Pastoral”—we still have copies available. Please see the inside back cover for information on how to order that special issue, as well as other back issues, bound volumes, etc. And get ready for Vol. XVII, No. 1, coming up next January.

EDWARD A. CAPANO  
*Publisher*

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*Editor*

J. P. MCFADDEN

*Publisher*

EDWARD A. CAPANO

*Contributing Editors*

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BRIAN ROBERTSON

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ESTHER BURKE MARY McDONOUGH

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## INTRODUCTION

ONCE G.K. CHESTERTON WROTE: “The physical fact of death, in a hundred horrid shapes, was more naked and less veiled in times of faith or superstition than in times of science or scepticism.” Well, we surely live in “scientific” times. It is fashionable to hide from anything horrid. Modern death should be *clean*, and not seen. Of course this requires the cooperation of the dying: if they insist on clinging to life, things can get horrid indeed. Friendly persuasion can accomplish a great deal: like good advertising, it can persuade the dying of the benefits they can provide to *others* by going quietly. But there will always be hard cases. In the ideal secular society, the *law* should provide for them.

That ideal has been largely achieved in Holland. Once famous for religious fervor, the Dutch have moved abruptly into the forefront of secularism, embracing the “good” of euthanasia along the way. True, some Christian-era legal inhibitions remain on the books, but they are ignored with impunity, pending the proper “Right to Die” laws.

So it is fitting that the World Federation of Right to Die Societies should have held its biennial conference in Holland this year. And we were fortunate to have our friend Rita Marker there to cover the whole affair. Mrs. Marker has a sharp eye for detail, and can tell a good story well—you might call her account entertaining reading but for the subject matter. It’s fascinating to learn that the conference was run by an expert staff that “saw to every comfort” of the delegates. The atmosphere may remind you (as it did us) of a *chic* funeral home. But deadly-serious business was on the agenda: for instance, “Shall adult patients who are in a medically terminal condition be permitted to request and receive from a physician aid-in-dying?” Aid that will snuff out the patient’s life in a “dignified, painless and humane manner”? Such cold-blooded questions are warmly received even by physicians themselves nowadays, just as they once were in Germany, even before the Nazis. Indeed, our old friend Malcolm Muggeridge enjoys pointing out that “Hitler gave euthanasia a bad name”—thereby setting back the cause of “mercy killing” for a generation.

Another point strikes us: in the case against Capital Punishment—another fashionable humanitarian cause—there is much agonizing over the possibility

that an innocent person could be executed. Euthanasia enthusiasts are not so fastidious about victims who may *not* be “medically terminal”—they can be buried along with the rest, Who’s to know? Again, much of what Mrs. Marker tells you would be laughable were it not for the horrors that the stuffy, deadly-earnest delegates are discussing. She’s done a memorable piece of *reportage*.

We can say the same of Miss Mary Meehan, who follows with a timely report on a situation that has been much in the news lately. In July, the Los Angeles *Times* ran a series by David Shaw on the strange manner in which the Major Media cover the abortion issue. The first part was headed “Abortion Bias Seeps into News”—but as Shaw’s investigative reporting demonstrates, that is a gross understatement: such bias *permeates* abortion coverage.

Surely no other publication better illustrates that reality than the Washington *Post*, the nation’s second “paper of record” (unless of course it’s the *first* one, the New York *Times*). Meehan specializes in the kind of in-depth, nail-it-down reporting you get here. She’s always so *fair*—or devilishly kind, if you prefer. She very much hopes that the *Post*, after being confronted with its egregious sins, will repent. After all, she points out, “On occasion, the *Post* has shown that it is capable of being a great newspaper”—and the *Post*’s own Ombudsman has called its slanted abortion coverage “a blot on the paper’s professional reputation”—sufficient reasons for reform? Meehan hopes so, although she admits it “seems unlikely” given the “overwhelming support of abortion” the editors have demonstrated—and for which she provides chapter and verse. We think you’ll enjoy this one.

Then you get Mr. Chilton Williamson, asking the obvious question: Why do Environmentalists—staunch defenders of noble nature, passionate lovers of whales, trees, even inanimate rocks—fail to see the unborn as an endangered species? It’s a good question, and Williamson pursues it, well, doggedly, marshalling an impressive array of supporting opinions (even St. Augustine!) to make his case. Of course he convinces *us*, and we trust he’ll shake up honest environmentalists as well.

What should we do with those babies who manage to get themselves born? Our colleague Brian Robertson has some strong opinions about that vexed question: in our age of the “Two-Income Family”—when Mom is supposed to have “personal fulfillment” just like Dad’s, out in the business world—it’s the “traditional role” of the *kids* that is changing most radically. For them, “Home” is no longer the place where their parents live, it’s wherever they are “cared for”—by baby-sitters, “day-care” professionals, whoever can replace parents busy elsewhere. True, many mothers really *need* to work to supplement their husbands’ too-little income. But that’s because the whole notion of a “family wage”—paying men enough to support their families—has gone out of style. Women in the “work force” *compete* with men for what used to be the “breadwinner’s” due.

## INTRODUCTION

In past times, says Robertson, this would have been viewed as “suicidal madness”—a good society demands strong families, and only at-home mothers can meet that demand. And if the kids don’t get the love they need, how can they give it to *their* children? *If* they have any: our “social experiment” with liberated parents is producing a birth-dearth that may “solve” our problems by default, leaving the future to the hoards of immigrants poised to fill the vacuum? Sobering stuff, but things could change: a recent poll, Robertson notes, reports that today’s “Twenty-somethings” say they will “spend more time with their own children than their parents did with them.” Hope springs infernal.

But some “surplus” babies remain welcome. Mrs. Jo McGowan, mother of two, now has three children. “I didn’t know you were expecting again,” said her pediatrician. She wasn’t: tiny Moy Moy came as a big surprise to Jo too. And she brought very special problems with her, causing her new parents to reflect on the meaning of it all, as well as the meaning of abortion—it’s what used to be called a “heart-warming story”—it’s also one you won’t soon forget.

Ruth Abbott was born some 94 years before Moy Moy. From what her daughter writes about her here, you get the feeling that Ruth remembers that event—she certainly remembers everything else. And she has strong opinions on just about everything as well. Nowadays she must have daughter Faith’s articles read to her, and while she’s been generally pleased with what she hears, she thinks they are “just too long.” So Faith set out to write a short one—about Ruth. That proved a rather difficult assignment: first, there’s a lot to tell; then too, one thing leads to another, and Faith couldn’t help thinking about other people, for instance those who insist that old age is an awful burden. The result is a *long* short story, but a very good one. We hope Ruth will enjoy hearing it, even if in installments. (*We know* she’ll enjoy Moy Moy’s story.)

Speaking of installments, our old friend Thomas Molnar next provides another memoir of his youth. The first one (“Growing Up in East Europe,” Spring, 1990) recounted his boyhood as a Hungarian in alien Rumania. Here, he is back in Hungary, and the coming war dominates everything. Needless to add, it also changed everything: Molnar ended up as a refugee in Belgium; indeed, he was clapped in jail there, which provoked some reflections on, well, the *circumstances* that determined guilt or innocence in those chaotic days. Molnar too has strong opinions, not least that Americans have been given a distorted view of the history he lived through.

Our final article comes from another old friend, Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, who is a difficult man to characterize—especially if you know him well. Herr Kuehnelt has been romping around the globe for most of his four-score years, ingesting gargantuan servings of knowledge on just about everything—if there’s a subject he *can’t* hold forth on, we’ve yet to discover it. Here, he explains some misunderstandings about the tricky questions of race, ethnicity and citizenship. As usual, his footnotes are as interesting as his arguments. For instance, did you know that “an intelligent Turk” is able to converse with a

THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

Yakut of north-eastern Siberia? Fascinating stuff, we hope you'll enjoy it all.

\* \* \* \* \*

Also as usual, we have added some appendices relating to what has come before. *Appendix A* is the *Washington Post* column, by Ombudsman Richard Harwood, mentioned by Mary Meehan. We wish we could give you the whole series by David Shaw, which Meehan also describes, but it's simply too long even for us. However, Harwood provides what might be fairly called a synopsis of Shaw's point.

We trust Paul Johnson needs little introduction to American readers: his books probably sell as well or better here as in Britain, e.g., his *Modern Times* topped best-seller lists for months. But the multi-faceted Mr. Johnson is not only a historian but also a veteran journalist who writes on media matters for the well-known English journal *The Spectator*. Earlier this year, Johnson got on "the outstanding under-covered news story in Britain today"—What else but abortion? In fact, Johnson often writes what over here would be called "pro-life" columns, but this one was especially powerful, so we wasted no time in getting permission to reprint it here.

You will note that Johnson is well informed about the American scene; indeed, it was Cardinal John O'Connor's "Abortion Pastoral" (the major part of it appeared as a special supplement in our Summer issue) that set him off: "Over here there is no such ecclesiastical prince as O'Connor to take on the massed battalions of the modern world." That gives you the flavor of it; Johnson supplies the *punch*, comparing the abortion holocaust to Hitler's (a controversial thing to do over here, as Cardinal O'Connor knows) with a powerful "Thus did the Germans permit the death-camps to function; they too operated round the clock, year after year, while people who considered themselves decent human beings tried not to know about their existence." We hope Mr. Johnson's next book will enlarge on the point.

Unlike Johnson, Mr. John Leo (*Appendix C*) has been, well, rather ambiguous on the abortion issue. But obviously the brutal treatment routinely meted out by police to Operation Rescue people is more than Leo can stomach, causing him to use his regular "On Society" column in *U.S. News* to argue that "Punishment should come from the courts, not the cops. This is not a banana republic. This is America." Strong stuff, and the more remarkable because *U.S. News* is by no means a "pro-life" publication—it fits the syndrome David Shaw describes. But as Leo says, he is expressing only "My own feeling"—not those of his editors. Still, we're glad to have it.

Miss Suzanne Fields (*Appendix D*) is another columnist with against-the-*Zeitgeist* opinions: for instance, she disputes the received Feminist wisdom that women have every *right* to be soldierpersons—and even if they *do*, what about the rights of their children? The current near-war in the Persian Gulf has of

## INTRODUCTION

course sharpened this controversy—we've all seen the photos of Moms kissing the kids goodbye—to which Fields says "A society that sends mommies off to participate in a war when there is no actual military need to do so is a society that devalues its children." And we say "Hear Hear!" We hope to have more on this controversy in due course—it is by no means unrelated to our usual concerns.

We end with something *unusual*, certainly for this journal. We once had a "Letters" section, but found that our readers preferred sending in, ah, *articles* rather than mere commentary—very flattering of course, we're always glad to know people *read* all this—but a difficult editorial problem. But we still get many letters, and (just this *once*) we thought we might include one that we found particularly interesting, in the hope that you will too. Stella Morabito (*Appendix E*) obviously reads a *whole* issue at a time, and does exactly what we pray *all* our readers do—she sits down and *thinks* about it. In short, she's an editor's dream.

J.P. McFADDEN  
EDITOR



## A Dutch Treat

*Rita Marker*

The setting was quiet elegance. Delegates mingled on the first evening as a string ensemble played in the background. Thick carpet muffled attendees' footsteps as they moved from auditorium to lobby for espresso, tea and tiny cookies between presentations. Hushed, courteous suggestions were made by conference staff who saw to every comfort, from making dinner reservations in the best restaurants to arranging tours of historic sights in the old city of Maastricht Holland.

It was there that the Dutch euthanasia society, "Nederlandse Vereniging voor Vrijwillige Euthanasia" (NVVE), hosted the eighth biennial conference of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies, June 7-10 of 1990. Delegates of euthanasia organizations of 20 countries met to share information, set strategy, and learn from the masters of the euthanasia craft. Euthanasia is so commonplace in Holland that the Royal Dutch Pharmacists Association has supplied every physician in the country with a 10 page pamphlet outlining the most efficient ways to kill patients,<sup>1</sup> and more people are now estimated to die by involuntary than by voluntary euthanasia.<sup>2</sup> It was thus the perfect setting for participants to glean practical advice for implementing their ongoing efforts to expand the "right to die."

Euthanasia organizations from most countries, including Columbia, Spain, Israel, India, South Africa, Sweden and Japan had only one or two representatives present; others such as France, England, Belgium and Canada had sent larger contingents. The greatest number of participants from outside Holland, however, were from the United States. Among them were Ronald Cranford, the Minnesota neurologist who frequently appears as an expert witness in "right-to-die" cases;<sup>3</sup> Sydney Rosoff, Chairman of the Society for the Right to Die;<sup>4</sup> Donald McKinney of Concern for Dying;<sup>5</sup> and Hemlock chapter leaders from a number of states.

Derek Humphry, Executive Director and co-founder of the National Hemlock Society<sup>6</sup> was at the helm of the proceedings as this year's president of the World Federation of Right to Die Societies.

Among its advocates, euthanasia goes by many names. Self-

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*Rita Marker*, a lecturer in political science and ethics at the University of Steubenville (Ohio), is also Director of the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force.

determination, aid-in-dying, self-deliverance, merciful release, and the right-to-die are but a few. Killing, however, is one word that is shunned. Indeed, in his welcoming remarks to the conference audience, Derek Humphry took great pains to deny the killing connection. Noting that all member organizations “believe in the right of the terminally ill person to choose euthanasia,” he proclaimed, “We are definitely not about murder, or killing or getting rid of the less fortunate. Our movement is about compassion and love for our fellow man and woman. It’s about caring.” As Humpty Dumpty said, “When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.”<sup>7</sup> For euthanasia leaders congregating in Maastricht, caring, compassion and love mean what they choose them to mean. They mean death.

In his keynote address to the international gathering, Dr. M.A.M. Wachter, ethicist/director of the Institute of Health in Holland, left no doubt about this when he declared, “Euthanasia is the intentional ending of the life of another . . . It is always a question of terminating human life.” Such blunt statements are discouraged, however, when it comes to shaping public attitudes. A gentler, more gradual approach is preferred. “The definition builds the road for euthanasia,” Wachter explained. “Definitions are not neutral. They are not just the innocent tools that allows us to describe reality. Rather, they shape our perceptions of reality. They select. They emphasize. They embody a bias. Therefore definitions constantly need redefinition.”

Like the constantly changing patterns of a kaleidoscope, definitions shift ever so slightly, molding new patterns of thinking. Imperceptibly, the previously appalling emerges as the presently appealing.

Since an increasing number of frail elderly and chronically ill patients are becoming potential euthanasia recipients, current stress is being placed on the need for euthanasia “once it’s been determined that life is meaningless.” This is a subtle but critical change. No longer is unbearable suffering the driving force that guides the physician’s hand as he administers the lethal dose. No longer is euthanasia merely allowed in the name of toleration. Now it is presented as the culmination of good patient care—a merciful release to end a life no longer worth living.

#### **Friendly Persuasion**

Dr. H.S. Cohen is a general practitioner who works closely with the NVVE. His is the task of convincing reluctant physicians that

euthanasia is more than just a part of good medical care. He guides his colleagues to accept the administration of death as "part of good spiritual care." Generally he is called in after a patient contacts the NVVE with a complaint about a family doctor who won't provide euthanasia. In order to "help the individual find a solution," Cohen personally contacts the obstinate fellow professional and works with him, explaining and advising. This effort, although time consuming, is one which he considers well worthwhile. "This work has impact" since a previously uncommitted doctor may become an active euthanasia advocate. "Talking with an unwilling physician helps not only the patient but often leads to the doctor being willing to talk with all patients in the future," Cohen said.

Rarely does Cohen encounter outright opposition to his euthanasia activism. But in those infrequent instances of confrontation, he defuses the situation with humor. Describing his answer to accusations that he "kills people," he said he always responds, "Well, I only kill my friends." Friendship, he noted, is the basis for the doctor-patient relationship in the Netherlands. And he dismissed any remote possibility of a physician abusing his power to end a patient's life by maintaining that the Dutch medical establishment is of such high integrity that it is "not corruptible."

#### *Euthanasia as a Necessary Option*

Once euthanasia is considered part of good medical practice, the obligation exists to offer it to patients and to promote it on a large scale. Suggesting that euthanasia should have a firm place in school discussions along with issues like voting rights and contraception, Cohen declared: "It's never too early to think about euthanasia." "Euthanasia is a way of life" . . . it is "just another exercise in medical ethics."

Helping patients choose euthanasia is a responsibility that must be assumed: it has become common practice to offer this choice even to patients who have not brought up the subject. Raising the topic "takes courage and diplomacy" said Mrs. H. Bakker-Winnubst, a physician who directs a large nursing home, because "many patients are apt to say 'Yes, doctor, whatever you say.'" This does not mean the issue should be avoided, however, it only underscores the necessity for good timing when initiating the discussion.

The extent to which euthanasia is entrenched in Dutch medical circles was illustrated in a recent article by British journalist Bernard

Levin.<sup>8</sup> Levin described the plight of a physician who was reprimanded by the Dutch Medical Disciplinary Board (a body which could be considered the Dutch counterpart of the American Medical Association) for his failure to practice euthanasia. The errant physician had reportedly agreed to provide lethal drugs to a patient but failed to do so. Instead, he provided ordinary tranquilizers. The patient's son reported the case to the disciplinary board, which found the doctor "guilty" of "breach of trust." Levin aptly observed that by the time this case came to the medical board's attention, ". . . the thought of punishing a doctor who would not kill his patient had ceased to be grotesque and disgusting: indeed, it became not only reasonable but necessary."

The sorry state of pain control in Holland is also receiving some attention. When, at the urging of British right-to-die advocates, the British Medical Association undertook a study of Dutch euthanasia practices, the ensuing report noted that the development of palliative care (pain control and comfort care) is not well developed.<sup>9</sup> Such a finding lends credence to the notion that if it is easy to kill a patient, it is less likely that efforts will be put into pain control and comfort measures.

Published reports have indicated that in Holland euthanasia is administered to people with diabetes, rheumatism, multiple sclerosis, AIDS, bronchitis and to accident victims;<sup>10</sup> that doctors are now suggesting suicide to non-terminally ill debilitated patients;<sup>11</sup> and that the Royal Dutch Medical Association has reached the point of advocating full legalization—to replace the current *de facto* legalization—of active euthanasia, including the right of children to elect to die.<sup>12</sup>

#### **The Fiction of Protective Guidelines**

News reports about Dutch euthanasia generally include boilerplate reference to "strict" guidelines that must be adhered to by physicians.<sup>13</sup> The illusion of protection, it appears, makes death induction more palatable. Touted as safeguards against abuse, the guidelines include requirements that there be consultation with other physicians, that the patient be competent, and that he be experiencing unbearable suffering. In practice, however, the legal requirements afford no protection for anyone not in the full bloom of health.

As described at the Maastricht conference, the consultation requirement is met when a second doctor is selected by the very physician who will administer the deadly dose. Having a euthanasia "team"

in place at all times automatically fulfills the consultation requirement.

The elasticity of the competency requirement was apparent from remarks made in Maastricht by A.N.A Jitta, the prosecutor from Heiloo. He stated that the problem of the voluntary request can be dealt with if one is observant. "In the beginning process of growing demented," he said, "there are periods where the patient is lucid. A signal from the patient at this time may be considered a request for euthanasia." No clarification was made regarding what would be a sufficient "signal." To illustrate a situation which also fulfilled the guidelines' competency component, Jitta described the case of a man who was "incontinent, disoriented and in stages of decay." When the physician had "convinced himself" that it was time, based on a request "in the abstract from years before," he carried out euthanasia. Since prior requests and comments meet legal technicalities, Jitta suggested that nursing home patients be offered the opportunity to make directives requesting euthanasia at the time when they are admitted to nursing homes

The component of unbearable suffering is interpreted to encompass far more than physical pain. According to Dutch anesthesiologist Pieter Admiraal, "Pain is very seldom a reason for euthanasia." Instead, most of his patients "ask for euthanasia as a result of the complete loss of human dignity."

In an ethics journal article, H.A.M.J. ten Have, a Dutch physician, wrote that the current definitions of euthanasia in the Netherlands makes no reference to the terminal phase of an illness. Therefore the categories of those who would be considered eligible for euthanasia under existing guidelines include patients who are terminally ill and expected to die within weeks; those who have several months to live; those with incurable, but not life-threatening, illnesses; and individuals who are not ill but are "unwilling to live."<sup>14</sup>

#### A Hospice for Euthanasia

The hospice movement, long a haven of comfort and care for the dying in England, has only been active in Holland for the last two years. It differs significantly from its British counterpart in both philosophy and effectiveness.

While euthanasia is vigorously opposed by British hospice workers, the few hospices that exist in Holland view it as a purely personal matter. "As an organization we are not against euthanasia," said Dr. P. Sluis, chairman of the Dutch Hospice Movement. During

his Maastricht presentation, Sluis acknowledged that “palliative care is not good in Holland” and, what care there is, is limited to a very short time. Anyone whose predicted life expectancy exceeds three months is ineligible for hospice care since longer care would entail problems for the underdeveloped program. Describing his own role in the case of a diabetic patient for whom care would have extended beyond the three month limit, Sluis said “I had to decide whether I would take responsibility for the patient.” Since the patient’s care would have been too long term, the decision was made to end his life by stopping medication (insulin).

#### **Death By Any Means**

Sluis’ decision to end medication for the purpose of ending life is completely in line with the preference expressed by yet another speaker, Dr. A.W. Musschenga. A professor of health ethics, Musschenga was the only speaker to make liberal use of the word “killing,” imploring the audience to rise above any emotional reluctance to end a life of futility. Using the example of feeding a patient whose “life has no value,” he said that this type of patient may need to be fed by another person, which, he said, is not different from tube feeding. The only difference in stopping one and not the other is psychological. “We should counter these differences,” he said. “When the killing of a human life is morally justified” he urged that it be done by stopping treatment and care when possible. Only if killing in this manner is not feasible should alternative means be used.

Musschenga’s view of spoon feeding severely disabled patients is virtually identical to that expressed by Ronald Cranford when, in 1988, he testified as an expert witness in the *Cruzan* case.<sup>15</sup> Thirty-two-year-old Nancy Beth Cruzan of Missouri was severely disabled as a result of brain damage sustained in a 1983 car accident. Her parents, who are her co-guardians, had sought court approval to withdraw food and fluids being provided to her by means of gastrostomy tube. (According to court records the gastrostomy tube was implanted—even though she could chew and swallow—to make her long term care easier.)<sup>16</sup>

During his testimony, Cranford, associate physician in neurology at Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis, testified that he would consider even spoon-feeding Nancy Cruzan to be “medical treatment.”<sup>17</sup> He explained that there really is no definition of what “artificial” feeding is. Noting that “there is a legitimate difference

of opinion concerning spoon-feeding” he said, “. . . it is not fair to say that artificial feeding would only characterize what we call gastrostomy and so forth.”<sup>18</sup> He stated that spoon-feeding is denied in a case like Ms. Cruzan’s because to spoon-feed her “would be totally inconsistent” with what was wanted.<sup>19</sup> What was wanted in that case, as in the situation discussed by Musschenga, is death for the patient.<sup>20</sup>

#### Team Efforts and International Networking

While pockets of resistance to euthanasia can be found in Holland’s churches—primarily among fundamentalists—members of other religions, most notably Roman Catholic, have either remained silent or been supportive of its practice. Such support was described by Pieter Admiraal, who is widely recognized as being the world’s leading euthanasia practitioner. Introduced as “this humble man who just calls himself simply ‘Pieter’ like the other one who opens the gates of heaven for those who suffer down here,” Admiraal told the audience that there can be “no terminal care without the possibility of euthanasia.” Framing the issue as one of “rights”, Admiraal declared that every patient has “the right to ask his physician for euthanasia.” “We originated euthanasia twenty years ago in Holland at a Roman Catholic hospital,” he said, citing Catholic support for his practice. Today, Catholic priests are part of his euthanasia “team.”

Admiraal’s influence has reached far beyond his own county. Often featured on news programs and at ethics conferences in the United States, his presence during policy making discussions is less visible but no less important. For example, in early 1989, euthanasia promotion in the United States took a major step forward with a “report” published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.<sup>21</sup> While the report contained many excellent suggestions for patient care, its positive aspects faded into the background when, in its discussion of suicide, it became evident that the concept of physician-assisted suicide was to receive favorable treatment. The “MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour” described the report as the “strongest public endorsement of doctor assisted suicide ever published in a major medical journal.”<sup>22</sup> The report concluded that it is morally acceptable for a doctor to give suicide information and a prescription for the deadly dose to a patient. One of the report’s twelve physician authors, Ronald Cranford, stated: “We broke new ground and we were very aware we were doing it. We felt it was an opportunity to make a statement that’s very

controversial and stand by it." He acknowledged that assisting suicide is "the same as killing the patient."<sup>23</sup>

Little noted at the time was the fact that the panel had been convened by the Society for the Right to Die. Of the twelve panel members, four serve on the board of directors or the advisory board of the Society<sup>24</sup> and a fifth, Cranford, has written that, in the future, "physician assisted suicide may not only be permissible, but encouraged."<sup>25</sup> The concluding paragraph of the report stated there will be continuing debate about the "role euthanasia may have" in treating the terminally ill or the hopelessly ill,"<sup>26</sup> thus setting the stage for euthanasia as "treatment" for the non-dying, but "hopeless," patient. Although only twelve doctors were listed as authors, a thirteenth physician was present for the deliberations during which the "report" was formulated. The extra person was Dr. Pieter Admiraal.<sup>27</sup>

It appears that the authors' groundbreaking discussions were benefitted by the guidance of euthanasia's premier practitioner.

#### Want Pan-European Euthanasia

With Holland generally recognized as the model (or, as one participant declared, the "euthanasia paradise"), euthanasia's disciples are determined to spread its practices throughout the world. "All other countries are Third World countries" in relationship to Holland one speaker said, but plans are underway to change this.

The year 1992, when members of the European Economic Community will take a giant step toward what could eventually become a united Europe, is looked upon as an opportunity to gain a foothold in countries which have, until now, resisted efforts to adopt euthanasia either in law or in practice. Conference chairperson Mrs. Pit M.M. Bakker said, in her remarks to participants, "With the establishment of Europe '92, right-to-die societies in the EEC need to work together" to set at least a minimum level of euthanasia policy which each participating country would be required to accept. These sentiments were echoed by Mrs. I. van der Heuvel, a socialist and former member of the European Parliament, who said, "We have to play the European card." The Council of Europe has been active in the field of human rights policy but has not brought about any relevant document on the "problem of self-determination and euthanasia." Therefore, to achieve the goal of creating a European euthanasia policy "optimal political pressure must be organized."

Throughout the three day conference, it was apparent that the



speakers and participants saw themselves as kindly decision makers whose beliefs could change the world, making it a better, more beautiful place. These were the truly committed. These were the elite. They had come to the font of wisdom and were ready to return to their homelands, their fervor for the cause renewed. Political pressure, friendly persuasion, judicial activism, careful use of words, past policies and practices—all would be among the tools used to forge ahead in building a society where death is the choice to be made at the appropriate time.

“Aid-In-Dying” in a Rusty Van

Ready and waiting for American right-to-die advocates as they returned home was an American media hungry for comment about scheduled death. The catalyst for the latest euthanasia blitz was the story of Dr. Jack Kevorkian’s “self-execution machine.” The sordid details of 54-year-old Janet Adkins’ death in the back of the unemployed pathologist’s rusted old van stood in stark contrast to the respectable image advanced at the Maastricht conference.<sup>28</sup> It would be easy to dismiss Jack Kevorkian as an isolated kook, but he and his deadly device capture the essence of the euthanasia movement. The Michigan doctor, who is reported to be a personal friend of Doctor Pieter Admiraal,<sup>29</sup> merely stripped the niceties from the ghoulish work of killing sick people. Whether in a sterile hospital setting, in the familiar surroundings of the patient’s home, or in the back of a rusty old van in a Michigan park, the implications for the future are the same.<sup>30</sup>

Kevorkian’s suicide machine escalated the euthanasia “dialogue” and catapulted onto the front pages the very activity that had already been promoted in “respectable” circles. In fact, during interviews over the past year when he described his intentions to use his machine, Kevorkian had pointed out that he was merely planning to put in practice that which had already been approved in theory.<sup>31</sup> To bolster his contention he cited the March 1989 *New England Journal of Medicine* article.

Although initial reaction to the Kevorkian story was negative, it didn’t take long for the emphasis to shift to the “need” for Kevorkian-type solutions. Marcia Angell, executive editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, in a *New York Times* opinion piece titled “Don’t Criticize Doctor Death,” called upon society to “examine the problem forthrightly and compassionately.”<sup>32</sup> Charles Baron, a professor at

Boston College Law School, stated "You've got to admire him (Kevorkian). He had the (nerve) to do this."<sup>33</sup> And pollsters began to report public support for suicide clinics.<sup>34</sup>

*Medical Tribune* asked doctors to phone in their opinions about Kevorkian. Of the first wave of callers, 49% approved his poison-delivery device. Representative of favorable comments were those of Delaware doctor David Messinger: "I would mostly agree with Dr. Kevorkian. I think that we should have a closer relationship with the Hemlock Society and assist patients that want to participate in their own demise if they feel that their life in the future is hopeless" and Bay City Michigan's Dr. Donald Garvin, who said "I admire the man for maybe opening the way for something that we probably do need. He is an example of the kind of courage we need."<sup>35</sup> While in Holland for the Maastricht conference Derek Humphry, in a phone interview with a New York radio station, called Kevorkian a "brave and lonely pioneer"<sup>36</sup> and the Oregon headquarters of his organization issued a press release stating, "Hemlock would prefer that actions like those of Dr. Jack Kevorkian were clearly made legal and not made subject to ambiguity."<sup>37</sup>

#### "Do it Yourself" Death

Kevorkian's suicide machine is just one method of "do it yourself" death. "How to" books are available. Since its beginning in 1980, the Hemlock Society has aimed for acceptance of death by drug overdose or lethal injection. Toward this end the group published a suicide manual. Speaking before members of San Francisco's Commonwealth Club, Humphry said, "The Hemlock Society publishes a book on how to kill yourself, *Let Me Die Before I Wake*. It gives stories, background, legal advice, and drug advice on how a terminally ill person may end his life. We also publish a chart which gives the actual lethal dosages."<sup>38</sup> The book has been a money raiser—according to Humphry it's earned over \$1 million. In early 1990 he told a London newspaper, "I'm just about to write a sequel when I've got a moment. The book has smashed the taboo, so the sequel will be more direct. Now I'll be able to say it directly: this is what you should do. It'll be more like a textbook."<sup>39</sup>

Full legal acceptance of death on demand has, however, been the ultimate goal. The simplest way to accomplish this, by amending an already existing law, was attempted two years ago in California. In April 1988 the World Federation of Right to Die Societies (the

same organization which met this year in Maastricht) held its seventh international convention in San Francisco. That convention coincided with—and was geared to—a signature gathering campaign to place the “Humane and Dignified Death Act” on the California ballot. The measure would have legalized “aid in dying,” defined as “any medical procedure which terminates life swiftly, painlessly and humanely.”

On the evening preceding the convention, during a debate on the Death Act, its co-author, attorney Robert Risley explained, “What we want to do is change the law ever so slightly.” (He was referring to California’s living will law.) First he reminded the audience that it is now acceptable to remove food and water and thus cause death by starvation or dehydration. He then stated, “There is a better way.” The “better way” proposed was “aid-in-dying,” the lethal injection.<sup>40</sup>

Risley, who heads Americans Against Human Suffering (Hemlock’s California political arm), had big plans for its “better way.” “We’re going to try to change the laws in each state and, we hope, to get Congress to pass a resolution urging states to take that step,” he had told *Medical World News* the previous year.<sup>41</sup> But the group’s California attempt failed to collect the hundreds of thousands of signatures needed to put the measure on the ballot.

Vowing to continue its campaign, Hemlock moved its headquarters to Oregon and began preparations for the next assault. Euthanasia “represents one of the last great social reforms in modern society . . . The entire movement is going to spend all of the next two years working on this. We’ll focus on building public acceptance,” Humphrey said in 1988 as he unveiled plans to target Washington, Oregon and Florida for legislative efforts. He intends this as just a beginning.<sup>42</sup> “We stand for legalization of voluntary euthanasia” as “we want a law adopted in every state so the dying person can make a written request for help in achieving death,” Humphrey said,<sup>43</sup> predicting that within 10 years, “Americans will view the issue as routinely as living wills.”<sup>44</sup> He is quick to point out that the Dutch have coped successfully with euthanasia for years.

The routine of scheduled death will, in Humphrey’s view, be flexible enough to allow for every eventuality, including double suicide. “At the end of the day, some couples want to die together, even though one of them isn’t sick. Who is to criticize them? We would

urge that the healthy partner doesn't die, but we're a free-will society."<sup>45</sup> In the "free-will society" of Derek Humphry, death for any reason is merely an acceptable alternative to life. The stark reality of where this type of vision leads was exemplified in the double suicide of a Los Angeles couple when, according to Los Angeles police, a real estate broker and his wife—both in their forties—killed themselves. In a videotape sent to a relative, the couple said they had gone as far as they could in life and wanted to "end it all" while they are still successful.<sup>46</sup>

For now, publicity is concentrated on "voluntary" euthanasia for the "terminally" ill; however this is only done to render proposed changes in law more palatable. As John Westover, a member of the National Hemlock Society board of directors explained, "The six months limit is a tactical move. It's probably all the public will accept . . . . If the principle of legal euthanasia is established, there will be less concern about the time element."<sup>47</sup> Westover was referring to an initiative campaign currently taking place in the State of Washington.

#### **Death by Voter Mandate**

Washington State is halfway around the world from Holland. But in many ways, the Evergreen State is similar to the land of windmills, tulips and death. Residents of both Holland and Washington pride themselves on their "tolerance." Religion is a non-essential element in the lives of the majority of people in both places and, for those who consider themselves to be of any religion, church membership is largely nominal. Both Holland and Washington are major exporters of tulips. (The Skagit Valley region of Washington actually ships tulip bulbs to Holland). And—if Hemlock's current efforts are successful—Washington, like Holland, will be viewed as a "progressive" euthanasia mecca.

In May, Hemlock's Washington state chapter and its political arm, Washington Citizens for Death with Dignity, began gathering signatures for Initiative 119, the "Death with Dignity" initiative.<sup>48</sup> The measure would amend the state's Natural Death Act (Washington's Living Will law) to include "aid-in-dying" as an option for Living Will signers. Armed with petitions bearing the logo of a dove and the subtitle "A Voluntary Choice for Terminally Ill Persons," hucksters of death stand on street corners shouting at passers-by with bullhorns, staff booths at county fairs and visit senior centers, feverishly attempting

to gather 150,001 signatures of registered voters. If successful in obtaining the required number, the measure would go before the state legislature in January, where it could be either approved or, if it does not pass there, appear on the ballot in the next general election.

Hemlock is banking on Washington voters' past willingness to step up to the front of the line, leading the charge for death on demand. Twenty years ago, Washington was in the middle of one of the most heated political campaigns in its history—the battle over “Referendum 20” to legalize abortion up to 16 weeks. Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform urged voters to accept what they called “necessary” changes to allow for “safe, legal abortion in the hard cases.” The public was assured that abortion on demand was not the intent of law “reformers.”

Among those giving such assurances was Unitarian minister Ralph Mero, a leader in Washington Citizens for Abortion Reform. Deception prevailed at the ballot box and in 1970, three years before *Roe v. Wade*, Washington became the first and only state to approve abortion by direct vote of the people. Now Ralph Mero—the same Ralph Mero who 20 years ago led the abortion charge—is again leading the pack. Mero is employed as executive director of the Washington chapter of the National Hemlock Society. Once again a deceptive campaign, aimed at getting Washington voters to approve death in the names of tolerance, progress and pluralism, is taking place.

#### The Trick Question

The question being put to petition signers—and the question which would appear on the ballot—is simply: “Shall adult patients who are in a medically terminal condition be permitted to request and receive from a physician aid-in-dying?” Buried in the very small print of the petition is the meaning of “aid-in-dying,” defined as a “medical service” that will end a patient’s life in a “dignified, painless and humane manner.”

Nowhere in the working of the proposal is it made clear that state’s homicide laws would change, giving legal approval for doctors to intentionally kill their patients by lethal injection or drug-overdose. Missing from news coverage about the measure is the naked truth that what is called “aid-in-dying” in the initiative petition is currently called first degree murder in Washington. In a creative bit of journalistic understatement, one national news program described the initiative

as a proposal "to clarify language in Living Wills."<sup>49</sup> An interesting way to describe a legislative proposal that would give immunity from any civil, criminal or administrative liability to doctors who intentionally kill their patients.

In addition to allowing willing physicians and health facilities to provide the lethal means for cutting health costs, the proposal would require those doctors and facilities unwilling to engage in such activities to "make a good faith effort to transfer" the potential euthanasia victims so that the deed could be done. This requirement places each and every member of the health care profession in the position of being forced to cooperate, in some way, to bring about the death of the patient. Pressure to do so may decrease, however, if special euthanasia or suicide clinics are established. There is nothing in the proposal that would prohibit opening such clinics. In fact, they would naturally flow from approval of "aid-in-dying" since there would be no reason for a person to check into a hospital just to be killed. It would be far more cost effective to check into a clinic if "checking out" is the only medical service desired.

As evidence of foresight on the part of the initiative's drafters, a provision is included which would allow "similar directives to physicians lawfully executed in other states" to be recognized as valid in Washington State. What happens in Washington will have national impact. Euthanasia advocates contend that if one state approves of "aid-in-dying" the rest will fall in line. And ready to fall in line or pick up first place is Oregon where, says Derek Humphry, "four state legislators have promised to get such a law passed next year, when their legislature next meets" and "Americans Against Human Suffering is planning another initiative in 1992" for California.<sup>50</sup>

#### **Iowa Law School Model Death Act**

Also poised to enter the fray is a "Model Aid-in-Dying Act" drafted at the University of Iowa College of Law under the direction of Professors Sheldon Kurtz and Michael Saks. (Kurtz has since moved to Florida where he is Dean of Florida State University law school.) The Model Act is likely to be seriously considered if past projects directed by Kurtz are any indication. In 1987 a project under his direction resulted in the "Model Human Reproductive Technologies and Surrogacy Act" that has been published and considered by several state legislatures, including Iowa's. Recently published in the *Iowa Law Review*,<sup>51</sup> this proposal is expected to be offered, eventu-

ally, to legislatures across the country. It has several novel features.

For example, it would allow parents of a child under age 6 to request aid-in-dying for their child. It would allow a child 6 or over to make a death request and, if parents disagree, enable the child to take his or her plea before a special aid-in-dying board for the final decision. "Minors," the model law's commentary explains, "have the right to request aid-in-dying whether or not their parents agree."<sup>52</sup> The model law also takes into account the fact that others will request aid-in-dying for incompetent people. Thus it provides that "it is not improper for a governmental agency or health-care provider to suggest to a patient's family that they request the provision of aid-in-dying . . ."<sup>53</sup> Additional provisions allow for a state registry of specially qualified people who may carry out aid-in-dying<sup>54</sup>— anyone who pays a fee and passes a test (somewhat similar to the procedure for obtaining a driver's license) may be so qualified.<sup>55</sup>

The Iowa model defines "aid in-dying" as "the withdrawal or withholding or other abatement of life-sustaining treatment or the administration of a qualified drug for the purpose of inducing death."<sup>56</sup> And any drug "approved by the (Department of Health) that will induce death in a swift, painless, and humane manner," would fall within the category of "qualified drug."<sup>57</sup> Comment to the final section of the proposal states, "The sole purpose of the Act is to allow a patient, surrogate, or Board to make a decision in the best interest of the patient based on a multitude of considerations."<sup>58</sup> Indicative of the "multitude of considerations" which would come into play with passage of such a proposal are statements contained in an early distribution draft of the Act. The preamble of the draft stated "Effectively, this Act provides for quality control in the termination of life . . ."<sup>59</sup> and it "provides a principled means of managing our health care resources . . ."<sup>60</sup>

#### Mandating the "Offer" of Self-Determination

At the federal level, another bill, which some might conclude is a means of managing health care resources, was introduced on October 17, 1989. Titled the "Patient Self-Determination Act" and sponsored by Senators John Danforth and Daniel P. Moynihan (both senior members of the Senate Finance Committee), S. 1766 would require that any health-care provider receiving Medicare or Medicaid funding ask if a patient has a Living Will or "advanced directive." A spokesperson for Danforth's office disclaimed any connection of

the bill with cost containment but it cannot be denied the Living Will has been recommended in the past as the ideal vehicle for trimming the federal budget.

In 1977, just one year after California passed the nation's first Living Will law, Robert Derzon, administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) suggested that Living Will laws would be a major benefit to the nation's economy. In an internal memorandum to the Secretary of HEW, Derzon wrote "Encouraging states to pass such a law or, more strongly, withholding federal funds without passage, would serve to heighten public awareness of the use of such resources and would also lower health spending when such will are executed." He pointed out that the "cost-saving from a nationwide push toward 'Living Wills' is likely to be enormous" since the savings would also accrue "to Medicaid and the VA and Defense Department health programs."<sup>61</sup>

A similar suggestion was made in 1987 when Dr. Otis Bowen, then Secretary of Health and Human Services, testified before the Senate Finance Committee. During questioning by Senator John Danforth, Bowen was asked how the problem of health cost could be addressed. Acknowledging that the topic of cutting health expenditures was a sensitive area, Bowen responded that he thought the only way to attack the problem was to encourage Americans to write Living Wills.<sup>62</sup>

**I**t is undeniable that the old, the frail and the sick consume more health care resources than do the young and healthy. Further, it is true that attempts to *appropriately* cut costs are both necessary and admirable. Increasingly, however, those who are in need of health care are portrayed as greedy individuals who pose a threat to others. Illustrative of this is a statement made recently by Philip E. Sharpe, Jr., former special counsel to the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources chaired by Senator Edward Kennedy. Noting the growing demand for services from the ever-increasing Medicare population, Sharpe said, "No one has the guts to say 'no' to seniors' insatiable demand for such services."<sup>63</sup>

Suggesting that people forego health benefits for the purpose of balancing the budget, however, is not a popular stance, as former Colorado Governor Richard Lamm found when, in 1984, he reportedly told a group of senior citizens, "You've got a duty to die and get



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out of the way. Let the other society, our kids, build a reasonable life.”<sup>64</sup> The firestorm of protest that erupted following Lamm’s remarks served to put elected officials on guard. With “duty to die” statements dangerous to the political health for a politician, the challenge was to figure out a way to make people want to give up the right to medical care.

The only way to save money and maintain elected office is to convince voters that they are getting, not giving up something. The Danforth-Moynihan proposal apparently is doing just that. In an October 17, 1989 press release issued by Danforth’s office, the “Patient Self-Determination Act” was described as legislation that would seek “to improve communication in health care” and to protect a person’s “right to self-determination.” On the same day, joining Danforth and Moynihan at a press conference to announce the measure was a group designed to show broad religious and ethical support: Rev. Dennis Brodeur, Director of the Sisters of St. Mary Health Care System, St. Louis, Missouri; Myra Christopher, Executive Director, Midwest Bioethics Center of Biomedical Ethics, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia; Barbara Mishkin, Hogan and Hartson, Washington D.C.; and Rabbi Rev. Rav A. Soleff, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, representing the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

Originally the measure—referred to by Danforth as a medical “Miranda Rights” proposal—would have forced any state not having an “advance directive” law to pass one or forfeit Medicare or Medicaid funds. Following a July 20, 1990 hearing on the measure, a memo stated that requirement will be deleted.

However, if the “Self-Determination” Act passes, every Medicare and Medicaid provider—hospitals, nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, outpatient rehabilitation facilities, home intravenous drug therapy providers, clinics and public health agencies—must, as a condition for continuing to receive such funds, comply with extensive requirements. These include providing information about advance directives (developed by HHS and the State) to every adult patient. Early discussions indicated that this requirement would be fulfilled at the time of initial contact with the patient, a situation that could lead to ludicrous and dangerous results. A woman who is in the late stages of labor and is “offered” the opportunity to sign an advanced directive prior to hospital admission is unlikely to ask for an explanation of the document’s terminology. Likewise, a patient who is under stress at being placed in a nursing

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home may wish to avoid the appearance of confusion about any paperwork for fear that this may be misinterpreted as incompetency.

Although the measure does not require that patients sign such a document—only that they be informed of the “right” to do so—it’s logical to assume that a person going through tedious admitting procedures at a nursing home or hospital would automatically sign the “offered” document along with the many other necessary forms at the time of admission. After patients have an advance directive, health providers would be compelled to carry them out to the full extent of each state’s Living Will Law. Thus, if aid-in-dying amendments to state Living Will laws are passed, the “Patient Self-Determination Act” would force every Medicare and Medicaid provider to “offer” aid-in-dying to patients and would force health professionals to either administer the lethal dose or transfer the patient.

**Conclusion**

Once before in this century death was offered as the solution to the problem of life not worth living. When the horrors of the death camps became known, those familiar with Germany questioned how that land with its noble medical profession and cultured society could ever have become so corrupt.

The answer, as Richard John Neuhaus has written, was that “the Holocaust was not the abstraction we call a period of history but a succession of mornings and afternoons and evenings, much like this day. It was a tangled combination of innumerable actions and consequences, of careers and ambitions, of fears and loyalties, of flirtations with the unthinkable turning into the routines of the unexceptionable. To most of those involved, the icon of evil did not present itself whole. It happened an hour at a time, an equivocation at a time, a lie at a time, a decision at a time, a decision evaded at a time.”<sup>65</sup>

Will historians say the same thing when chronicling events of the last half of the 20th century?

**NOTES**

1. Michael Specter, “Thousands of Dutch Choose Euthanasia’s Gentle Ending,” *The Washington Post*, April 5, 1990, p. A30.
2. Richard Fenigsen, “A Case Against Dutch Euthanasia,” *Hastings Center Report*, January-February, 1989, p. 22.
3. Ronald Cranford is a past president of the American Society of Law and Medicine. As a member of the American Academy of Neurology he helped draft the AAN’s guidelines on removing food and water from patients diagnosed as being in a persistent vegetative state. He has suggested that patients who are “permanently unconscious”—those diagnosed as being in a persistent vegetative state or in coma, as well as anencephalic infants—be considered neocortically dead but that consideration

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be given to maintaining their biological lives so their bodies may be used for medical experimentation, organ harvesting or drug testing.

See: Ronald E. Cranford, M.D. and David Randolph Smith, J.D., "Consciousness: The Most Critical (Constitutional) Standard for Human Personhood," *American Journal of Law and Medicine*, Vol. XIII, No. 2&3, (1987) pp. 233-248.

4. The Society for the Right to Die was formed in 1938 as the Euthanasia Society of America. In 1939, a Society official said it planned eventually to legalize "putting to death of non-volunteers." The Euthanasia Society of America changed its name to the Society for the Right to Die in 1975.

5. Donald McKinney is former president of Concern for Dying. Known since 1978 as Concern for Dying, the group was formed in 1967 under the name, Euthanasia Education Council. It originated the Living Will as a tool for changing public attitudes about euthanasia.

At the present time plans are underway for the Society for the Right to Die and Concern for Dying to merge into one combined organization. After the merger, expected in late 1990, the combined organizations will operate under the name, National Council on Death and Dying.

6. Derek Humphry is a former British journalist whose provision of a lethal dose of drugs to his cancer stricken first wife became the basis for the book, *Jean's Way*.

Derek Humphry and his second wife, Ann, formed the Hemlock Society in 1980. In late 1989 Humphry abandoned his second wife, three weeks after she was diagnosed with cancer. He cited her inappropriate handling of her cancer as one of the reasons for his actions.

The Hemlock organization is currently under investigation by both the Internal Revenue Service and the California Justice Department.

7. Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking Glass*, Magnum Books (New York), 1968, p. 222.

8. Bernard Levin, "Under patient's orders—to kill," *The Times* (London), December 11, 1989.

9. *Euthanasia: Report of the Working party to review the British Medical Association's guidance on euthanasia*, British Medical Association, May 5, 1988, p. 49, No. 195.

10. "Suicide on Prescription," *Sunday Observer*, (London), April 30, 1989, p. 22.

11. "Dutch in agonizing debate over voluntary euthanasia," *The Pittsburgh Press*, July 31, 1989, p. 1.

12. Allan Parachini, "The California Humane and Dignified Death Act," *Hastings Center Report*, January-February, 1989, pp. 10-12.

13. See, for example: Marcia Angell M.D., "Euthanasia," *New England Journal of Medicine*, Vol. 319, No. 20 (Nov. 17, 1988) p. 1349; Michael Specter, "In Netherlands, euthanasia stirs courage and conflict," *Washington Post*, 4/5/90, p. A1; Hend Rigter, Els Borst-Eilers, H.J.J. Leenen, "Euthanasia across the North Sea," *British Medical Journal*, Volume 297 (December 17, 1988) p. 1593.

14. Henk A.J.M. ten Have, Ph.D., M.D., "Euthanasia in the Netherlands: The Legal Context and the Cases," *HEC Forum: An Interdisciplinary Journal on Hospitals' Ethical and Legal Issues*, Pergamon Press, Vol. 1, (1989) p. 45.

15. *Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Department of Health, No. 88-1503* was the first euthanasia case to reach the U.S. Supreme Court. On June 25, 1990 the high court found that the state of Missouri could require "clear and convincing evidence" of a patient's wishes before removing food and water. In so doing, the court upheld the Missouri Supreme Court decision preventing Nancy Beth Cruzan's parents from ordering health care workers to starve and dehydrate her to death.

16. Transcript of *Cruzan v. Harmon & Lamkins*, Case No. CV384-9P, in the Circuit Court of Jasper County, Missouri, Probate Division at Carthage, 3/9/88-3/11/88, p. 423. Hereafter cited as *Cruzan*.

17. *Cruzan* transcript, p. 228.

18. *Ibid*.

19. *Cruzan* transcript, p. 229-230.

20. For a thorough discussion of the relationship of withholding food and fluids and the euthanasia movement see: Rita L. Marker, "The Right-to-Die Movement and the Artificial Provision of Nutrition and Hydration," *International Review*, Vol. XII, No. 3 (Fall, 1988), pp. 193-209.

21. Wanzer, Determan, Adelstein, Cassel, Cassem, Cranford, Hook, Lo, Moertel, Safar, Stone, van Eys, "The Physician's Responsibility Toward Hopelessly Ill Patients: A Second Look," *The New England Journal of Medicine*, March 30, 1989, Vol. 320, pp. 844-848. Hereafter cited as Wanzer.

22. MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour, PBS, March 30, 1989.

23. *Ibid*.

24. Board member, Safar; Advisory Committee members, Cassel, Lo, Wanzer.

25. "Dr. Ron Cranford Defines Distinctions Between 'Allowing to Die' and 'Killing,'" *Concern for Dying Newsletter*, Summer 1988, p. 2.

26. Wanzer, p. 849.

27. "Second SRD Conference Urges Peaceful Death; Stresses Control of Pain," *Society for the Right to Die Newsletter*, Fall 1989, p. 3.

28. For more information about Kevorkian and his "suicide machine," see Diane M. Gianelli, "Debate rages over MD-aided suicide," *American Medical News*, June 22, 1990, p. 1.

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29. George Adams, "Death, by appointment only," *Health Care Weekly*, August 24, 1987, p. 1.
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## Press Agent for the Grim Reaper

Mary Meehan

“**T**HWACK! THWACK! THUMP!” Early in the morning, the *Washington Post* hits the steps and porches of homes in the nation’s capital, serving its daily dose of news and commentary. The mighty *Post* reaches more than 800,000 subscribers on weekdays and over one million on Sunday. Through the news service it runs with the *Los Angeles Times*, many of its news stories reach subscribers to another 650 newspapers. In addition, several of its top columnists are made available to other newspapers through a syndicate called the Washington Post Writers Group.<sup>1</sup>

Among the *Post*’s huge readership are most of the movers and shakers in U.S. politics. The President reads the *Post*. So do cabinet members, Supreme Court justices, and members of Congress. A 1988 survey by the Marketing Projects Group of New York showed that 83 percent of executive and congressional officials were reading the *Post*. Only 30 percent were reading its nearest print competitor, the *Wall Street Journal*.<sup>2</sup>

When the *Washington Post* talks, many policymakers do more than listen. They snap to attention and salute. This is the kind of influence and political power that most politicians can only dream about.

So there is concern when the *Post* uses its great power to push an agenda that undermines human life and happiness. I recall a particular low point in 1981, when its Sunday “Outlook” section carried an essay called “Thank God for the Atomic Bomb,” followed just two weeks later by “A Few Good Words for Suicide.”<sup>3</sup>

The *Post* is somewhat ambivalent about the Bomb. It also has mixed feelings on suicide, appearing to favor it for elderly people who have serious health problems but to oppose it for healthy youngsters. Last April the *Post* used this headline for an elderly couple’s suicide by drug overdose: “One Couple’s Calm Journey Into Death: For Middleburg Family, Suicides Leave Behind No Anguish.” Reporter Alison Howard noted that only one day after the couple committed suicide because of poor health, “the cheerful, throaty sound” of

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Mary Meehan, a Washington free-lance journalist, has written for numerous magazines and newspapers, including the *Washington Post*.

their two daughters' laughter "spilled out onto the stone porch" of their home. The parents, members of the pro-suicide group called the Hemlock Society, had planned their deaths far in advance and discussed the matter often with their daughters. One daughter remarked that the parents' frankness "has made this so easy for us."<sup>4</sup> How nice. What a wonderful commercial for the Hemlock Society.

Eight days later, however, the *Post* reported the suicide of an 18-year-old who rode his motorcycle into a brick wall. *That* suicide was treated as a tragedy. A follow-up article on May 4 noted warnings that other youngsters might engage in "copycat" activity and provided a list of telephone numbers to call for suicide prevention.<sup>5</sup>

The earlier article on the elderly couple had not gone so far as to provide the Hemlock Society's phone number. Still, readers may have concluded that if they were old and sick, they should contact Hemlock; but if they were young and healthy, the pleasure of their company was still requested on this earth.

An occasional *Post* writer suggests that suicide is not the best remedy for the elderly infirm. On the same day the *Post* published the Hemlock promo, it published a long report by David Streitfeld on the suicide of psychologist Bruno Bettelheim, another Hemlock Society member. Streitfeld talked to a number of Bettelheim's friends and drew a portrait of a very lonely and depressed man. While a few of the friends appeared to approve Bettelheim's action, the director of a school he once headed noted that former students were saying, "This is the man who told us that you struggle for life, that even though it's very difficult, life is worth living. How can it be that he committed suicide?" An acquaintance of the psychologist reported that Bettelheim had told her that "he should have gone to Israel because there the kibbutzes knew how to create a situation in which old people could be useful."<sup>6</sup>

Despite an occasional, thoughtful piece like Streitfeld's, the *Post* generally is sympathetic to suicide and euthanasia as escape routes for people who have serious physical problems. The bias of staff people who deal with the issue is often apparent in news stories, especially in what is *not* reported or what is underplayed. This has been so in the case of Nancy Cruzan, a Missouri woman who is severely brain-damaged. Her family wants to halt her artificial feeding so she will die. In June the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Missouri could prevent dehydration and starvation of Nancy Cruzan, who lives in a state hospital. The Court's decision, however, was no great

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victory for euthanasia opponents, since it suggested that a state may *allow* starvation, too. This states' rights approach was editorially approved by the *Post*.<sup>7</sup>

Like other major media, the *Post* stressed the mental suffering of Cruzan's family and paid little attention to the quality of the nursing care she receives. (According to trial testimony, that care is excellent.) It did not contrast the Cruzan family with other families in the same situation who strongly oppose starvation. Some of them, in fact, care for their loved ones at home, thus assuming a burden far greater than the one the Cruzans carry. Because of intense media coverage, the American public developed enormous sympathy for the Cruzans. One can sympathize with them yet still insist that families who care for the severely brain-damaged at home deserve far more sympathy. They rarely receive either sympathy or a forum for their views, because the *Post* and other publications rarely tell their stories.<sup>8</sup>

The *Post* also failed to examine some common assumptions about "persistent vegetative state" or PVS, which was diagnosed as Cruzan's condition. It is clear that experts have been too quick to diagnose the condition as "irreversible" in some cases. Moreover, people in coma or PVS are unconscious by definition; yet some who have awakened from what appeared to be those states remember things that happened while they were "unconscious."<sup>9</sup> There is great mystery about coma and PVS, but many reporters are too quick to accept glib statements from "experts" who are campaigning for the starvation policy.

Some media outlets at least gave major play to stories of people who awakened from PVS when they were not expected to and, in fact, when feeding halts had been requested or even authorized. The *Post* did cover the 1986 case of Jacqueline Cole, a Baltimore woman who woke up six days after a judge had refused her husband's request to remove her life support systems.<sup>10</sup> That case, however, was so close to the paper's home territory that it was almost a local story. Last year, when an elderly New York woman named Carrie Coons woke up shortly after a judge authorized her starvation, the *Post* ignored the story. Finally, more than two weeks after it appeared elsewhere, the *Post* ran a Nat Hentoff column about it.<sup>11</sup> Hentoff, a syndicated columnist, is one of the few euthanasia opponents the *Post* allows to appear in its pages.

Last March, while the Cruzan case was before the Supreme Court, a Wisconsin man awoke from a vegetative state that had lasted for

eight years—that is, slightly longer than Nancy Cruzan had been in PVS. Some newspapers thought this was a real story: The *Washington Times* played it on its front page (“‘Rip Van Winkle’ Awakens Doubts”), and *USA Today* on page three. The *Post* ran a small item on page A-16, with no reference to the Cruzan case. If you happened to be a Supreme Court justice agonizing over the fate of Nancy Cruzan, it would have been very easy to miss that item. Later the *Post* “Health” magazine ran a longer item about the Wisconsin case, taken from the Associated Press. Again; however, there was no reference to Cruzan.<sup>12</sup>

The media often suggested that the Cruzan case and others like it were responses to modern and mindless technology. One *Post* medical writer said the Cruzan case could be called *Mercy v. Life at All Costs*.<sup>13</sup> Certainly, there have been too many cases of doctors’ using extraordinary means to keep dying people alive for a few more days or weeks. Yet three major differences in the Cruzan case were often missed: 1) Nancy Cruzan was not dying. 2) Many patients can survive without high-tech interventions such as respirators; no one can survive without food and water. 3) Artificial feeding is neither high-tech nor expensive. It is *not* a monster of recent and mindless technology. Gastrostomy, the operation to implant a feeding tube in the stomach, has been used successfully since 1875. Most of the early operations were done on patients who were starving to death because cancer prevented their eating by mouth. The procedure was also used to save children who were starving because they had swallowed lye, resulting in esophagus closure.<sup>14</sup>

Another omission in media coverage, including *Post* coverage, was the failure to note strong opposition to starvation among the nurses who care for Nancy Cruzan. “I was trained to help save lives, not to enhance death,” nurse Lisa Perrin told the trial court. Another nurse, Janie Bowker, testified: “We cannot handle it. We cannot stand by and do nothing and watch her dehydrate and starve to death.”<sup>15</sup>

The *Post* occasionally reports cases of serious negligence of nursing home residents. It does not, however, consider the possibility that forcing nurses to stand by and do nothing for the long-term unconscious may also encourage negligence of other helpless patients. Human compassion cannot be turned off and on like a water faucet.

As the Supreme Court considered the Cruzan case, the *Post* was galloping ahead to quicker, more direct forms of euthanasia. Last



April, in an article headlined “Thousands of Dutch Choose Euthanasia’s Gentle Ending,” *Post* reporter Michael Specter described the quasi-legal status of euthanasia in the Netherlands.<sup>16</sup> Many people would not use the word “gentle” to describe a process in which, Specter said, “physicians usually administer barbiturates to induce coma and the muscle-paralyzing drug curare to stop breathing.”

Specter noted that Dutch doctors “perform” (why not say “commit”?) euthanasia with great difficulty and that many “frequently have nightmares afterward.” Overall, however, he presented Dutch euthanasia as a necessary evil which has safeguards to prevent abuse. He did not even mention documented cases of Dutch euthanasia performed without consent of the patients. Nor did he mention Dr. Richard Fenigsen, a prominent Dutch opponent of euthanasia who has written that “no society knows how to live with an army of benevolent or casual killers, thousands strong.”<sup>17</sup>

Victor Cohn, who writes “The Patient’s Advocate” section for the weekly *Post* “Health” magazine, keeps bringing up the subject of active euthanasia. He usually presents both sides of the question. Somehow, however, the pro-euthanasia side nearly always comes out on top. This is partly because Cohn cites many medical authorities who either favor euthanasia or are highly ambivalent about it, but few who oppose it outright.<sup>18</sup> There are many articulate opponents of euthanasia—both inside and outside the medical profession—who are rarely if ever quoted by Cohn. Among them are: Dr. Eric Chevlen, a cancer specialist; Yale Kamisar, a well-known expert who has written what many consider the definitive study of the issue (“Some Non-Religious Views against Proposed ‘Mercy Killing’ Legislation”); Rita Marker and Mary Senander of the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force; Thomas Marzen, a disability-rights lawyer; Richard John Neuhaus, a prominent writer and editor; Victor Rosenblum, a law professor and vice-chairman of Americans United for Life; Dr. Alan Shewmon, a neurologist; and Dr. Joseph Stanton, another well-known physician and writer.<sup>19</sup> It is extremely important that their voices be heard by politicians, Supreme Court justices, and other citizens.

Summing up recent *Post* coverage of euthanasia, one might say that it is almost as poor as *Post* coverage of abortion for the past 20 years. The reason for the “almost” qualifier is that *Post* columnists are not yet heaping upon euthanasia opponents the kind of abuse they have showered on abortion opponents for many years. The

rules for columnists, of course, are different from the rules for reporters. Columnists are *supposed* to be opinionated. They are also allowed, if they wish, to be angry, rude and insulting. Several *Post* columnists fill the bill nicely. Their writing provides a context, like a picture frame, for the newspaper's reporting on abortion.

In a 1981 column, Richard Cohen remarked that he once arranged an illegal abortion for a "former girlfriend of a friend who had left town" and that he would do the same thing again. If abortion were again made illegal, Cohen declared, anti-abortion legislators would not hesitate to arrange abortions for their daughters, wives or girlfriends. With the omniscience that some columnists assume, Cohen asserted that they "would do what I did when I was 22. They would make a lot of calls and go into the underground and do what had to be done." His conclusion: "You could never outlaw abortion if you first outlawed hypocrisy."<sup>20</sup>

Reading abortion opponents' minds and declaring them hypocrites is a favorite Cohen ploy. Recently he declared that many abortion opponents believe that "women who engage in sex for sensual reasons are supposed to suffer the consequences—pregnancy."<sup>21</sup>

Certainly Cohen's personal attacks are easier to write than his occasional efforts to support legal abortion rationally. In a 1984 column, for example, he argued that the effort to outlaw abortion was "an attempt to restrict personal freedom." Yet a few weeks later, in a column about car seat belts and air bags, he declared: "Often we need to be protected from our own foolishness."<sup>22</sup> His theory seems to be that government has no right to protect the weak against the strong, but has an obligation to protect the strong against themselves. No wonder he prefers personal attacks to logic.

Last year *Post* Columnist Henry Mitchell said that, among anti-abortionists, "There is an element of vindictive gloating all too often, as if to say to the pregnant woman, ha, you've made your bed and now lie in it and the more suffering and chaos it introduces into your life the better. Serves you right."<sup>23</sup> Like Cohen, he offered no evidence to support this assertion. Where, one wonders, do they pick up this sort of rubbish? Have they ever sat down and spoken with abortion foes? Do they *know* any?

They may pick up their misconceptions from other columnists and from politicians who support abortion. In a different context, John Kenneth Galbraith explained the process many years ago:

Washington politicians, after talking things over with each other, relay

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misinformation to Washington journalists who, after further intramural discussion, print it where it is thoughtfully read by the same politicians. It is the only completely successful closed system for the recycling of garbage that has yet been devised.<sup>24</sup>

Herblock (Herbert Block), the veteran *Post* cartoonist, does his part in the recycling chain. He portrays abortion foes as nasty, mean-spirited, and virtually always male. The millions of women who oppose abortion do not exist in Herblock's world. They, like the unborn, are non-persons.

Possibly Herblock's lowest point was reached last year after President Bush vetoed a bill requiring public funding of abortion for women pregnant by rape or incest. Herblock's cartoon showed one man putting his clothes back on, and another—who looked somewhat like the President—straightening his tie, while a rape victim lay on the floor near them. A White House briefcase stood by the men, lest anyone should miss the point or accuse Herblock of being subtle. Long-suffering *Post* readers described the cartoon as “distasteful,” “extremely offensive” and “unfair and vicious.”<sup>25</sup>

*Post* editorial writers occasionally add to the abuse, as when they recently called a Louisiana anti-abortion bill “repressive and mean-spirited.”<sup>26</sup> Generally, however, they prefer to write in a serious and thoughtful tone—always, however, in support of abortion. There is no sign that they recognize any contradiction—or even irony—in the juxtaposition of their pro-abortion stance and their commendable concern about prenatal care and the needs of children after birth.

A genuinely liberal newspaper might be expected to crusade for adoption as an alternative to abortion. It would be nice to see frequent editorial reminders about adopting *children* similar to a 1984 *Post* editorial on adopting *cats and dogs*. Noting the “suspended death sentence” facing animals at the local shelter, the editorial stated: “In case you were thinking of getting a dog or cat one of these days, we just thought we'd let you know. Sooner rather than later would make all the difference for the gang on animal death row.”<sup>27</sup>

*Post* editorials, of course, strongly oppose the death penalty for humans *after* birth. If the same people who write those editorials also write the ones supporting abortion, they have unusually compartmentalized minds. “The essential question,” proclaimed one anti-death penalty editorial, “is whether this country . . . is willing to ‘solve’ social problems by killing human beings.”<sup>28</sup> Yes, precisely.

Against the backdrop of pro-abortion columns, cartoons and editorials, how do *Post* reporters deal with the issue? Some handle it as true professionals, keeping their personal opinions to themselves and trying hard to present the facts. Even the good reporters, though, must operate within style guidelines that stack the deck for the pro-abortion side.

Until the spring of 1989, *Post* reporters had some latitude in choosing labels for opposing sides in the abortion debate. Some used the labels that each side seemed to prefer: "pro-choice" for pro-abortion and "pro-life" for anti-abortion. Others, however, used a positive label for the pro-abortion side and a negative one for their opponents. In April of '89, according to a *Post* writer, "the paper went through three separate generations of memos" to reach this result: "'Pro-life' and 'pro-choice' are banned; the sides are now 'antiabortion' and 'abortion rights.'"<sup>29</sup>

The mighty mountain had labored and brought forth a change from optional discrimination to *mandatory* discrimination. In a nation which practically worships the concept of "rights," the *Post* awarded that word to one side while using a negative label for the other. Moreover, the plural form, "rights," suggests some vague multitude of rights connected with abortion, thus stacking the rhetorical deck even further. The *Post* needs a lesson in language and logic: The reverse of "anti-abortion" is "pro-abortion." The reverse of "abortion rights" is "abortion wrongs."

*Post* photography policy may be even more important than its style guidelines. With only one exception that I can recall, it has failed to show the results of abortion. In 1982 it accepted an advertisement from the National Right to Life Committee showing a child aborted at late term. The child was intact, not dismembered.<sup>30</sup> While the photograph may have shocked some people, a photo of fetal parts from an abortion by dismemberment would have shocked them a great deal more. These are precisely the photos citizens should see if they want to understand what abortion is all about. They are the photos members of Congress should see before voting on whether to fund abortion. Why don't they see them in the *Post*?

When the *Post*'s Sunday magazine published Cynthia Gorney's profile of anti-abortion activist Dr. John Willke last spring, Gorney noted the controversy over explicit photographs and said:

Even the photographs of first trimester suction abortion are disturbing to most people unprepared for the sight of recognizable arms and legs; Washington

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*Post* editors decided not to run sample photographs with this article because they found the pictures too graphic for a magazine readily accessible to children. . . .<sup>31</sup>

For a brief period last year, however, there were photos of *adult* corpses all over the *Post*, especially from the warfare in Panama and Romania.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps the editors received so many protests against their little experiment in frankness that they decided against a repetition. It may also have occurred to them that it is inconsistent to show large, intact bodies but not tiny, dismembered ones.

Certainly, we should all be concerned about protecting the innocence of children. When they have access to television sleaze and slasher films, however, why draw the line at pictures of aborted children? Don't they have a right to see what is happening to a large part of their generation? I, for one, would like to see *Post* editors run the abortion pictures and then try to explain them to small children. They might find that task so difficult that they would have to look for new jobs—or change their editorial policy.

Let it be said again that, given the limitations of their paper's policies, some *Post* reporters still do good, professional work on abortion. There are others, however, who reinforce the newspaper's basic bias and carry it to extremes. A 1989 report on Operation Rescue by Howard Kurtz relied heavily on comments by observers hostile to those who sit-in at abortion clinics. There was no evidence that Kurtz made any effort to check statements most damaging to the rescue people. He quoted a Planned Parenthood official as saying that they "pretend" to be non-violent, that they call women "murderers and whores" and that they "spit at them." By the time Kurtz's article appeared, I had covered 18 Operation Rescue sit-ins in four states—and had never heard any of the participants call women "murderers" or "whores." I had never seen any of them spit at anyone.

Kurtz quoted another abortion supporter who described Operation Rescue people as "violent" and said she had seen them "hold their hands up in a Hitler salute."<sup>33</sup> That is something else I had never seen. It is astonishing that the *Post* would print such a charge only on the word of an interested party. Kurtz's description of Operation Rescue sit-ins was so reliant on quotes from abortion advocates that I wondered whether he himself had ever witnessed a sit-in. To cover an event, it helps to be there.

Months later, the *Post* "Style" section ran a long piece on Operation

Rescue and its leader, Randall Terry, by Susan Faludi.<sup>34</sup> The article was reprinted from *Mother Jones* magazine. If *Post* staffers did any fact-checking before deciding to run the article, they did a remarkably sloppy job. Faludi said that Joseph Scheidler of the Pro-Life Action League first had the idea of sit-ins, citing a 1985 book by Scheidler. Yet he was not the pioneer; the sit-ins dated back to 1975; and the first one was done by a group of Maryland women.<sup>35</sup>

Faludi's references to Randall Terry's home territory in New York as the birthplace of feminism, where "Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton launched the campaign for women's equality," suggested wonderful irony. She neglected to say, or did not know, that Anthony and Stanton opposed abortion. Their 1868-69 newspaper, *The Revolution*, carried articles calling it "a crying evil," "child murder," and a "work of destruction." Unlike many newspapers of its time, *The Revolution* refused on principle to carry ads for abortifacients.<sup>36</sup>

Finally, Faludi made an intellectually dishonest effort to link Operation Rescue with violence. She said it was "the latest step in a national escalation of anti-abortion sentiment and tactics, an increasingly violent outpouring that first surfaced in the late '70s." Then she mentioned—among other things—arson, bombing, and kidnapping. As far as I know, Operation Rescue people have never been linked with any of those actions. In fact, they ask sit-in participants to sign a pledge that they will be "peaceful and non-violent in both word and deed" and will not struggle with the police, but "remain polite and passively limp."<sup>37</sup> I have seen them do so despite the use of "pain compliance" by police that looked very much like torture. Except for a few columns by Nat Hentoff, the *Post* has generally ignored police brutality against sit-inners. When David Shaw of the Los Angeles *Times* recently investigated media coverage of abortion, he found that the editorial page editors of both the *Post* and the New York *Times* "had never heard of the 'pain compliance' practices and resultant charges of police brutality by Operation Rescue."<sup>38</sup>

Michael Specter, who did the superficial reporting on Dutch euthanasia, has virtually campaigned for the use of tissue from aborted children for transplants. In a November, 1989, news story, Specter referred to the ban on fetal transplants by government scientists as "one of the few examples in modern times of a political prohibition on scientific research that most experts consider important." Later in the same article, referring to the Bush administration's difficulties in recruiting top health officials, Specter remarked: "Many medical

and scientific leaders have said they would be offended by suggestions that any person in such a demanding and important scientific position ought to hold political views agreeing with those of President Bush.”<sup>39</sup> If you substitute “ethical” for “political” in these sentences, the statements seem rather odd. Yet this issue is primarily an ethical one. Specter did not explain why anyone would be offended by the idea that presidential appointees should agree with the president who appoints them. That, too, seems to be a rather strange notion.

In February, 1990, Specter reported on a Swedish experiment in which a fetal tissue transplant appeared to help a man with Parkinson’s disease. All of the quotations in the article were favorable to fetal transplants. There was not one quote questioning the ethics of such transplants. Not one. In a March article, headlined “Abortion Issue Chills Research,” Specter managed the same feat again.<sup>40</sup> Is this news reporting? Or propaganda?

The *Post* handles genetic screening of the unborn (amniocentesis and other tests) in a similar way. When genetic screening detects fetal handicaps such as Down’s Syndrome and spina bifida, the overwhelming majority of parents choose abortion for their handicapped unborn. This raises two major issues: homicide and discrimination against the handicapped. Yet the *Post* generally downplays or ignores both issues.

Occasionally it uses first-person accounts to pre-empt ethics. Instead of inspiring compassion for the children whose lives are actually at stake, these stories emphasize compassion for able-bodied family members. In a 1979 “Outlook” article, a woman who had the amniocentesis-abortion combination wrote about her anguish and grief when her little daughter was aborted. Yet she added: “I know that we were all spared a great and much more enduring tragedy—that which engulfs a family into which a deformed or retarded child is born.” Referring to her surviving child, she asked, “. . . what about those endless years that Andy would face, forever living in the shadow of a retarded sibling?”<sup>41</sup> To which one might respond: What about our retarded citizens, forever living in the shadow of such bigotry?

The “Outlook” article was an opinion piece. A reporter can further the same agenda by judicious selection of experts. In a 1983 article called “Ethics and the New Genetics,” Sandy Rovner featured Rev. John C. Fletcher, an Episcopal priest and bioethicist. On aborting

the handicapped, the key Fletcher quote was that “our society should support a woman who could go either way with that decision . . .” No ethicist was cited in opposition to Fletcher.<sup>42</sup>

The *Post* “Health” magazine occasionally raises the ethical questions, but rarely (if ever) quotes anyone who opposes in principle the abortion of the handicapped. “The Ethics of Genetic Counseling,” a 1986 article, quoted a couple who had one Down’s Syndrome child and decided to pre-screen their second child. Reporter Sally Squires noted that the mother “once marched against abortion but, based on her own experience, has since changed her mind about the need for individual choice.” Squires did not quote any mother of a handicapped child who still opposes abortion.<sup>43</sup> There are many such women; certainly the *Post* could find one if it tried.<sup>44</sup>

In 1987 the “Style” section ran a profile of Sherri Chesson, who in 1962 went to Sweden for an abortion because she had taken the Thalidomide drug during pregnancy. The tone was set when reporter Jay Mathews commented: “To be denied an abortion, particularly with a deformed fetus, seems as old-fashioned as the manner in which Chesson was referred to in most American newspapers of that era—Mrs. Robert Finkbine.” (People who favor abortion in these cases always say “deformed fetus” or “defective fetus” rather than “handicapped fetus,” much less “handicapped child.”) Mathews reported that the former Sherri Finkbine did not feel that, had she missed that 1962 abortion, “I’d have given birth to this genius who had no arms and legs.” She said that two of her children, born after the abortion, “would not exist if I had been forced to give birth to a head and a torso.”<sup>45</sup>

Possibly these insensitive comments brought a storm of protest to the *Post*. Two months later, the “Outlook” section ran an article by Eileen Cronin-Noe, a former Thalidomide baby who was doing quite well, thank you—working in the rehabilitation field, taking graduate courses, and married. Cronin-Noe, who has only partly-formed legs but is able to walk with artificial ones, said that abortion was not an option for her parents “and would not have been even if they had been aware of my condition.” She also said that “I would not choose any other life but mine.”<sup>46</sup> This was one of the extremely rare occasions on which the *Post* quoted a handicapped person who appeared to be against abortion.

A great irony is that the newspaper publishes many excellent articles on handicapped achievers and on new ways to help the disabled



gain some independence. “On an Eagle’s Wings” profiled a young man with Down’s Syndrome who became an Eagle Scout. Another story, with splendid photographs, described a Little League division for handicapped kids. There was a piece on a Hungarian institute that has notable success with children severely handicapped by cerebral palsy. There have been profiles of such high achievers as Irish writer Christopher Nolan and English physicist Stephen Hawking, neither of whom can walk or speak.<sup>47</sup> There are countless articles on new inventions to make life easier for the disabled.<sup>48</sup>

Yet the *Post* rarely makes a connection between such stories and abortion of disabled children or euthanasia of disabled adults. It opposes virtually every form of discrimination against the handicapped, except the *lethal* discrimination of abortion and euthanasia. Editorially, it does not deal with this radical contradiction—does not, in fact, even acknowledge that it exists.

Coverage of marches and rallies on abortion is another example of the deep and pervasive *Post* bias. For seventeen years, there has been an annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., to protest the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. Only rarely has the *Post* offered substantial pre-March publicity. Only five times has it run front-page stories on the march the day after. Last January, when police gave their largest-ever estimate of people taking part (75,000), the *Post* played the story back in its Metro section.<sup>49</sup>

In April, when the National Right to Life Committee was organizing a huge rally on the Washington Monument grounds, the *Post* waited until the day of the rally to run a minor story noting that it was about to take place. No map of the rally site was provided. After a crowd of *at least* 200,000 showed up, the *Post* reported the event in the Metro section.<sup>50</sup>

By comparison, when the National Organization for Women was organizing a pro-abortion march in April of 1989, the *Post* was a major publicist and cheerleader for *that* march. “Abortion Marchers Assembling,” said one of several pre-march stories. Another proclaimed: “The Star Brigade: Hollywood Heads for Abortion March.” A third noted: “Demonstrators Swarm Into Capital.” One map of the march route was provided the day before the march; a second was provided the next morning, hours before the march began. On the day after, the *Post* outdid itself in reporting the event that it and other media had done so much to promote. The front-page story was headlined

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“300,000 March Here for Abortion Rights.” There was a second story on children who marched, a third on the Hollywood contingent (enough already!), and a fourth on mother-daughter teams who took part. There were many photographs of happy marchers. Among the happy marchers, according to a later report, were some *Post* reporters and editors.<sup>51</sup>

The contrast between the April, 1989 coverage of the NOW march and the coverage of the “Rally for Life” one year later was so striking that abortion foes deluged the *Post* with complaints. *Post* Ombudsman Richard Harwood said the underplaying of the anti-abortion rally had “left a blot on the paper’s professional reputation” and called it “shabby work.”<sup>52</sup> The newspaper’s managing editor, Leonard Downie, Jr., later said he had taken some sub-editors “to the woodshed” over the coverage.<sup>53</sup>

It seems unlikely that the overwhelming support of abortion on the editorial pages of the *Post* will be reversed.<sup>54</sup> Harwood, however, has criticized the paper’s news coverage of abortion on other occasions.<sup>55</sup> Downie’s admission about the 1990 rally coverage indicates that the most obvious type of news bias may be corrected. The bias is so deep and long-standing, however, that it is difficult to hope for a more radical change.

I very much hope that I am wrong about this. On occasion, the *Post* has shown that it is capable of being a great newspaper. It would be splendid to see its potential fulfilled on a regular basis. It would be magnificent to see its editorial pages opened to serious and sustained defense of human life.

## NOTES

1. Telephone checks with Washington *Post*, Aug. 16 and Sept. 14, 1990.
2. Telephone check with the White House, Sept. 13, 1990; and Washington Post Co., “Influence, the Media and Washington Opinion Leaders,” a brochure published in May, 1989.
3. Washington *Post*, Aug. 23, 1981 & Sept. 6, 1981.
4. *Ibid.*, April 24, 1990. More recently, humor columnist Art Buchwald attempted to make light of people who threaten suicide for minor reasons. A woman whose younger brother had committed suicide said that the column “made me angry and sad.” See *ibid.*, Aug. 23 and Sept. 5, 1990.
5. *Ibid.*, May 2 & 4, 1990.
6. *Ibid.*, April 24, 1990.
7. *Ibid.*, June 27, 1990.
8. A rare case of *Post* coverage of such home care was in its “Maryland Weekly” section, May 17, 1990. For reports of other cases, see: Tampa *Tribune*, Nov. 27 & 28, 1978; Frederick, Md., *Post*, Nov. 9, 1982; Miami *Herald*, Jan. 5, 1989; *National Catholic Register*, March 26, 1989 and July 8, 1990.
9. Jeanine Steuck, *Good Morning, Judy!* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1978); Hartford

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- Courant*, Feb. 23, 1988; *Journal of Neuroscience Nursing*, vol. 20, no. 4, August, 1988, pp. 223-228. (Many people object to the term “persistent vegetative state” because it tends to depersonalize and dehumanize the patient. An older term is “coma vigilie.”)
10. *Washington Post*, Sept. 28, 1986.
  11. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1989. For earlier reports, see Albany, N.Y., *Times Union*, April 12, 1989, and *New York Times*, April 13, 1989.
  12. *Washington Times* and *USA Today*, March 29, 1990; *Washington Post*, March 30 & April 3, 1990.
  13. *Ibid.*, “Health” magazine, Aug. 15, 1989. The writer was Victor Cohn.
  14. *Lancet*, vol. 1, May 15, 1875, pp. 678-9; *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal*, vol. 8 (New Series), July, 1880, pp. 16-24; *Transactions of the Kentucky State Medical Society*, vol. 5 (New Series), 1896, pp. 135-43. The *Post* was mistaken when it said, in a June 27, 1990 editorial: “A generation ago, a situation like Nancy Cruzan’s was unthinkable.” Feeding of persons in prolonged coma goes back at least to the early 1940s. See *New York Times*, Jan 12, 1952; and *Tampa Tribune*, Nov. 27, 1978.
  15. Transcript of trial *Cruzan v. Harmon*, No. CV 384-9P, Jasper Co. Cir. Ct. (Mo.), March 9-11, 1988, vol. 1, p. 378, & vol. 2, p. 646.
  16. *Washington Post*, April 5, 1990. While reporters are not usually responsible for headlines, in this case the headline writer appeared to be following Specter’s lead paragraphs.
  17. Richard Fenigsen, “A Case Against Dutch Euthanasia,” *Hastings Center Report*, Jan./Feb., 1989, Special Supplement, pp. 22-30.
  18. See Cohn’s articles in the *Post* “Health” magazine, April 4, 1989; July 25, 1989; Aug. 15, 1989; Sept. 5, 1989 (sidebar); and Jan. 30, 1990.
  19. Cohn should also speak with Earl Appleby Jr., Madeleine Appleby, Kathryn O’Bara, and Sara Trimnal, who have given home care to unconscious family members for long periods.
  20. *Washington Post*, March 22, 1981.
  21. *Ibid.*, June 26, 1990.
  22. *Ibid.*, Aug. 21 and Sept. 8, 1984.
  23. *Ibid.*, Jan. 27, 1989.
  24. John Kenneth Galbraith, “Grump’s Fourth Law of Politics and Other Reasons Why We’re So Confused,” *New York*, May 22, 1972, pp. 64-65.
  25. *Washington Post*, Oct. 27 and Nov. 4, 1989.
  26. *Ibid.*, July 10, 1990.
  27. *Ibid.*, Jan. 18, 1984.
  28. *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1987.
  29. *Ibid.*, April 25, 1989
  30. *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1982.
  31. *Washington Post Magazine*, April 22, 1990, p. 39.
  32. *Washington Post*, Dec. 18, 21, 24, 25, 26 & 27, 1989.
  33. *Ibid.*, March 6, 1989.
  34. *Ibid.*, Dec. 23, 1989.
  35. *Ibid.*, Sept. 9, 1975.
  36. *The Revolution*, March 12, 1868, p. 146; March 26, 1868, p. 178; May 28, 1868, p. 327; July 8, 1869, p. 4. See, also, James C. Mohr, *Abortion in America: The Origins and Evolution of National Policy, 1800-1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 109-113; and Mary Krane Derr, “Opposition to Abortion: a Feminist Tradition,” *Harmony*, Sept.-Oct., 1989, pp. 4-7
  37. “Operation Rescue Philadelphia: July 4-6, 1988,” a brochure. This or a similar pledge appears in almost every Operation Rescue recruiting brochure that I have seen.
  38. *Los Angeles Times*, July 2, 1990. See Nat Hentoff columns in *Washington Post*, Sept. 2 and Oct. 28, 1989.
  39. *Ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1989.
  40. *Ibid.*, Feb. 2 and March 27, 1990.
  41. *Ibid.*, Nov. 18, 1979.
  42. *Ibid.*, Feb. 18, 1983.
  43. *Ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1986.
  44. For example, see Christine Allison, “A Child to Lead Us,” the *Human Life Review*, vol. 15, no. 3, Summer, 1989, pp. 97-102.

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45. *Washington Post*, April 27, 1987.
46. *Ibid.*, June 28, 1987.
47. *Ibid.*, May 28, 1987; April 30, 1990; Feb. 20, 1988; March 27, 1988; April 15, 1988.
48. For example: *Ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1984; May 19, 1987; Nov. 12, 1987; Feb. 16, 1988; Jan. 2, 1990.
49. *Ibid.*, Jan. 23, 1990. At least the *Post* did provide rally maps on the day before, and the day of, the march this year.
50. *Ibid.*, April 28 & 29, 1990.
51. *Ibid.*, April 7, 8, 9, 10 & 15, 1989.
52. *Ibid.*, May 6, 1990.
53. Quoted in *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1990.
54. As mentioned earlier, abortion receives overwhelming support in *Post* editorials and cartoons. It also receives support from columnists Richard Cohen, Dorothy Gilliam, Ellen Goodman, Ann Landers, Judy Mann, and Courtland Milloy. David Broder and Haynes Johnson have also voiced support on occasion. Columns and op-ed pieces on the other side of the issue are few, far between, and rarely written by women.
55. For example, see *Washington Post*, April 16 and Oct. 29, 1989. Harwood also wrote an excellent column on Nov. 9, 1989, criticizing *Post* bias in covering a Virginia governor's race in which abortion was a major issue. *Post* Columnist Mark Shields has also written some fine criticism of media bias.

# The Environmentalism of Abortion

*Chilton Williamson Jr.*

AS A RESIDENT of the state of Wyoming—97,203 square miles in area, with a population of only some 449,000—where the environment remains the principal fact of existence, I know many environmentalists. Only one of them however is neither “pro-choice” on the question of abortion nor positively in favor of *encouraging* abortion as a means toward achieving “zero-population growth.” Given their premise, their logic is at least comprehensible. Man, they believe, despite the biological grounding of his physicality, is created outside of Nature with which, owing to his Faustian nature, he is fundamentally at war. For most environmentalists, human civilization is a thing which, if not deplorable in itself, has deplorable effects upon the natural world—or “bio-sphere,” as they would say.

In his book *The End of Nature*, published a year ago and widely reviewed, Bill McKibben argued that mankind must abandon what he called “the defiant path” and follow instead the “humble” one by suppressing its Faustian instincts and accepting a subordinate place within the natural world. “This could be the epoch,” he breathed, “when people decide to go no farther down the path we’ve been following—when we make not only the necessary technological adjustments to preserve the world from overheating but also (sic) the necessary mental adjustments to ensure that that we’ll never again put our good ahead of everything else’s.”

Humanity, according to McKibben as well as to a great many environmentalist writers and activists, is a privileged club whose members are both too rich and too numerous, for their own good of course but more importantly for the good of the sacred grounds which they occupy. Some stifling of the club’s activities and their general redirection is therefore in order, and it is understood that drastic measures must be involved, concerning which ordinary members need not be consulted by the panel of specialists appointed to get the job done.

In this effort, finally, a single system of values is to be considered, and that is the system derived from intellectual, moral, and religious principles that have been developed over the last century or so by

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Chilton Williamson is a Senior Editor of *Chronicles* magazine. His latest book is a novel, *The Homestead*, published earlier this year by Grove Wiedenfeld, New York.

the science of Ecology. The essential point to be grasped in the program would be recognized instantly by Professor Arthur Laffer: *Life is trickle-down*. Put your money on the highest value, and it will percolate eventually down through the lower ones.

The late Frank Sheed said that not to see the universe for what it is is as much a form of insanity as it would be insanity to point your car toward a tree in the assurance that you were not going to collide with it. Many critics of the environmentalist movement have accused it of panthesim, of which it is in many instances and respects certainly guilty. Still, nobody would argue that you must be a monotheist or a Christian in order to believe that men have a moral obligation to preserve the natural world. Rather, the chief philosophical error of environmentalism is arbitrarily to separate man from the creation, since man, whether philosophically speaking a part of "nature" or not, is a created being—created by God or by Evolution is immaterial in this respect.

But if man is recognized as a part of creation, then what is good for man is ultimately good for the rest of creation, and *vice versa*. It follows therefore that a concern for human "nature" ought to be as important to environmentalist thought as is the concern for nature itself. So abortionism, environmentalism, and human sanity all are inseparably connected within what might be thought of as the environment of human thought.

At the root of the environmentalist's distrust of man, his strange disinclination to account for him as part of the natural world he inhabits, is the fact of man's being the sole creator within the creation. It is above all man's Faustian nature to which the environmentalist objects. Now there happens to be a long and honorable oppositionist tradition in Western thought regarding man and his presumptive will. But environmentalism, being intellectually and sociologically an extension of the historical leftist agenda, equates the Faust story not with Goethe and the sin of presumption but with Lenin and the sin of greed. For the Left, man has always been not the thinking animal but the greediest and most destructive animal by virtue of his capacity for rational thought. This attitude does not represent sanity, but for the environmentalist, accustomed as he is to a world unequally split between victims and victimizers, it does constitute ground for diverting moral preference toward innocent Nature and away from guilty human nature—particularly for so insignificant a scrap of it as the human fetus.

Bill McKibben argues that the fundamental explanation for the present environmental “crisis” is that Western man has been on a “binge” during the last century and a half. That statement, it seems to me, implies volumes concerning environmentalism’s understanding of man’s nature, his existence, and his purpose on this earth—or rather, its lack of understanding. All too often, for the environmentalist Goethe and Faust are the moral equivalents of each other. Or would be, if Goethe had been a genius of mechanical invention or of finance instead of a poetic genius.

Even the lowest of men have some sort of natural endowment that they are meant to draw upon, but this “binge” argument really implies that only a few of man’s natural talents ought rightly to be developed—the “soft” talents we might say, like those for literature, music, raising petunias, and homosexuality—while the “hard” ones—an ability for metallurgy, applied physics, aeronautics, and procreation—should be forcibly short-circuited in order to prevent such binges from occurring. This is of course a silly assumption, and it is only made to appear sillier by the fact of one of man’s greatest talents being his need for, and his ability to create, human society. Here again, the environmentalist is likely to be contemptuous of what he sees as a mere over-elaborate congeries of organized greed and destruction—unless, of course, the communities in question are primitive, simple, and small ones: communities harmless to Nature, in other words. For him, civilization is indeed a source of discontent—the primary source, in fact. This is because, being himself a materialist—a “natural” or “spiritual” materialist we might call him—he sees in civilization only the prospect for an enhanced materialism, rather than an enhanced rationality or even spirituality.

For him, the Club of Man can be truly developed and refined only through the Club of Rome, since, left to itself, it must refine only what the average man is capable of developing and refining: greed, arrogance, and the risible snobbery of speciesism. Therefore the Club of Man must be reformed—or must be ultimately abolished. In the interim, it must be crippled in its “progress,” and as many as possible of its evil works confounded.

Out in the Rocky Mountain West we hear a lot about something called ecotage and the organization Earth First! (based in Tucson, Arizona) that most notoriously and effectively promotes it. A year ago last May Dave Forman, the spokesman and co-founder of Earth

First! was arrested by FBI agents and charged with conspiring to blow up a steel tower carrying high-voltage power lines to the Central Arizona Project, whose canal is objected to by environmentalists in Arizona because it is drawing down water tables beneath the desert to permit the continued and apparently limit-less expansion of Phoenix and Tucson, and to allow the people in those cities to have clean cars and to maintain their artificial lawns stiched together from blocks of commercially-grown grass. The pros and cons of ecotage are the significant issues among environmentalists today and constitute an argument that is not so much one between extremists and moderates as it is between people who have fundamentally opposed understandings of the nature, purpose, and utility of environmentalism itself.

Earth First! is an advocate of what is called Deep Ecology, which holds that man's destructive effect upon Planet Earth is already so great that merely monitoring, directing, regulating, and curbing his activities are insufficient to correct a balance now destroyed. Earth First! was inspired by a raunchy outrageous comic novel, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, written by the late Edward Abbey and published first in 1975; since that time it has sold some hundred of thousands, if not millions, of copies in various editions. *The Monkey Wrench Gang* is the story of a group of deep ecologists who conspire to blow up Glen Canyon Dam at Page, Arizona in order to release the millions of acre-feet of water prisoned in Lake Powell (or Lake Foul, as Abbey called it) and drain the magnificent slickrock canyons drowned by the Lake when it was filled in the early sixties. Just how much ecotage Ed—who was in person a kind, generous, and very gentle man—himself performed is a matter of conjecture; probably he sugared the gas tanks of a bulldozer or two in his time. Nevertheless the activities of the fictive characters of *The Monkey Wrench Gang* were immediately provocative, and they have been widely copied (though on a much more modest scale than blowing up the Glen Canyon Dam) since.

Ecotage is like goodness, no piece of it however small is too small and every action is in spirit a great one, whether that be pulling up survey stakes marking the future disposition of a drilling rig in Wyoming or spiking trees in the old-growth forest of the Northwest with nails. (Nails do not harm the living tree, but they make the lumber from a felled one worthless. Also there is a happy chance that a nail will cause the cutting bar of a chainsaw to kick back



and decapitate the lumberman who wields it.)

On the back page of the same number in which the arrest of Dave Forman was front-page news, the excellent environmentalist paper *High Country News* carried a commentary on violent environmentalism by its publisher, Ed Marston—a native of Brooklyn, New York who lives and works in the little town of Paonia on the West Slope of Colorado. Unlike many or most environmentalists, Marston is concerned for human populations in the Western states as well as for “natural” ones, and his interest is responsible enough to make him a shrewd and sympathetic observer of them. The previous fall he had written that since the energy bust of the early 1980’s the economy of the Rocky Mountain states had gone to smash, and with it much or some of the region’s traditional social pattern. This was fine, Marston noted, by Edward Abbey and Earth First! who were nearly as hostile to that pattern as to mainstream environmentalism and all its works. “Although,” Marston wrote, “EF! may rail at organized environmentalism and its professionalism, its real target is middle-class environmentalists—people who want to have good jobs, and to use the public lands for recreation. These people bring a middle-class, park-like vision to the West that sets Abbey’s and Earth First’s teeth on edge. Abbey and EF! spokesman Dave Forman are anything but middle-class park seekers. They are in flight from that kind of America, attracted to the relic anarchy and violence of this 19th century region. People who think ecotage is a tactic miss the point: Ecotage is the end, not the means.”

The following spring, in a carefully-phrased “Opinion” piece and without ever mentioning the name of Dave Forman, Marston went ahead and devastated the moral and intellectual foundations of ecotage:

One hundred and fifty years ago, this region was rich with natural beauty and resources. Today, in both its human and its natural aspects, it has declined, or been bludgeoned, to a low level.

But that is not an argument for conservationists to separate nature from mankind, and then appoint themselves defenders of nature. There can be no hope for the West’s natural world without the rejuvenation of the human communities which make up the West. The West’s natural world and human world can only come back together. We cannot save the natural world unless we can reform ourselves, our communities, our society.

So when ecotage occurs, any short time gain for nature is lost in the further weakening of the West’s democratic and humane impulses. These impulses, marginal though they may be, are our only hope for creating, in Wallace

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Stegner's words, a society to match the scenery. There can be no intact, healthy environment without an intact, healthy human society. Either we strengthen the human society, or the human society will pull the environment (as it has been doing) down to the same low level as the society.

Unlawful violence, in other words, brutalizes human beings to the point where their aesthetic and moral sensibilities do not operate on even the minimal level in respect of their responsibility toward the creation. And it seems to me that precisely the same point can be made concerning the prenatal violence that is euphemistically termed abortion. Nor does the fact that the typical Sierra Clubber is probably both pro-abortion *and* pro-environment necessarily invalidate the argument. If the best and the brightest of our society cannot see the connection, how should the degenerate rednecks—who supported the war in Vietnam and whose idea of a “wilderness experience” is to drive four-wheel ATVs at thirty miles an hour over previously unblemished alpine tundra while tossing beer cans over their shoulders—be expected to see it?

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How, for that matter, when not all *anti*-abortionists, apparently, are able to see it? Because the point I am trying to make cuts on both sides, it is a double-edged sword. . . .

Most anti-abortionists are at least in some or another sense also conservatives, but is it fair to say that most American conservatives are either stolidly opposed to environmentalism or, at best, uninterested in the subject? As a conservative journalist who believes unambiguously that abortion is murder, and with equal assurance that “environmentalism” (awful word: as awful, almost, as most “environmentalists” themselves) is a crucial issue of the times; as one moreover who has argued both of these propositions for nearly fifteen years while working in close proximity with other conservatives, I can aver with some degree of conviction that, yes, it *is* a fair thing to say.

Part of the problem, I suspect, has to do with the fact that when I speak of “conservatives” what I have in mind is conservative writers and intellectuals, and that as far as the United States today goes it is a demographic and a sociological truth that writers and intellectuals are almost entirely urban and suburban creatures. This truth has many corollaries, most of them in my my opinion unfortunate but none so unfortunate as a result that in American social and political culture it is mostly leftists who feel (or think they feel, since they too are largely urban people) affinity with the natural world, and

are willing publicly to express their affinity.

I attended a publishing party on one of my regular trips East some years ago and was approached there by a famous neoconservative writer and editor whom I had not seen for some years. "How are you?" he asked. "I haven't seen you in a very long time." When I replied that I had moved to Wyoming five or six years ago, an expression not of astonishment but of absolute incomprehension encompassed his face. "Why," he gasped, "would you want to live in *Wyoming*?" I could have explained it to him then, but I don't believe he would have been interested. Probably indeed he would have been shocked since, to tell the truth, my explanation would have sounded very much like one of my friend Edward Abbey's. ("Nor is it by chance that my two friends and I live in this region; we live here because we could not survive anywhere else. What most take for granted as simply the way things are, *urbanism*, [we] . . . regard as a stifling impoverishment of human possibility. So we cling to this blessed island of the American Southwest, refugees from the nightmare of contemporary times."— E.A., *Mother Earth News Special*, Summer 1988. Ed always preferred the Southwest, while the Northwest is my terrain of the heart. Each man to his own type of rattlesnake, each to his own subspecies of scorpion and special desert bush.)

Living one's life in an almost strictly urban environment appears to have two principal effects on people. The first is to distance them physically—and therefore in experience, imagination, and sympathy—from the natural environment; the second is to make them perhaps more man-centered than they ought to be—not that a man can have too much charity, but simply that he can have too little appreciation of all that God made that is not human. Confronted by the environmental question, too many conservatives I know are all too ready to quote from Genesis: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." This quotation, when called upon to do service, is invariably rendered with great gravity and with the stony assurance of speaking aloud that which is written in stone. For my part, I always refer them to *Confessions* (Book XIII:24) where St. Augustine is pondering the *real* meaning of Genesis:

I therefore understand the reproduction and multiplication of marine creatures

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to refer to physical signs and manifestations, of which we have need because the flesh which envelopes us is like a deep sea; and I take the reproduction of humankind to refer to the thoughts which our minds conceive, because reason is fertile and productive. I am convinced that this is what was meant, O Lord, when you commanded man and the creatures of the sea to increase and multiply. I believe that by this blessing you granted us the faculty and the power both to give expression in many different ways to things which we understand in one way only and to understand in many different ways what we find obscurely written in one way. This explains how the fish and the whales *fill the waters of the sea*, because mankind, which is represented by the sea, is impressed only by signs of various kinds; and it explains how the offspring of men *fill the earth*, because the dry land appears when men are eager to learn and reason prevails.

Augustine goes on to identify allegorically the fruits of the earth that have been given to man to eat with “the works of mercy which the fertile earth produces to help us in the needs of this life.” (I am sure that not even Bill McKibben would see in a wild plum tree the work of God’s mercy.) Then St. Augustine says: “I have counted and found that Scripture tells us seven times that you saw that what you had made was good, and when you looked for the eighth time and saw the whole of your creation, we are told that you found it not only good but very good, for you saw all at once as one whole. Each separate work was good, but when they were all seen as one, they were not merely good, but very good.” I have never known a single modern ecologist to express it any better.

Thomas Fleming, the editor of *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*, told me how he was approached at a barbecue by a lady who, after she had had a few drinks, said to him: “You have all these conservative friends. Can you tell me why conservatives, who get so upset over an aborted fetus, couldn’t care less about a baby seal?” The lady’s priorities were backwards of course, but her suggestion that both (I hope) baby seals and baby humans have a moral claim on the attention of civilized people was not amiss. And such a claim *does* depend on the presence in this world of civilized people.

The Navajo Indians used to kill men in order to drive off their sheep, but today the Navajo tribe, out of the insatiable Navajo love of sheep, goats, and horses—which are both status symbols and the equivalent of cash for them—have let their 26 million acre reservation in northeastern Arizona become overgrazed nearly to the point of total ecological collapse, in which event all of the sheep and the horses and the goats will starve miserably to death. The Navajo

Nation is very far from being a barbaric people, but they have yet to fit together (except in their mythology) the separate works of the creation as one, as St. Augustine would say. The same thing can be said of the highly developed and otherwise sophisticated culture that conquered them more than a hundred years ago.

Why do modern conservatives see nothing conservative in conservation? (I know: Preservation, which almost all environmentalists want, is a step beyond conservation; but let's put that aside for the moment, or until such time when conservatives finally make it to first base.) I think it is because they, like so many contemporary Westerners, have lost the capacity for wonder of a kind that one cannot get even from theology unless one has the imagination of a fine poet or is supernaturally inspired. They, like their ideological enemies around them, have allowed their minds to succumb to the penchant for abstraction that has seduced a culture fascinated by computers and addicted to "scientific" problem-solving, technology, and technique.

Unlike the reactionary (the distinction has been drawn by John Lukacs, the historian), the conservative has learned to place his trust in technology and in evolution, instead of in land and in history. In the 1950s the Columbia Professor and former drama critic for *The Nation*, Joseph Wood Krutch—who was by then happily planted in his adopted country, the Lower Sonoran Desert of Arizona—noted that, "The wilderness and the idea of wilderness is one of the permanent homes of the human spirit," and inquired: "Does to experience [solitude and quietness] even occasionally provide thoughts and suggest values not only significant in themselves but likely to provide critical insights into civilization which may influence more favorably the course it takes?"

I believe, with Krutch, that it may do exactly that; I believe further that anyone who cannot experience the wonder and pathos of a baby seal may not have enough poetry (which is *not* abstract since, having to do with the imagination, it deals also with what is finite) in him to recognize *to its fullest extent* either the finite wonder or the infinite one of a three-month-old child in the womb. We are—thank God!—really not such compartmentalized intelligences as to make it possible that he should.

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Somewhere near the start of this essay I poked a little wry fun

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at Professor Laffer and his trickle-down theory. Perhaps, having come to the end of it, I should now take a little of that fun back. Because what I have been saying is that ideas *do* trickle down from a culture's highest sensibility, and that the highest sensibility in Western tradition has been toward, after God, God's Own Creation. Anti-abortionism, environmentalism, and the love of that Creation are, all of them, part of a single thing. They are part of the truly humanized environment of thought that alone represents universal sanity.

## A Baby's Place Is in the Home

Brian Robertson

THE TWO-INCOME FAMILY is now almost as American as McDonald's hot apple pie. What was once regarded as the failure of a man to adequately provide for his family is today a quite unremarkable fact of life. Well, you might say, so what? We live in a society much less concerned with maintaining traditional gender "roles" than with personal fulfillment. Since women are no longer "slaves to their biology" as in less advanced times, who would begrudge them the measure of happiness and achievement many now find in professions outside the home? Why should women be held back from professional ambitions merely because of the responsibilities of housewife and mother that society has traditionally (and, feminists insist, arbitrarily) associated with the gender?

Yet, for most of our history, this kind of talk would be seen as suicidal madness—and with good reason. First, because it views motherhood as a matter of personal taste and not of social necessity. And perhaps more importantly, because each course of action (motherhood or careerism) mitigates against successful pursuit of the other. Child-rearing (especially if it involves more than one child) is an especially demanding, time-consuming, and aggravating job. It can also be an especially rewarding one, in that the fruit of one's effort is a human being, who is both able to return the love one puts into the effort and to communicate that love to others throughout his or her life. It all depends on how the mother gives and communicates *herself* to her child, a full-time process that only begins with the child's birth and doesn't end until well beyond childhood.

A career too requires self-giving, but of a different nature. Unlike a mother and her baby, for the traditional bread-winning father the purpose of work is distinct from the product he produces. He can indeed do his job with dedication and care—putting effort, style and refinement into the process—and be satisfied with the result of a job well done. But the love and effort he invests in the job are not for the car he is welding or for the computer program he is writing, but for the family he is supporting. In the case of the mother who has chosen to work outside the home (if not for the

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Brian Robertson, our Articles Editor, is also a regular contributor.

mother who works by necessity) it's hard to see how *family* can be her animating principle. If it were she'd be at home having one.

Increasingly, *that* choice is becoming more difficult, at least for women who want to maintain the standard of living that American families have come to expect. Our economy rewards married women who make the choice to work outside the home, and in effect penalizes married men who desire to support their family with a single income. According to government statistics, over the last 10 years the average income of married women went up 22 percent; during the same period, the average income of married men fell by 6 percent. In 1975, 53 percent of married couples with children were traditional families with dad working and mom at home; in 1988 they made up only 33 percent of the total—63 percent were in the dual-worker category. Even more depressing are the statistics for mothers with children under six: in 1970 only 28% worked outside the home; today the figure is 58%.

This is, arguably *the* greatest socio-economic upheaval we have witnessed in the last 20 years. And yet it is usually addressed only indirectly: “latch-key kids” without supervision, “supermoms” without time, etc. No one dares to suggest that the problem may be working mothers *per se*. On the face of it, these statistics would seem to indicate that the feminist dream of “equal pay for equal work” and “shared responsibilities” is becoming reality. But an economy that acts according to these principles is, quite simply, encouraging its own destruction. The reason is fairly obvious: In treating married men and women as equally-deserving competitors for wages in a gender-neutral labor market, we are deliberately ignoring the part of our society which supplies that labor, provides it with emotional and physical stability, ethics, love, a sense of responsibility; in short all the things that make civilization tolerable, indeed the things that make it *civilized*. We are ignoring the home, and its animating force, the Homemaker.

That word is rarely heard these days, having been turned into a term of derision by early feminists like Betty Friedan. But it remains a remarkably apt description of the role of the full-time housewife and mother. Without that ever-present civilizing force, family domiciles are essentially boarding houses where the occupants leave for jobs or day-care centers in the morning and check in for food and sleep at night. The home, on the other hand, is not a physical entity; it is a spiritual *environment* that teaches behavior, not necessarily



through any formal instruction, but simply through example and tacit understanding. Home includes details that are essential in forming the characters of children: particular family stories, anecdotes, bits of wisdom or inside jokes; enthusiasms for hobbies, sports, music or politics; intellectual and literary sensibilities; styles of dress and decoration; taste in food and drink; ways of celebrating and of mourning, and keeping the peace by means of little tricks that can only be known through intimacy. In short, home is made up of seemingly insignificant things that, taken as a whole, are the life-blood of human existence.

This doesn't mean that children will become the carbon-copies of their parents; on the contrary, children usually are overly-conscious of being *different*. But essential to the child's own unique personality is that home environment, some of which he consciously reacts against, some of which he unconsciously adopts; all of which *influences* his makeup. The home is the child's school of the personality. It communicates the framework of values by which he learns to interpret the confusing events of the world outside.

I cringe when I hear politicians and other public figures say that the "key" to curing social ills ranging from violent crime to racism is *education* (which is like saying that the cure for malaria and measles is *medicine*—"here, drink this bottle of red stuff, I'm sure it'll work"). "Education" is simply the transmission of facts or values which the teacher already possesses; it is always a matter of what facts and whose values, not of more or less "education." What professional "educators" generally mean by the word is some sort of consciousness-raising effort in the public schools to inform children with fuzzy-liberal "value-neutral" ethics (e.g., since we're all equal and nobody's beliefs or opinions are better than anybody else's, we should all live together in harmony, etc.).

Perhaps those who have confidence in such notions of moral formation see no problem with the current mania among Yuppie parents for replacing the Home with the Day-Care Center. After all, their kids will be fed, provided with entertainment, and supervised by an adult. And that doesn't differ too much from what they would get at home from a full-time mom who performs these same functions. Of course, the problem is that there is a lot more to the rearing of children than these merely material considerations would imply. The formation of the will and the development of character depend to a very great

extent on the particular responsibilities entailed in family life. Unlike a day-care center, a mother provides exactly that type of "education" that *is* the key to "social problems" that plague us: an education in daily living. Chesterton described this type of education in *What's Wrong With the World* (1910), when he said that very young children

require to be taught not so much anything as everything. Babies need not to be taught a trade, but to be introduced to a world. To put the matter shortly, woman is generally shut up in a house with a human being at the time when he asks all the questions that there are, and some that there aren't.

Parents who expect day-care to fill this role are playing with fire. As one might expect, small children who are deprived of the all-important, formative relationship with a mother seem to exhibit less capacity to relate to others. "The attachment relationship that a young child forges with his mother forms the foundation stone of personality" says psychologist Brenda Hunter. "The young child's hunger for his mother's presence is as great as his hunger for food, and her absence inevitably generates a powerful sense of loss and anger." For a mother to cavalierly surrender the awesome vocation that Chesterton describes to some anonymous day-care worker (whose interest in her child is primarily monetary) is strange enough. But to do so in order to pursue a career is genuinely bizarre. It is essentially a decision to work so that you will be able to pay someone else to raise your child. Aside from the alienation that children raised in such an environment display, can you imagine the stifling lack of personality that must result from the cookie-cutter, government-subsidized and -licenced programs now touted as solutions by child-care advocates?

To some extent, this change in attitude toward motherhood reflects the increasing number of young women who define themselves not in terms of domestic ambitions (husband, children, household) but in terms of career ambitions. It also reflects, however, a new attitude on the part of *both* sexes toward the relationship between workplace and home. Both men and women have begun to regard the workplace as a home away from home, or, perhaps more accurately, a substitute home. Just as day-care centers are becoming surrogate homes for children, increasing demands are put on employers when households and communities fail to exercise their normal functions: health-coverage, sports facilities, stress-counseling, eating facilities, day-care, pregnancy leave, and so on. Meanwhile, communities and homes are falling

apart from disuse. The competitive economy, predisposed as it is to seek cheap labor, has encouraged this shift in loyalties. The London *Economist* reported recently that Margaret Thatcher has encountered Tory and business opposition by encouraging mothers to stay at home with their young children (which she sees as a key to solving the increasing problem of violent, anti-social behavior by British youth).

Employers grumble that a scarcity of women in the labour market could help to push up wages . . . But while the dithering goes on, the market has been shaping its own family policy, as businesses decide for themselves that a woman's place is in the job market.

In 1971 fewer than half of all married women were in paid employment; but by 1988 the figure was nearly two thirds. Many companies . . . rely heavily on women workers. Once trained, an employee is expensive to lose. . . . Not surprisingly, personnel departments are increasingly keen to provide maternity leave with guaranteed re-employment. . . . So companies are introducing a growing array of incentives to wean mothers away from their children and back to work. Last month, for example, the Legal and General insurance company announced it will give mothers a 25% pay rise for the six months after maternity leave. And many companies reserve part of the maternity payment until the mother returns to work.

An economy that makes no wage distinctions according to gender, or according to relative family responsibilities (i.e., between the married man with 8 children and the single man with none) will necessarily favor those with *fewer* responsibilities. Not only do they have the advantage of fewer dependents, but they usually have fewer demands on their time and energy outside the workplace, and fewer ties to their community. If you don't think these things are increasingly in demand in the corporate world, you must not know any Yuppies. Those who can consistently work late hours, and are willing to travel or move often, have a distinct advantage over those who can't or won't.

It's interesting that the objections to this trend are coming principally from feminists. Earlier this year Anna Quindlen noted in her regular column in the New York *Times* that

The 5 O'Clock Dad has become an endangered species. A corporate culture that believes presence is productivity, in which people of ambition are afraid to be seen leaving the office, has lengthened his workday and shortened his home life. . . . For the man who is paid by the hour, that means never saying no to overtime. For the man whose loyalty to the organization is measured in time at his desk, it means goodbye to 9 to 5.

Even in the fabled grey-flannel-suit Corporate America of the conformist

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50s, most men would have thought it strange for a married man to sacrifice so much of his time at home with the family for the sake of his boss. In the popular “Hers” column in the *New York Times Magazine*, Susan Jacoby rejects the “post-feminist stereotype” of the “Dour Old Dad” of the 40s and 50s who was “a remote, frequently authoritarian figure with his face in the newspaper and his sensitivities in the deep freeze.” She compares Dour Old Dad with the “sensitive” Dad of the 80s:

Most of our fathers made it clear that their occupations were important primarily as a means of providing for their families. They took pride in their work, but the term they used to describe what they did is significant—a straightforward “job” rather than an inflated “career.”

Neither business travel nor 12-hour workdays were as common among the white-collar classes 30 or 40 years ago as they are today. Yet many feminists (of both sexes) maintain that today’s men are somehow more “involved” parents than their own fathers—in spite of the absence of “quantity time.”

I don’t buy it. . . . Whatever their styles as parents, these men stuck close to home. Quantity time. Quality time.

In point of fact, the demands of the workplace have begun to take precedence over the demands of hearth and home—often because there’s nobody *at* home to make demands. Working wives have changed the conception of work as a means to provide for one’s family into a means to find fulfillment and purpose in life—the role traditionally served by the family. In consequence, the lives of women *and* men now revolve around their careers to a much greater extent than ever before, leaving a void in that ever-shrinking oasis of civilization, the home.

Miss Jacoby thinks that the unfair stereotype of her father’s generation may derive from the psychological need of today’s parents to justify their *own* lack of attention to their children.

The current desire to cast our all-too-fallible fathers in the role of awe-inspiring paterfamilias may well be rooted in a need to bolster our very different domestic choices by recasting the past in a more negative light.

Those “very different domestic choices” are sometimes mandated by the new economic reality. The old ideal of the “family wage”—(enough for a man to support a family)—now goes against the grain of our “social economy.” As women have entered the permanent workforce in droves over the last two decades, they have altered the face of that economy in ways that have invariably done harm to families. When they entered the job market *en masse* in the ’70s, most women chose to work for ideological or personal reasons. What

began as a “supplemental income” and a way to feel more “personally fulfilled” has become, for many women, a necessity. Today, career women have made the option of running a household and raising a family much more difficult for many others whose career goals are marriage and motherhood, because they are directly *competing* with the housewife’s source of income—her husband. More importantly, they have greatly increased the supply of labor, making it possible for employers to set wages below anything like family-wage level.

The so-called “feminization of poverty” that is the subject of so much commentary is largely a feminist spin on the much more serious problems of illegitimacy and divorce, coupled with the ideological imperative that drives women toward a “career path.” Even 15 years ago, it would not have come as a shock to women that they would find it economically and physically impossible to raise children without their husband’s dependable income. But that is what the “feminization of poverty” means: the inability of working women who are single parents to pursue their career, raise their children, and maintain the same standard of living that their mothers enjoyed.

Attempts to solve this problem with huge government subsidies for day-care would just put a greater tax burden on parents who are trying to raise their own children in order to subsidize illegitimacy, divorce, and women who prefer a career over motherhood. We should be doing precisely the *opposite*: in the current economic environment, mothers who want to raise their own children need all the help they can get—at the very least, an increase in the tax-deduction for dependents.

The other obvious solution of more stringent divorce laws and stricter enforcement of child-support in cases of abandonment does not appeal to feminists because it reinforces a “dependency” on men. Feminists see nothing wrong with divorce or illegitimacy *per se*; in fact the “sexual freedom” they promote encourages both. They just want the rest of us to pay for the consequences.

The children of illegitimacy, divorce and neglect don’t feel so indifferent about it, however. In *Time* magazine’s poll of the “Twentysomething” generation, one of the few things this remarkably-apathetic group felt passionately about was the proper rearing of children. This age-group, which *Time* describes as “the first to experience the downside of the two-income family,” spent more time watching television (45%) than with their parents (43%) while growing up.

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And they're not too happy about it: a big majority (64%) say they will spend more time with their own children than their parents did with them.

That is, if they decide to *have* any children, which they're not at all sure about.

New York *Post* columnist Ray Kerrison recently wrote:

Nearly 50 percent of all marriages end in divorce. . . . Women want careers; men abdicate their responsibilities. More children are being reared in one-parent homes than at any time in history. . . . We don't protect children against the excesses of the age. We allow them to be bombarded with pornography in movies, magazines and cable TV. We dump them in day-care centers for someone else to mind. . . . They are taught in schools stripped of all values. Why should anyone be surprised that so many young people turn violent or reach for artificial supports like drugs? We reap what we sow.

The children of our social experiment with the two-income family are telling us what we should have known: no love given means none returned.

# Mini Moy Moy

*Jo McGowan*

I WAS AT A CHRISTMAS PARTY holding Moy Moy, our brand new, adopted baby, when one of the local pediatricians stopped to say hello. “I didn’t know you were expecting again,” he said.

“Neither did I,” I replied. “She’s adopted—and she was a big surprise to us, too.”

He bent over to take a better look and I saw his expression change to something close to horror. “My God!” he said. “How old is she?”

Most people reacted the same way—although she had been born four weeks earlier, Moy Moy shouldn’t have seen the light of day for another eight weeks. Twelve weeks premature, two pounds at birth, the eighth child of an undernourished, anemic woman . . . As I related these facts to the doctor, he shook his head ominously: “Dicey,” he said, “very dicey.”

“What exactly do you mean?” I was furious. What a way to talk to a new mother.

“Oh, there’s no telling how she’ll turn out.”

“There’s no telling how any of us will turn out!”

“But she could be brain-damaged.”

“So could you if you have an accident on the way home today.”

I could have continued for quite a while—holding my fragile, insulted baby made me feel like a tigress defending her cub—but our hostess came and gently separated us. What made me most angry about his remarks was the obvious insinuation: You got a bad deal; trade her in for a better specimen.

Now, I do admit that she was pretty frightful in the very beginning. A two-pound baby doesn’t even look human, let alone cute. Her face was minute in relation to her forehead and the rest of her skull, giving her the look of a chimpanzee. Her features were all beaky and hawklike, with none of the sweet roundness we associate with babies. Her body was firmly clenched in the fetal position—to change her diaper I had literally to pry her legs apart. The strength of her rigidity was astonishing—looking at those legs one assumed they would snap like matchsticks.

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*Jo McGowan is a writer now living with her growing family in Dehra Doon, India.*

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She never woke on her own, not even for a feed. At night I had to set the alarm at three-hour intervals to wake myself and then her—if I slept through, then so did she. She took 45 minutes to drink one ounce of milk (that's all a two-pound baby needs to grow!). She did not respond *at all* for 12 weeks. She was 14 weeks old before she smiled.

This was, in fact, the only really difficult part of caring for her: no response. It was more demanding than I could have imagined. It required an absolute faith in the value of her life *as it was* (and as it might *continue* to be, for all I knew). And total selflessness. I gave, she just took in.

I alternated between feelings of despair and feelings of wonder. Before my eyes this baby was transforming in ways normally hidden from human sight. I had the sense of being allowed to share deep secrets as I watched this development that should have taken place before she was born. Eyebrows and eyelashes appeared magically, fingernails grew where there had been none, her face slowly lengthened (thank God!) to occupy more and more of its rightful space, her arms and legs gradually relaxed and unfolded . . . I could only marvel at the sureness with which Nature was at work. This baby had *no time* to please me with sweet smiles and tender glances. She was too busy growing.

It was, no doubt, in large part my own projection, but I felt a perceptible difference in her (and in my feelings toward her) once her actual due date was reached. It was as if she were finally able to look up and see who it was who had been feeding her all those weeks, as if she sighed and said, "Yes! Now I should be here."

She should be here. There is no doubt in my mind of that, and yet everything in her small life seemed to conspire against her. Her parents, farmers from a village in the Himalayas (my husband and I live in the foothills), had originally decided on an abortion. They had seven children and four grandchildren already and her mother, in particular, was quite sure she did not want another baby. When she was in her fourth month, they came down to our town (there was no hospital in the village) and visited an obstetrician who happened to be a friend of ours. She was also a Jain, a religion which teaches total non-violence, and she does not perform abortions. Instead, she encouraged the parents to have the baby in her hospital and leave it with her to be placed for adoption.

Two months later, coming down for a routine prenatal visit, the



mother went into labor on the bus. The bus pulled over and Moy Moy was born on the side of the road, barely two pounds, on a chilly grey November morning. They got back on the bus with the baby wrapped in whatever clothes they had to hand and proceeded to the hospital where, as they had agreed, she was left.

There was no incubator, so she was wrapped in cotton wool and layers of shawls and parked, for some unknown reason, in the nurses' station where she was in line for every germ and cold draft in the place. Nothing touched her. Hypothermia and respiratory infection are the two most serious risks for premature babies, but she never flagged for an instant. She was (and is) a survivor.

When she was two weeks old, my sister and her husband, both doctors, came to India to visit us and work in a local hospital. We had arranged for them to be at the same place where Moy Moy had been left and inevitably, the obstetrician mentioned the situation to them. My sister immediately volunteered us as prospective parents and 36 hours later, we brought her home.

Although it is true that a baby is a baby, adopting one and giving birth to one are very different experiences. With my first two children, my appreciation of them as unique, miraculous creations was tempered somewhat (I see it now) by the very physical nature of pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding. It was difficult to give full credit to God when I seemed to be the one doing all the work. While I didn't go so far as to think of them as my personal designs, I did see them as reflections or extensions of me—as such it was often impossible to see them as coming straight from the Creator.

With Moy Moy, on the other hand, there has always been this sense of amazement and gratitude: what did I do to deserve this? She came to us like a bolt from heaven—one day we had never heard of her and the next she was our daughter—and even now, eight months later, I am acutely aware of having done nothing to merit her. This adds a dimension to our relationship which is too wonderful to believe—she is no less than a gift from God. The phrase is an old one, but she has brought it to startling life. The gift is immeasurable and it has been given to *me*. It is so specific and delightful that sometimes I can hardly bear it: God has chosen me to be the mother of one of his children. (Of course, He had already done just that twice before—and as I have been discovering Moy Moy in the last eight months, I have been rediscovering my homemade

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son and daughter, meeting them all over again in the light of this new information on their origins!)

Adoption, which I believe to be the only real solution to the abortion disaster, is, ironically, also the best evidence we have of why abortion *is* such a disaster. While liberating us from the illusion that we are responsible for their creation, adopted babies free us to see them for what they (and all babies) really are: unmerited, priceless gifts from God, sent on loan into the universe and our safekeeping.

As she has created her place in our family, the tag “adopted” has come to mean less and less. But I will always be grateful to her for teaching me Whom to thank, and where the credit for creation truly lies.

# The Story of Ruth

*Faith Abbott*

EVERY DECEMBER MY MOTHER, Ruth Abbott, who lives in Fort Myers, Florida, sends a Christmas letter to her myriad friends all over the country and beyond. There was one exception: Christmas 1985. She was soon to be 90, and so decided to wait and send out a *birthday* letter. Dated January 19th, 1986, it begins: "Today I am 90 years old! Not that it feels any different from 89. But the world labels you as VERY OLD, which is faulty thinking. True, these last several years I have had strange things happening to me, such as dimming eyesight and occasional aches and pains from two broken hips, but *that* is to the *outside* of me. Inside all gets better and better, and I find myself thanking God for being alive."

Two years later, finding herself still very much alive, she wrote in her Christmas letter: "I, Ruth, whose eyesight diminishes week by week, often think of something Malcolm Muggeridge said: 'I totally accept the mystery of these circumstances.'"

Last January, in New York City, a 59-year-old woman stood on the corner of 92nd Street and Park Avenue, waiting for the light to change so she could cross Park and get on with her errands. Suddenly a van drove by and hands reached out for her purse. The woman hung on to her bag and was pulled under the van. Next day the papers headlined: "Elderly Woman Dragged to Death."

New Yorkers were horrified by this tragedy, but some admitted they'd also been surprised to discover that at age 59, they had suddenly become "elderly." There were letters in the papers. One woman complained that "As a woman in her 60s, who tries to look, act and feel young, I resent being categorized as a 'senior citizen.'" The *New York Post* published the letter under the title "Retire 'Elderly'" and a lot of us cheered.

But even if 59 *were* elderly, it's a fact that this woman's life was cut short by the thieves in the van. In another part of the country, early last June, a somewhat less than "elderly" woman decided to cut her own life short. Mrs. Janet Adkins, 54, suspected that she was in the first stages of Alzheimer's disease. She so valued her "quality of life" that the gradual loss of her many talents would

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*Faith Abbott* is our popular, prolific Contributing Editor.

be, she thought, a fate worse than death. So she chose death; and flew to Michigan where Jack (“Doctor Death”) Kevorkian helped launch her into the Great Beyond. It was supposed to be a “death with dignity.” But once the media got hold of the story, her death didn’t seem all that dignified.

This pre-elderly woman could still win at tennis. There was some doubt (or so I read) that she actually *had* Alzheimer’s. What she *did* have was a husband and two sons who were Very Supportive about her fatal decision. They sort of *hoped* she’d change her mind (*Mr.* Adkins even bought round-trip plane tickets, in case she would) but—well, *you* know, “It’s really up to Mom.”

Now if she had been truly elderly and ailing, and had pushed that suicide-button so as not to become a “burden” on her family, one might have been able to feel some “compassion.” But from all accounts Mrs. Adkins was not concerned about becoming a burden to family or society. She was concerned with her ego—just as Dr. Kevorkian was concerned with *his*. He wanted his place in the headlines as a crusader who has taken an important step “in a national campaign of planned death.”

Whatever ailments Mrs. Adkins may have had, being “elderly” wasn’t one of them. And yet she decided that 54 was the age beyond which her life could have no meaning. It was the most *elderly* she would ever get.

#### The “burden” of the elderly

My mother readily admits to being “elderly.” She has been what is euphemistically called a “senior citizen” for a very long time. She remembers many things her daughters have forgotten, but I remember one thing *she’s* forgotten, which is that—many years ago—she said: “If I ever become a burden on you girls, just take me to the nearest bridge and toss me off.” I don’t remember the context, but we knew she was just kidding.

It was OK to joke about that, then: it’s not such a joke now. You could be taken seriously—you might even be asked to put it in writing. “There are a lot of bridges in China,” I thought, because in a country where forced abortion and sterilization are government policy, wouldn’t euthanasia be a logical part of the “consistent ethic?” Maybe the government will start rolling Kevorkian-type machines off the assembly line, stamped Made In China?

*No*, says the Asian expert Steven W. Mosher, author of *Journey*

to the *Forbidden China* (1985), when I called him to check. He says the Chinese government has other ways of dealing with the elderly population. There is, for instance, the Chinese “triage” system: the sick elderly who are *working* are given medical treatment; the unproductive elderly are sent home, or back to their “retirement village,” to die. There are not nearly enough hospital beds and, anyway, very few measures are taken to prolong human life. And the problem will rapidly get worse. The “single child” generations will obviously produce too few children to take care of aging parents; retirement villages will be bursting at the seams. The government will have to do *something*. Mosher expects that *this* government will begin by rounding up the elderly who are *not* terminally ill, and exhorting them—in meetings and lectures—to be Patriotic about their *duty* to reduce the burden on the nation. No doubt the *regime* would offer some aids-in-dying, but Mosher wouldn’t speculate on what form these might take, nor on what will be done about the non-volunteers, except to say that whatever it is will have to be *economical*—no expensive “Doctor Death” machines.

Malcolm Muggeridge was not thinking of China but of governments in general when he predicted, in a speech at the University of San Francisco, in July 1978:

This is what is going to happen: governments will find it impossible to resist the temptation . . . to deliver themselves from this burden of looking after the sick and imbecile people or senile people, by the simple expedient of killing them off. Now this, in fact, is what the Nazis did. And they did it, not as is commonly suggested, through slaughter camps and things like that, but by a perfectly coherent decree with perfectly clear conditions. And, in fact, it is true that the delay in creating public pressure for euthanasia has been due to the fact that it was one of the war crimes cited at Nuremburg. So, for the *Guinness Book of Records*, you can submit this: that it takes just about thirty years in our humane society to transform a war crime into an act of compassion. That is exactly what happened.

(Muggeridge has often referred to abortion and euthanasia as the “Humane Holocaust.”) A year or so after that, he wrote:

. . . disposing of people who live inconveniently long, and of defectives of one sort and another, has, from the point of view of governments, the great advantage of saving money and personnel without raising a public hullabaloo—something governments are always on the look out for.

. . . So Dr. Jack Kevorkian’s suicide-machine is a timely propaganda weapon. The Hemlock Society—the best-known group that backs various “pending” proposals for “aid-in-dying” laws—issued (just

one day after Kevorkian used his machine) a release stating: "Hemlock would prefer that actions like those of Dr. Kevorkian were clearly made legal and not subject to ambiguity." Whether for the middle-aged, the defective, or the actual elderly, the message is: relieve the burden by dying.

#### **Elderly Population Grows**

In the United States, the burden of caring for the elderly becomes ever more acute as the population (yes—abortion works!) becomes top-heavy with "senior citizens." In August, a Florida paper announced a "Seminar on Aging" and stated: "The number of Americans older than 85 is expected to triple by the year 2000." (Ten years ago, in a letter, my mother listed her various physical problems "But I am not complaining," she added: "Nothing has been too bad. It just takes longer. And statistically it seems that we all get older.") The July 16th issue of *Newsweek* had statistics: "By the early 21st century, the percentage of Americans who are elderly will double, while the percentage of young people—caregivers of the future—will sharply decline."

So: after the next decade or so, a quarter of our nation will be *old*. And our "environmentalists" are encouraging young couples to be Responsible and Unselfish by having no more than one-point-something children, so that those children and *their* children will have arable land, forests, and unpolluted air to breathe. "Another myth of the anti-natalists," writes Jacqueline Kasun, in *The War Against Population*, "has it that population growth diminishes the aesthetic qualities of the human condition. Yet some of the world's most beautiful and most livable cities are the most densely settled." There *are* some young couples who, glowing with altruism, are willing to make the sacrifice: they will limit their families for the sake of future generations. But shouldn't "altruism" extend in the *other* direction? You don't have to be a math whiz to figure that if more couples have fewer children, the debt to the *previous* generation will go largely unpaid. Aging parents and even more "elderly" grandparents will have no family caretakers as their "quality of life" diminishes, so will it be *off* with them? *Humanely*, of course: with *dignity*.

The famous British actor, Robert Morley, has written a delightful book: *The Pleasures of Age*—which he, being in his early 80s, knows a lot about. In one chapter he writes "Even though the average age of the population increases annually (by the year 2011 there will

be four million people over the age of seventy-five) the elderly should never lose sight of the fact that we are an *endangered species*." [my emphasis: Environmentalists, take note!] "To enjoy life," Morley says, "one must always be conscious of predators. The old graze happily, sometimes alone, sometimes in herds. But the wardens lurk. They are for the most part benevolent committee members. Armed with the medicinal dart they occasionally favour anaesthesia and removal to a place of safety. Blanket or netting, ambulance or helicopter, we open our eyes in a nursing home . . . embarking albeit unwillingly on what may prove the last holiday. Resistance may well prove futile but we can fight successfully against the involuntary outing . . ."

Morley's book is dedicated to "those who enjoy growing old and are lucky enough to be able to do so." Suzanne Fields, the Washington-based syndicated columnist, wonders if it's possible that the old are a happier lot than the young, and says it *seems* so: she notes that the Los Angeles *Times* polled 3,000 adult Americans between the ages of 18 and 94 and nearly two-thirds of those over 65 said they were quite satisfied with their personal lives; only *half* of those between the ages of 18 and 49 said *they* were.

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I wish everyone could be "burdened" by the sort of mother I have, the sort of grandmother our five children have. She will be 95 next January. She can no longer write letters, so she *talks* them into her tape recorder. (She also listens to Talking Books and says she's "read" more books this way than she's read in her whole life.) In a talking letter to me a year ago, when she was merely ninety-three and a half, she said that she has had a wonderful life and recommends *old age*: "It gives you great insight and great peace and much time to reflect . . . and for getting everything into perspective."

I thought of that when I read about Mrs. Adkins. If she hadn't been in such a hurry, she too might have found peace and perspective, and might have left her husband and sons a legacy of more value than newspaper clippings about her notoriety.

Some months before Mrs. Adkins checked herself out, a husband and wife in Anaheim, California, decided to terminate themselves. They made a 15-minute videocassette in which they talked of recent successes in real estate, said they planned to go on a \$50,000 spending spree; they then spoke of their fears of growing old, and of ending their lives. That was in April. No one knew about it until August.

On Friday, August 3rd, the Associated Press story ran in papers across the country. The New York *Daily News* headlined it this way: "Two preferred death to aging." Douglas Ridenour, 48, and his 45-year-old wife of 22 years were presumably in good health. They had had a full life and were happy with it but (said a police sergeant) "They decided they reached the age where they have gone as far as they are going to go. . . . They decided they wanted to make the decision as to when it all should end." (The Ridenours had no children.) The videotape was sent to Douglas' brother, along with a Will, a prepaid cremation document, and directions to scatter their ashes over the ocean. The brother, after viewing this surprise package from the post office, raced to their home. He found their bodies slumped on separate couches in the den, along with the bodies of their two "cherished poodles." They had all been dead for two days. The weapon in this suicide-murder was a 12-gauge shotgun.

You have to wonder what was going on in the Ridenour's minds between April and August. Were they looking for a "sign"? Did they find it in Mrs. Adkins' suicide? Or had it just taken that long to complete the paperwork? One doubts that they spent their last months being peaceful and gaining insight and getting things into perspective.

I haven't seen any follow-up stories, but I assume that reactions to this murder-suicide ranged from shock (How awful—what a waste) to approval (Well, didn't they have the right-to-die?). But maybe the animal-rights zealots were furious about the Cherished Poodles, which couldn't possibly have given their Informed Consent.

#### **The Process of Becoming**

You may remember Dr. Bruno Bettelheim, the famous psychoanalyst, who worked with autistic children, and studied fairy tales to learn the secrets of their emotional power over young minds. In his prizewinning book, *The Uses of Enchantment*, he wrote that as an educator of severely disturbed children "my main task was to restore meaning to their lives." A friend had given me that book, and I had underlined a sentence: "In childhood, more than in any other age, all is becoming." I remembered that as I read about the Ridenours. Bettelheim was always precise with language: his *more than in any other age* meant that "becoming" doesn't *end* with childhood—it goes on. And I wondered: How did the Ridenours decide that their becoming had ended and that they had become *became*? How do



you know when you're *complete*? Even if you don't believe in God, shouldn't you be a bit hesitant about *playing* Him?

It is a sad irony that Bruno Bettelheim himself decided to stop becoming, when last March he took pills, put a plastic bag over his head, and died. At least he *was* elderly (86), and his wife of 43 years had died; a stroke had impaired his ability to write, and he'd been moved into a "retirement" home. "Dead by His Own Decision" headlined *Time* magazine, referring to what Bettelheim had once written: "All people, Jews or gentiles, who dare not defend themselves when they know they are in the right, who submit to punishment not because of what they have done but because of who they are, are already dead by their own decision."

The New York *Post*'s obituary headline was less dignified: "Famed Shrink's Bizarre End." Bruno Bettelheim had survived the Nazi Holocaust, but he couldn't survive the temptation to stop *becoming*. It was hardly a fairy-tale ending.

I am very glad that my mother is still in the process of becoming. And I know that she thinks (as she'd put it) it's a dog-gone shame when people take the life God has given them. Mom brought us up in the school of "We *all* make mistakes but we can learn from them," and "It's never too late to say sorry, and change." Suicide is the exception: there's no second chance.

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My mother has long been an admirer of Malcolm Muggeridge, and was delighted to actually meet him and his wife Kitty, when they were in Florida in 1979. They had a long chat about many things, including being Elderly. Death, they agreed, would be an interesting experience; they weren't afraid of it but they were still enjoying it *here*. However, during the 1980's Mother began to sense—from Malcolm's writings—that he was too rapidly becoming detached from this world. This, for instance:

. . . like a prisoner awaiting his release, like a schoolboy when the end of a term is near, like a migrant bird ready to fly south, like a patient in hospital anxiously scanning the doctor's face to see whether a discharge may be expected, I long to be gone. Extricating myself from the flesh I have too long inhabited, hearing the key turn in the lock of Time so that the great doors of Eternity swing open disengaging my tired mind from its interminable conundrums, and my tired ego from its wearisome insistencies.

*Too much*, thought Mother. When she wrote me about her 90th birthday (*scores* of people celebrated it with her) she said she had

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written a note to Malcolm (he is seven years younger than she), gently chiding him with: "Ninety is my favorite age. And don't keep looking around every corner for the end!"

On that birthday she was surprised and pleased to hear from an old friend. Or, more precisely, a young friend from an old friendship formed when Mother lived with her family as a "companion" to the family matriarch—the ailing (but formidable and eccentric and charming) Grandmother. The granddaughter and my mother had become good (you might even say close) friends, but Mother hadn't heard from her in ages. Possibly this was because the young woman was busy becoming a famous movie star. But Mother always thought there were other reasons, and this saddened her, for she is always saddened when she feels there's a "real need to be met" which she can't meet because somehow "a door has been closed." So it seemed the door had opened—at least a crack—and Mom wrote: 'I felt there was a great gulf fixed between us like that of the poor beggar in Lazarus' bosom and the rich man *'who died and was buried.'* (I have always been fascinated by that phrase.) Well, I had a very warm birthday card from Glennie, a letter, really . . . and I feel the gulf is gone."

Now I will admit that I was more mystified than "fascinated" about Lazarus' bosom and also that I'd hoped to see that letter. But Mother has—over the years, through many moves—become a non-collector; and though she keeps all things in her heart, she doesn't keep them anywhere else. One of her dictums is that People are more important than Things and I know the *person* of that letter is very much in her heart, and in her head (Mother's heart and mind are wondrously integrated) and in her prayers, which she believes this young woman needs more than ever, now that she has joined forces with the "pro-choicers" (who are thrilled to have her on their side) and has made movies that Mom, even back when she still went to movies, thought didn't have a very high Moral Tone.

Mother does of course keep such *things* as she'll pass on to her children and grandchildren: family silver, china, and her paintings. *Her* paintings. Wonderful acrylics—of her grandchildren, of landscapes and the flowers that grow in Arizona, where she lived for some years with that Grandmother, when she moved from cold Connecticut to her house there in Tucson.

Mother is fond of geriatric jokes and has several in her repertoire. One, which she thinks she read in some paper (could it be *true*,

she wonders?) is about a 90-year-old couple who went to a lawyer: they wanted a divorce. When the astonished lawyer asked the obvious question, they told him that, well, they'd never much liked each other, but they'd stuck it out for the sake of their children. But now all the children were dead. Then there's the one about the Streaker on the grounds of a retirement home. "*What was that?*" one elderly resident asked her friend, as something whizzed by. "Well, I don't know," replied the friend, "but it sure looks like it needs *ironing*."

Ruth was a First Too

Nowadays we read a lot about women who are Firsts. Geraldine Ferraro, first woman to run for vice president; Sandra Day O'Connor, first woman Supreme Court justice (and I suppose Janet Adkins may be awarded a posthumous First), and so on. Barbara Bush recently had what you might call a double-First: first First Lady to address the Wellesley College graduating class. We all remember what happened: a quarter of the students complained that Mrs. Bush was a wrong choice for Commencement speaker because she had done nothing to reflect the "self-affirming qualities" appropriate to a Wellesley graduate. After all, hadn't she quit college to get married? She hadn't really done anything "on her own."

My mother's First had to do with college, too. If there had been a radical feminist movement in 1918 (in a sense there *was* but its single issue was women's suffrage) they might have been confused about whether Mother's achievement was a plus or a minus for them. Probably they wouldn't have made much of it, since Mom was not an incipient feminist; she was, simply, *feminine*, and she wasn't trying to "make a statement" or to set a precedent. "First Woman" might not even apply, since there were *only* women in her college: nevertheless she was the First War Bride allowed to resume studies at her college in Ohio. She did not break college rules: the college broke its rules for *her*. On April 3, 1918, the St. Louis *Globe Democrat* ran this headline: "WAR BRIDE DEPARTS TO RESUME STUDIES: Western College for Women Breaks Rule for Mrs. E.S. Abbott." Ruth Wenzlick had been engaged for more than a year to Ernest Spencer Abbott. The war summons came and

Abbott was ordered to Camp Funston, where he is a corporal in the Three Hundred and Fourteenth Engineers' Train. Both young people felt the impending separation keenly, and during the Christmas holidays, when Miss Wenzlick was home from college, a marriage was decided upon. After a brief honeymoon, she returned to her studies.

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Ernest Spencer Abbott survived the shellfire in the trenches of France; Ruth Abbott survived the terrible flu epidemic; "Ernie" became a Presbyterian minister; they had three daughters; and in 1933 my mother survived my father and began her long widowhood.

She has also survived many broken bones; she has had pins and replacements, has been in hospitals and in wheelchairs and walkers. At present she uses just a cane, when she is outside on uncertain terrain.

Ruth Abbott is indeed a woman of many talents. When she was in high school a local paper raved: "Girl, 17, author of School Play . . . Acclaimed New St. Louis Literary Wonder."

As the author of a play, the plot of which she devised in an hour, and which, drawing the largest audience ever assembled in the Central High School auditorium, has been pronounced by her teachers as the best amateur production they ever witnessed, Miss Ruth L. Wenzlick, 17 years old, has suddenly found herself proclaimed one of the most promising stars in St. Louis' literary constellation.

She got in the papers again when she was a college freshman. The St. Louis *Globe Democrat*, April 4, 1915, said: "Scenery Trees Wear Skirts . . . College Girl's Play an Oddity . . . 'Tragic Opera' by St. Louis student Hit with Faculty."

. . . the comedy points to the theory that marriage and domesticity are the real ambitions of every girl . . . This histrionic triumph comes close upon the heels of a warm commendation which Miss Wenzlick received for a congratulatory poem which she wrote to the president of the college on his birthday . . .

These articles also featured *large* photographs of Ruth L. Wenzlick. I have these clippings in an album, along with Mom's caption: "This was before we entered World War I and there was no great news. That is why I keep getting in the paper. Great exaggeration."

Mother is also musical, although I have heard that my father used to tease her: he said her special musical talent lay in beginning one song and absent-mindedly transposing it into another. She still goes to church and sings the hymns: when she forgets some of the words, she just makes up vowels and consonants that seem to match what she is hearing, through her hearing aid.

But perhaps my mother's greatest talent is: prayer. It is one talent that is not affected by dimming eyesight, poor hearing, physical weakness, or any of the other Diminishings of Old Age. Mom prays every day for her children and their husbands and her grandchildren;

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and she prays for our country and even for other countries. She knows more about what's going on in the world than most people half her age: somehow it's *personal* to her. Recently, when she and my sister had some financial confusions, Mom said that they *had* to get them straightened out *right away* because it is important to "live a pattern for our poor government—so sunk in debt and spending above our means."

And one should never *underestimate* her prayer-talent. A few years ago, when Southwest Florida was having one of those devastating droughts, Mother prayed for rain, and they got a tornado. During the power failure that ensued, she tried to grope her way to the bathroom, tripped on something and fell and broke yet another bone. As she lay on the floor, knowing that her hollerings couldn't be heard above the storm, she may have been remembering Malcolm Muggeridge's words, and trying to totally accept the mystery of *those* circumstances.

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My mother (who must now have *Human Life Review* read to her) wondered if I couldn't perhaps make my next article a bit *shorter*. I have tried, even though this time it doesn't seem fair to *her*. On the other hand, the full Story of Ruth would far exceed the limits of this journal. She has been a fan of this journal since its beginning, because she has always been a fan of human life from *its* beginning, and throughout: the whole continuum, with all its mysterious circumstances. As she is now enjoying Old Age with its potential for getting-things-into-perspective, it is *beginnings* more than endings that she ponders in her heart and mind. Ruth, who is still *becoming*, and who thanked God for being alive when she turned 90, and who will be entering her 96th year next January, God willing, thinks about those who will never be able to thank God for being alive because they were never even allowed a *beginning*. She totally *unaccepts* the mystery of *those* circumstances because there is no "mystery" about the more than 25 million innocents who have been slaughtered since 1973, when their destruction was made "legal."

In 1988, when Mom could still see fairly well, she watched a PBS television program: "How a Baby Is Made." Afterwards, she wrote down her thoughts in a sort of free-verse, and sent it to my husband and me:

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*If only  
If only they had let us live.  
We were such miracles, little balls at first,  
Then in perfect obedience to an Inner Voice  
We slowly changed shape, lumps and hollows came,  
Then a round depression which turned inward  
To make the part of us we gave no thought to.  
All in perfect time.  
And then the complicated thinking process  
With which we could reason and dream.  
The little stumps that came had clumsy fingers,  
The promise of capable hands.  
If only they had let us live, to feel air and space,  
And loving arms responding to our cries, cradling us.  
To us it made no difference if in dirty alley shop  
Or polished, shining cleanliness the human sacrifice was prepared.  
Without warning, our small images of God were terminated.  
We were rejects, scraped into plastic bags.  
If they didn't want us, there WERE longing hearts and empty arms  
Reaching out for us.  
We would have been loved and nurtured and warmed to maturity as  
Men and Women.  
If only they had let us live, perhaps from the millions of us  
There would have been some who  
With clear brains, burning hearts and skillful hands  
Solved the unsolvable, found cures for hopeless ills,  
Brought water to deserts,  
And discovered the way for all men to love and belong to one another.  
If only they had let us live.  
If only.*

R.W.A.

## Growing Up in War

*Thomas Molnar*

LET ME CONTINUE the story of my childhood in East Europe, from childhood into adolescence and beyond. Let us say the first chapter was, if not of innocence, at least of youth. By 1937-38 the political situation entered deeply in everybody's life. In my own case (the reader left me as my family was moving back to Hungary after eleven years in Transylvania), the chapter was closed in late January 1938. The new Rumanian government of Octavian Goga—the poet who dreamed of a reconciliation, at least in literature, between his nation and mine—was far to the right, extremely nationalistic, and intolerant of foreigners, particularly of Magyars. The following day we were in Budapest, a city that I knew well, of course, but nonetheless it was strange, because I had not a single friend there, and had to start in a different school, in a new milieu.

There were a few adjustments to be made before I could return to school: history, geography, literature, more Latin than had been the Rumanian requirement, and more German too, but less French. These were not very serious difficulties. I cleared the hurdles, yet the adjustment took the better part of a year. For one thing, I had to re-learn the strategy of dealing with professors, and, worst of all, my fellow students had been long settled in various groups of friends, and the new face in class was not easily assimilated. Boys of 16 or 17 are extremely routine-bound; friendships are no small matter, they fill the world. And I never was gregarious.

My first "adventure" was, then, accommodation with the new environment, with new girls, new topics, new orientations. In retrospect, I realize, however, that the bourgeois way of life was the same all over Europe, there was no need to re-learn the basic attitudes. In both Hungary and Rumania—no love lost between the two, ever—the central concern was anti-communism, and its corollary, some sort of sympathy if not for Hitler, then certainly for Mussolini. In the whole east-central European area, Italy had been for many centuries the cultural bulwark against the more threatening forces: Byzantine-Greek (in the middle-ages), German, Turkish, Russian. Italy was

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Thomas Molnar's new book, *The Church, Pilgrim of Centuries* (Eerdmans) will be published soon. This article is a continuation of his contribution to our Spring issue.

the light, either in the form of papal influence, or the Renaissance, and again in the 19th century. Mussolini was an Italian, jovial and human, no matter what the ideological superstructure. Many of my friends studied Italian, the other choice of language being French. I was by then so deeply committed to French that I ruled out any “rapprochement” with the Italian language. To this very day, I do not speak it. Habits are rooted in adolescence, they do not change.

Nevertheless, Germany was nearer, and the long association with the Habsburgs conditioned Magyars, practically all of them, to speak German, and this remains true. Political influence comes with language and culture, and the lion's share in this complex was Germany's. Hence Hitler's influence on various layers of the population. Everybody understood his speeches and programs; hardly anybody understood those of Mussolini. That decided it. My new friends and I discussed it all of course. Perhaps this is the place to cut through the nonsense and disinformation so prevalent in America to this day when the immediate pre-war period is debated or written about. Frankly, I have not seen, in four decades in the United States, one single book, article, panel discussion or speech which correctly approached the topic of pre-war East-Central Europe.

The social problem was very acute, and its solution could not come from the then-existing social structure. The Magyar intelligentsia, as to some extent also the Rumanian, was divided (I simplify) among far-leftists who usually did not dare advertise their marxism in public, far-rightists who wanted a radical but of course anti-marxist solution (hence “national socialist”), and finally Christians who expected a miracle from the Church, therefore from Rome, therefore (some of them) from Mussolini and his economic corporatism. The liberal layer was a veneer, concentrated in Budapest, not at all representative of the country as a whole. In the classroom, that is in discussions after class, we had these same categories—democracy was not even a topic, it was literally meaningless, as I am quite sure it is to this day. I repeat: things do not change, only in this country are we supposed to believe that they do.

Everybody had an older brother, a father, an admired older friend who knew more about these things, so I think I can safely say that our debates reproduced the ones in the adult world and in the political spectrum. What we did not yet grasp was that the debate is never settled in the intellectual market-place of ideas (what a pompous expression!), but by giant pressures, in this case the nations around



us and their ideologies. But it should be clear to the reader that while the first part of this article was filled with the memories of the unpolitical child, this second part is that of the political young man. This does not mean that the child disappeared somewhere on the Rumanian/Magyar border in January 1938. Problem number one remained the baccalaureat, the general examination at 18 years of age which would practically decide our future course of life and career. Those who passed would enter the university, would have officer's status in the army when called to service, would belong to the upper levels of the bourgeoisie, would travel abroad, would become physicians, engineers, lawyers, professors, priests, or high-status businessmen. The others would fill all the other socio-economic posts, often in the position of underlings. At the tenth or twentieth anniversary of the baccalaureat, alumni used to meet in a restaurant. At times it was painful because the social status encouraged rigid class differences. What could the lawyer speak about with his earlier bench-mate, now a truck-driver? Well, they could share old memories; but only for a few hours, until the passage of another decade.

I admit that even today—in fact more than ever—I prefer class societies to class-less masses. They are less hypocritical, and express people's true convictions. For my generation the class society was no problem, but those who reflected more deeply were indignant at the great poverty of many in the peasant class, who lived in misery. The feudal mores were still very much alive, especially on estates and in villages. It was not rare to see peasants, men and women, get on their knees as the landlord passed by. It was also not rare to find only one peasant child of a family in school in winter, since the brothers and sisters had only one pair of shoes among them. These two vignettes should go a long way toward explaining why so many accepted the communist regime—at the beginning. Later, this same class of dirt-poor peasants, who received some (later confiscated) land and schooling from the Party, turned against the communists in 1956. They understood that they had only been used—the way Iliescu's miners are now used in Rumania to beat up the regime's opponents.

Thus politics came to us with an increased insistence, far more so than the Vietnam War came later to American youth in the colleges. Then, it held our attention. We lived through the Munich pact, the occupation of Czechoslovakia, the annexation of Austria, but these cases were not surrounded by the pseudo-moral aura that similar

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events have today for the average newspaper reader. They were strictly political, nothing *but* political. It had been so from time immemorial: nations coveted their neighbor's territory and, when possible, they went to grab it. It seems to me this approach was far less hypocritical than what prevails today when we are supposed to shed tears each time injustice is committed by or among governments. No amount of tears and moral indignation can stop such things anyway—and the tears are those of crocodiles.

Three days stand out in my memory, lived in the streets of Budapest. August 18, 1939, I see myself cross tramway rails in front of the Western Railroad Station, and read the headline of the Ribbentrop/Molotov pact; some weeks later, on September 3, we stroll with a friend through the halls of the annual Autumn Fair, and hear the megaphone announce the British declaration of war; another eighteen months, June 22, 1941, a beautiful sunny Sunday morning, my girlfriend and I prepare to take the tramway for a day in the Mountains of Buda, in a wood-surrounded swimming pool. In the crowd waiting for the tramway somebody announces: the Germans invaded the Soviet Union this morning. We spent a wonderful day.

In short, in ways human, the little and big events mixed in my life, the Important Dates stand out only in retrospect. The first air raids were terrifying, as was the blackout that preceded them, but it seemed to be more important that I had a date (lower case) on that day, or that I passed the baccalaureat, or that I received a two-volume Plato for an occasion I no longer remember. Americans who never saw a foreign war, or the occupation of their territory, dramatize events of which they hear, be they world war, revolution, or apartheid. Seen and lived close-up, there is hardly any drama, people usually do not allow the Great Events to interfere with their daily routine or personal problems, whether positive or negative. The fall of France, the American declaration of war against Japan, the meetings in Casablanca, Cairo and Tehran—all were very distant. The historian in me registers this truth, even welcomes it: it is proof that humankind never learns from events even when they are on the point of submerging us. And this explains why "history" will even go on (*pace*, Fukuyama!); we are permanently unprepared. Judgment Day will strike us with its unexpectedness the same way as the Yalta meeting (a small apocalypse) did, in February 1945.

The war manifested its presence in small ways, small at least in our eyes. Already in the first winter of the war German war production

needed all the coal of its neighbors, and we had many “coal-saving days,” hence no classes. When Hungarian army units were thrown into battle (in 1941-43) we, part of a para-military organization, were requested to go from building to building, to collect warm clothing for the soldiers in wintry Russia. Then there were the air raids, terrifying but still not quite real, although as one emerged from shelters, certain blocks were simply no longer there. A direct hit carried people away by the dozens. Yet, one could learn new lessons too. Namely that in time of crisis, let alone in mortal danger, the calm and organizing mind, the courageous soul, do not necessarily belong to the “tough guy” that one had respected all along for his boasting and aggressiveness. As often as not, the “leader” under the falling bombs was the man nobody had suspected of keeping a cool head and of quietly giving orders which saved lives and dispelled the clouds of crisis.

Goods slowly became scarce. It was quite a pleasant surprise when my father returned from work (we had at the time a small but functioning soap factory) with a big loaf of bread, since bread too began to be rationed. And only through the friend of a relative who worked in the Ministry of Raw Materials (the name was a sign of the times) could my father secure the monthly supply of chemical fats, imported from Switzerland, to make his soap. Some of the operations involved bribes, a normal outgrowth of scarcity—just as my mother put a few banknotes in the hands of those who served clients in food stores. In short, the war slowly became a reality, but except those who had a family member or a close friend in the army units fighting in Russia, it was lived in relative comfort and mental tranquility. Little information seeped through from the war proper, and Russia hardly existed in the popular imagination. What the war did do, however, was to create a deep division of society into two camps: pro-German and pro-Allied. This topic would need a whole book to give all the reasons, motives and nuances of the division. There were of course those increasingly squeezed and persecuted: leftists, marxists, Jews, freemasons. But except for the last year or so of the war, this “squeeze” was not very different from what one finds today in other divisions into camps. The difference was that in those times, a half-century ago, the Left was persecuted; now it is the Right, for example in Mitterand’s France. For me it is the *nth* lesson about history always being the same. I find the same zeroing-in

on Le Pen's party and voters, the same epithets and deprivations of rights that I found fifty years ago, then directed at the Left and its representatives. The victims change; the volume of persecutions and slogans seems to be a constant.

Did we—did I—take sides in the war? At the time I thought I did, now I am not so sure. What did the "West" mean to me? Almost exclusively its literature, philosophy, and art, and its history too, inasmuch as we envied the Western countries for their relatively-peaceful history, so different from ours. It is hard from an American perspective to understand how our world was defined. A rather large segment of young people devoted their lives to some deeply-felt vocation, which could be the priesthood, or the teaching of literature, or mathematics, but which was by no means a hobby, not even a profession—it was an absolute devotion and love. Only later in France did I see the same uncompromising dedication to the things of the mind which had marked me forever (and a good number of my friends as well). It is perhaps the greatest pleasure for me to this day to discover a similar dedication in young people of any origin or nation, and an even greater pleasure to find that such young men existed all along behind the Iron Curtain too, and are now coming forward. It is only now that I understand that the sufferings that history has inflicted on that region have purified the aspirations of many, so that the highest intellectual pursuits, and the most genuine spirituality, have been products, if not of repression, at least of a no-nonsense life—a permanent testing. Only this gives the soul the kind of strength without which it degenerates into a "psyche," a nondescript organ with its automatisms.

I insist that the "West" did not mean more than its culture. In fact, until Stalingrad (Christmas, 1942) almost everybody was convinced that the Germans would win the war over against decadent France and England. While the post-war era proved that they were indeed decadent—*they* never won the war, America and Russia did—the United States was simply too far away to matter. It was a story for adults, it was not a part of the real world. And the Soviet Union created the kind of fear that to Americans might qualify as "McCarthyite," but in every respect justified, as later events demonstrated. Thus our world was that of Central-Eastern Europe, a world as real as the "West" or the "Far East," or Islamic North Africa. I daresay it has survived with its special sensibility and cultural horizon. The Soviet occupation inflicted no irreparable damage,

and no amount of western presence after 1990, with its delirious consumer society and pornography, is going to affect it either. Not because it is a community of saints—very far from it—but because it is certain of its roots. It does not question its traditions, and loves its own way of life. Neither marxism nor capitalism will make deep inroads.

All this I discovered much later, so that the things I am writing about here were not at all conscious thoughts in the times about which I am writing. Yet the foundations were laid then, and it is easy for me to dig them up; they hardly need any dusting off. After all, they have stood the test of time. If anybody should be uncertain of his identity, it ought to be me. From early childhood on, I was tossed between nations, languages, curricula, then compelled by “history” to take refuge elsewhere. And the personal “pluralism” continued, with travels and life between at least two worlds, even between professions, because I never found intellectual stimulation in what is called “teaching” and “classroom” in America. One’s sense of identity, however, does not depend on any of these factors; it is implanted early and, once there, it cannot be uprooted. No matter how uncertain my times were, I owe it to those early and multiple influences that I withstood the fashionable sickness of the century: the confusion of “yes-no-perhaps.” If I find anything alienating today, it is that I cannot share the state of perpetual agony in which so many people like to live and from which their “problems” are fed.

Whence did I derive the virtue of tenacity? Biological influence aside (in my case probably my mother’s) it was the environment I found in Hungary. There was no question where the nation stood, in her history, and her present. The hierarchically-ordered society also indicated clear and straight avenues. As I have already said, in a class-society, values are well-articulated because they must be defended against other classes and other values, which contributes to a clarity of vision and attitude.

And derived from all these factors were manners to which not enough attention is paid in “classless” societies, although they may be the Archimedean point from which the best perspectives are gained. You do *this*, and you do not do *that*—such rules are not an interference with your “human rights,” but the means of providing you with the disciplines by which you gain self-respect, and the respect of others.

The inevitable happened. As the Soviet troops came closer and

Rumania surrendered (and was thus rewarded again with Transylvania), the front was now cutting through Hungary. Chaotic times struck the population, and then “peace” finally came, again two camps formed: those who fled, and those who stayed. Nobody knew, of course, that matters were to be frozen for 45 years. It was suddenly obvious that the “West” offered absolutely no protection, that it is one of the two grave-diggers. All it did was offer a kind of ambiguous open-door policy: it admitted refugees. It was most often fortuitous where the refugee would knock. In my case (but I have told the story elsewhere) it was Belgium, where I had vague connections—but whose police nevertheless jailed me three days after crossing the border illegally. They were right, to be a refugee is no virtue, who can tell the intentions? But, in fact, they did me a favor. They completed my “education,” they gave me a new angle on maturity. They did so by locking me up with a dozen others in one cell, all so-called *collaborateurs* of the German occupation troops. Thus while the Nuremberg Trials were going on outside, I learned the other side of the coin in the cell. My cell mates were taken out one by one and sentenced, at times heavily, in some cases to death. All of them said they were innocent—I believed them, because one does not lie facing death, one does not lie in front of all the others, to a young chap dropping down from who knows where—from Hungary—in the midst of self-righteous winners of the war that Belgium never won and to whose success it had contributed only by supplying (from the then-Belgian Congo) shipments of uranium to Los Alamos.

In short, I learned something of the hypocrisy of the winning side while I was listening, night after night, to whispered stories, basically always the same: “How could I not be a ‘collaborator’ when I had to feed my family?” “They condemn me now for not having been a hero and a martyr. Were they not those who in the first days of the war surrendered, then took off for London in the last few planes?” When I was released from jail, two months later, in August 1946, the first thing I did was to register at the university. Yet in a sense my university was already behind me, in all the things I learned during the war and after. I had been forced to “major” in “human nature,” the most essential thing one may study in this life.

# Race, Ethnicity and Citizenship

*Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn*

**R**RACE, ETHNICITY AND CITIZENSHIP! In the English language—and, to make matters worse, also in many others—an almost complete chaos surrounds these three concepts. I have avoided the terms “nation” and “nationality” because, the world over, they too mean very different things. (Just look at the definitions in *Webster’s New International Dictionary* and see the roots of the confusion!) To a Central European these terms are identical with “ethnic groups” and “ethnicity,” but to an English-speaking person or to a Frenchman, to ask “What is your nationality?” is usually a question about a person’s citizenship.

Now, let’s make some distinctions between these terms which are so important in discussions of biology, culture, politics, sociology and even religion. They also play a role in economics, psychology and law.

Let us start with “race.” Race is a biological quality found throughout the animal world. There are different races of dogs, horses, cats, camels and chickens. As among human beings, the differences are often visible. The different races mate and have offspring. Among human races very few, if any, are pure blooded. Even the Eskimos show two rather different racial strains: Mongolian and Paleo-Siberian. The quality of the hair, the pigmentation of the skin, the color of the eyes and the form of the female breasts are key racial characteristics. There are many others and some are non-visual, such as allergies or susceptibility to specific diseases. Are there superior and inferior races? There is no scientific proof for that, yet *statistically* it can be proved that the various races are gifted in different ways, as are males and females. Of course statistical differences are never absolutes. If we say that women are rarely composers, this does not mean that it would be impossible for a woman to compose music (Nadia Boulanger, the great composer, springs to mind). Still, it cannot be argued that women (who certainly enjoy music) were artificially prevented from composing. There are outstanding female writers and poets. It is in the realm of the spoken and written word that women most often match or surpass men—and for this, as we now know, there are physical reasons.

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Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, a prolific author, critic, and renowned world traveller, resides in the Austrian Tyrol.

We must be very careful in attributing mental qualities solely on the basis of I.Q. tests, which are valid primarily for an industrial and technological society and don't take into consideration factors like intuition (which is something very real). Of course, with intuition alone one cannot build a jet or a computer. We do not really know whether intuition can be explained scientifically or not. Women, no doubt, are more intuitive than men.<sup>1</sup> George Simmel, the great German philosopher, has written a brilliant essay on the effect of female inspiration on men, but he found no ready-made explanation.<sup>2</sup> It has been said that whenever Goethe established a close contact with a woman his mind became fertile.<sup>3</sup> These phenomena are unexplored and perhaps scientifically unexplorable.

Another factor, memory, can be tested, but it is not directly connected with intelligence. I have known people with remarkable memories who were absolutely stupid. On the other hand, to a creative intellectual, a first-rate memory remains (in spite of computers) a first-rate asset.<sup>4</sup> People who cannot take notes, write, or even make sketches undoubtedly need superior memories. I'll never forget a priest from Rwanda (at Lovanium University near Kinshasa) who not only remembered all the details of a novel of mine he had read in French some years before, but also all the data about my life (travels, works, etc.) printed on the back cover. Equally unforgettable is an Eskimo I met in Nome who had read an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* a year earlier. He could not understand the text but had memorized verbatim the very long initial paragraph—perhaps 20 printed lines. (Eskimos, however, can also make excellent true-to-life geographical sketches.)

The various races (just like the two sexes) have different brains displaying different characteristics. This implies superiorities *and* inferiorities which, however, because they are algebraic and not arithmetic units, cannot be added or subtracted. A plus B plus C does not equal 3 but remains A plus B plus C. To deny these differences only shows a leftist or childish turn of mind (which amounts to the same thing). God has not created human beings as equals,<sup>5</sup> and certainly we are not equal in the eyes of God. If Judas Iscariot is equal to St. John the Baptist, or Esther to Jezebel, Christianity and Judaism should close up shop.<sup>6</sup>

Physical qualities obviously differ among the races. A Watusi, a black giant, and a Bambuti, a black dwarf, cannot compete fairly on the same race track.<sup>7</sup> The tendency towards specific diseases varies not only between the sexes and races<sup>8</sup> (for instance, black adults



are frequently allergic to milk), but also between ethnic groups. (Of course, in the latter case, one has to consider the different ways of life. Heart disease, for instance is rare among the Japanese, who have a very healthy fatless diet.) Why then should brains, statistically, be equal and produce the same results?

Among races there is a marked difference in nervous reactions. When I was young, most famous German race-drivers were of Italian descent. I would advise Dutch drivers arriving in Rome to park their cars in a garage and forget about them during their stay. In the 1930's Britishers had just about as many cars as the French but twice as many accidents, which the better French roads alone did not explain. Within most large ethnic groups or countries, the Southerners are usually "quicker on the draw" than Northerners. This is evident in politics. Napoleon, as a Corsican, was an Italian whose mother never learned French; Hitler was an Austrian (i.e., a southern German); Stalin was a Georgian from the Caucasus; Venizelos hailed from Crete; Sun-Yat-Sen and Mao both came from China's South; Huey Long came from Louisiana. When I visited Southern Italy with the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno*<sup>9</sup> (a re-development agency) my guide on this trip, who came from the North, told me about all the problems this program encounters with local workers, but added that, as regards intelligence, they were far superior to Northerners. Their minds worked much faster<sup>10</sup>. (German entrepreneurs hiring Spaniards rather than Germans act for the same reasons.)

Race is inherited. It follows Mendelian laws. Yet there is scientific evidence to the fact that race is not invariable. Due to external influences, racial characteristics can undergo changes which then become hereditary. This is a Lamarckian view. (Lamarckism has been replaced by Darwinism, but today Darwinism is very much under fire,<sup>11</sup> and one tends to forget that toward the end of his life, Darwin again sympathized with Lamarckism.) Thus we know that Americans of pure Japanese descent (*Nissei*, *Sansei* etc.) differ physically from their cousins in Japan. They are taller and sport certain "Caucasian" features. As a matter of fact, such Americans, when visiting Japan, are frequently taken to be Eurasians.<sup>12</sup>

The reasons for such a change are probably both physical and psychological, through eating American food, being exposed to the American climate, accepting the American way of life, speaking American English, and so forth. Europeans too have changed in

America. When clothes and shoes were donated to European refugees after WW II, it was found that American foot-wear was too narrow for Europeans who, obviously, had not given up the habit of walking long distances. There is also such a thing as the American face (at least in the European mind). Thus four Presidents looked to us very American—Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge and Harry S Truman. On the other hand, I can easily distinguish American “Blacks” from Africans, if only because the former have some (or even a lot) of “Caucasian” blood<sup>13</sup> though they certainly differ from the South African “Colored” (*Kluerde*)<sup>14</sup>.

From all that it should be evident that we should not speak about the “German race,” the “Spanish race” or the “Arab race.” Ethnicity is characterized, above all, by language and culture, sometimes even by religion (which always has cultural implications). In larger ethnic units one often finds tribal differences, characterized usually by dialectic inflections of the same language. Yet there are exceptions. The Irish are Celtic by origin, but the revival of the Irish language proved a failure, although it still is spoken in the same coastal areas where it was customary before 1921. In this case, religion is important—especially so in Northern Ireland where (to a certain extent) the English language unites Celtic Irish Catholics and equally Celtic Scottish Presbyterians and Anglicans. Their accent is the same, but it is not the Irish brogue! The Germans living in the German Federal Republic, the German Democratic Republic, Switzerland, France, Italy and the pitiful remainder East of what *was* the Iron Curtain are tribally differentiated and speak a great variety of dialects. Some tribes are Catholic, and some are Lutheran or Calvinist; others are denominationally mixed. (The Swiss cantonal borders are much more denominational than ethnic!) German humor lives mainly in the dialects and has to be enjoyed aurally. (This is also true of Irish rather than English humor.)

Ethnic-religious identity is also a feature of Poland, but the Masurian Poles of former East-Prussia are Lutherans who considered themselves Prussian in the past and sided strongly with the National Socialists. After the war, they were not expelled since they spoke Polish, but their Catholic German neighbors in Varmia (Ermeland), who were staunch anti-Nazis, were dispossessed and had to flee. In Yugoslavia, denomination separates Croats from Serbs. The two groups are also culturally distinct because culture depends more upon religion than upon language. In Germany, even within the various *Länder*, the

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Catholic and Lutheran areas have their own outlook, their own quality of life. The carnival is celebrated in Mainz but not in nearby Frankfurt. We find the same situation in Switzerland. Life in Zürich is quite different from life in Lucerne or Zug, which is just 30 minutes away from Zürich by rail. You might see a Capuchin in his habit on a lady's bicycle in Zug, but certainly not in Zürich.

Ethnic boundaries in Europe can be strongly marked; crossing such a border often means stepping into another world: the people behave differently, and the cuisine, architecture, social customs and sexual mores are different, even though there might be a common government, a common currency, and even a common church. (One may experience all this crossing from a German to an Italian village in the South Tyrol.) Ethnicity, as a rule, is inherited from parents primarily through the "mother tongue" acquired from schools, friends, books and the media. Here the state and society, and sometimes also the church cooperate. Yet while race cannot be changed personally, ethnicity *can*—especially in childhood and adolescence. Later in life this becomes rather difficult. Just compare the German accent of Henry Kissinger, who immigrated to the United States at the age of fourteen, with that of his brother who came at the age of twelve!<sup>15</sup>

The accent, however, is not decisive. An American Black who went to college, has a white-collar job, and reads a good periodical is without doubt a real American.<sup>16</sup> He goes to the same ball games, enjoys the same movies, laughs at the same jokes and worships in the same church as his colleagues in the office. He has different racial characteristics but the same citizenship. Most (but not all) East European Hebrews were an ethnic group distinct from their neighbors: they had their own religion, spoke their own language, ate different foods, dressed differently and represented a different racial mix, i.e. they were largely "mediterraneans" with some khazar admixture. (I once asked an Italian in Naples whether he could distinguish a Hebrew from a Catholic Italian. He thought quite some time and then said: "The Hebrew eye is sad.") The German Hebrew was ethnically and legally a German of the Mosaic faith, a French Hebrew a Frenchman, and so forth. Consider men like Heine, Rathenau, Lassalle, Bergson, Aron and Dreyfus (who rejoined the army immediately after his acquittal). Franz Werfel, the Jewish Austrian author, was even a "cultural Catholic,"<sup>17</sup> and Sigmund Freud was inseparable

from his Austrian background.<sup>18</sup> The percentage of Jews among the commissioned officers in the Austro-Hungarian army was much higher than their national average.

Prior to the French Revolution, ethnicity was a very minor issue. Society was vertical and not horizontal. Feudalism implied the reciprocal loyalty of superiors and inferiors. The French Revolution produced a collectivistic herd instinct and, as a result, people who spoke different languages, behaved differently, looked different, and thought differently were automatically considered enemies. Equality, sameness, democracy, and uniformity became key words. The ideal state was now one with only one language, one class, one type of school, one ideology, one costume.<sup>19</sup>

In the old days, the people were united because they had a feeling of loyalty and affection toward a common ruler and a common faith; now they were divided by political parties and wanted to compensate for this by a common ethnicity. People started to speak about majorities and minorities, terms never heard before.<sup>20</sup> Minorities were to accept the language and customs of the majority to form a perfect unity and uniformity. This was largely the task of the schools. The Prussians made concerted efforts to Germanize their Polish minority; the Russians tried to Russianize the Baltic nations<sup>21</sup> and the Poles; the Serbs declared the Bulgarians of Macedonia to be "South Serbs"; the French provided only French schools for the Bretons, and so forth. The National Socialists went a step further: for them it was not sufficient to speak German and accept German habits and customs; everybody had to *look* like a German! Hebrews sometimes did not. Both Germans and Hebrews belonged to racial mixtures, but the constituent elements were not exactly the same. With his curly jet-black hair and dark eyes, the famous German philosopher Martin Heidegger (who had flirted with National Socialism) looked just like a Sicilian.

Racial mixtures can be as intellectually and artistically fertile as ethnic combinations. Dumas *père* and *fils* had African blood, as did Pushkin. The great Austrian Japanese Catholic author, Ida Görres, born Countess Coudenhove-Kalergi, had a Japanese mother.<sup>22</sup> In the European royalty and aristocracy there are traces of Hebrew, Arab and Tartar blood.<sup>23</sup> Genghis Khan is an ancestor of William II and Nicholas II, and Mohammed is an ancestor of all of our royal and great aristocratic families. The mother-line of the Empress Maria-Theresa goes back to Turk-Tartar princes.<sup>24</sup> The Icelanders are by no means of pure Nordic stock: the Vikings who went there came

via Scotland and Ireland, whose pre-Celtic populations did not look Nordic at all.<sup>28</sup> Small, stocky people, even with curly hair, are not rare in Iceland.

As one sees, race cannot be a measuring rod, nor a reason for qualifications or discrimination. One thing is certain: religion might have certain ethnic (i.e., cultural) affinities, but it has nothing to do with race. The widely accepted theory that the Reformation succeeded among Nordic people and failed among Latins and Slavs is nonsense. The racial background of the Irish and the Scots, who were on different sides in the Reformation, is very similar, and there are also some arch-Catholics in Scotland, on South Uist and in the Highlands. A large part of the Netherlands is Catholic (more than one third of the population), and so is Eastern Latvia, which is at the same latitude as Northern Labrador. Calvinism was once very strong in France (today it survives in Southern France) and Poland was once to a large extent Calvinist and Unitarian; Austria used to be 80 percent Lutheran.

Ideas are totally independent of race, but not of ethnically-defined cultures with which they interlock. Calvinism has radically altered the character of Scotland (as Wallace Notestein and Halliday Sutherland have pointed out) as well as that of Geneva. While all of Europe up to the Arctic Ocean was devoutly Catholic, the Lithuanians kept their pagan faith and embraced Christianity only at the end of the 14th century. Today they are staunch Catholics and fiercely resist Red atheism.

Ethnicity, however, often has strong class implications. Polish Catholics formed an upper class deep into Byelo-Russia and the Ukraine. (Joseph Conrad, a Pole, was born not far from Kiev.)<sup>26</sup> The Magyars formed the upper class in Slovakia as well as in Transylvania. The Franks, a German tribe, once ruled France, and the Germanic Visigoths dominated Spain, while other German tribes lorded it over large parts of Italy, but they all lost their languages and their ethnic character. Still, the Franks gave their name to France and the French consider Charlemagne their great historic ruler—but so do the Germans. (Though Charlemagne spoke a Germanic language, Frankish, he must have known Latin after a fashion.) On the other hand, I also have a list of over 500 French words which are of Germanic origin. (These are often simple words like *bleu*, *gris*, *nord*, *sud*, *tirer*, *briser*, *hair*, *guerre*, and so forth.)

If the conquering people are not numerous enough, it is natural that they lose their original language and with it their ethnic character. The Normans did so after they had conquered England. For centuries French was the official language of Norman-conquered England, before it blended with Saxon and became English. This, however, was the second-Norman metamorphosis, because they were originally Norwegians who had lost their idiom while they were living in Normandy. Nor were the Bulgars Slavs, but Turk-Tartars unable to impose their language on the people in the Eastern Balkans.<sup>27</sup> Thus Bulgar is a Slavic language although with a partly Illyrian grammar. (The original Bulgars came from the upper Volga river in N. E. Russia where one can find in Bolgary the ruins of their ancient capital.)

The Ottoman Turks were “luckier.” Originally a “yellow race” like their bloodbrothers in Central Asia (the Tartars, Turkmens, Kazakhs, Kirghizes), they converted to Islam, conquered Asia Minor and imposed their language and faith on the (partly Greek) inhabitants. The Turks like the Magyars lost their “Oriental” features but they still speak a Ural Altaic idiom closely akin to that spoken in Tashkent, Smarkand and Bukhara <sup>28</sup>. Today, thanks to the melting pot of Anatolia, “Turks from Turkey” look very much like other Mediterraneans.

When they conquered Hungary in 896, the Hungarians (Magyars) were Finno-Ugrians with a Turk-Tartar upper class and distinctly “Oriental” features.<sup>29</sup> They were, however, numerous enough to impose their language on the inhabitants of the Danubian basin surrounded by the Carpathians. As long as they remained pagans, the Hungarians terrified all of Europe because their raids extended to almost every nook and cranny of the Continent. They thoroughly changed their character when, in the 10th century, they embraced Western Christianity. Their ruling family, the Arpadians, then produced a whole crop of Saints, a unique feat in Christian history: Saint Stephen, his son Saint Imre<sup>30</sup>, Saint Ladislav, Saint Elizabeth, Saint Margit, Blessed Kinga. (Even Saint Margaret of Scotland, who was a granddaughter of St. Stephen, grew up in Hungary.) This shows clearly that religion is a more powerful element than race. After all, only religion gives an answer to the questions of wherefrom, whereto, how and why.

Ethnicism is legitimate if it stands for the enjoyment of one’s language and local culture. Both are “personality-building.” I am a Tyrolean by choice (and a Styrian by birth); I am enjoying the Alpine scenery

and culture, but I also love to travel and to enjoy other cultures, languages, music, architecture, plants and climates. Ethnicism (which in German is called *Nationalismus*) can be a real evil when it becomes an obsession and a mania to denationalize other ethnic groups (usually minorities) or to expel them from their homes. Grillparzer, Austria's great classic poet, has described all this in an (untranslatable) aphorism: "Our evolution goes from humanism over nationalism to bestialism." He sensed this 140 years ago. As a matter of fact, ethnicism has historically done more evil than even racism<sup>31</sup> which became an issue only with the rise of Darwinism toward the end of the 19th century, when biology entered the scene. Christian Anti-Judaism had petered out by the early 19th century. It had a purely religious character and was based on a fatal misreading and misunderstanding of the New Testament.<sup>32</sup> Biologism, however, brought an entirely new disease with a clearly anti-Christian character which resulted in genuine horrors. When Heinrich Heine became a Christian 140 years ago, he could say that his baptismal certificate was his entrance ticket to Christian society, but the racist National-Socialists, heirs of the French Revolution, established a neo-pagan society hell-bent on genocide.

What is called "nationality" in Britain is a purely legal status. Its correct name should be "citizenship." While a person's race can never be changed—and his ethnicity only in childhood or adolescence—citizenship can be dropped and acquired in various ways. Any child born in America or Britain automatically gets the citizenship of his country of birth on the basis of the *ius soli*, which is unknown in the heart of Europe. Continental law, on the other hand, automatically gives to a woman the citizenship of the man she marries. (The French have a curious intermediary regulation: the offspring of a third consecutive generation born in France becomes French by law.) The foreigner who acquires citizenship in the United States or wants to become a British subject goes through various steps and finally affirms his or her loyalty with a solemn oath.

To my knowledge, this is not done in the majority of Continental countries.<sup>33</sup> It is, after all, obviously a step binding a person's conscience. The state expects loyalty from its citizens and they should be able to count on the state's protection. If a country or part of a country is annexed by another country, the inhabitants are usually given the choice to accept the new political authority—or to reject it.

The latter might or might not be connected with emigration. Today, however, it has become the barbaric custom to expel huge autochthonous populations.

**W**hat we see are three different human situations which may or may not harmonize. The Swiss, for instance, are nearly all “Caucasians,” Indo-Europeans, Christians, and, largely Swiss citizens.<sup>34</sup> Looked at more closely, they are not all “white,” but can be divided into Germans, French, Italians and Rheto-Romans (conversant in 4-5 branches of that language). They are united by a bond of patriotism, but not of ethnicism. They feel Swiss before they feel politically anything else.

The Belgians, too, are united only by patriotic, not ethnic feelings. Some of them are Flemings, others are Walloons, and a few are Germans. They also have a common King who belongs to the international breed of monarchs with foreign mother, foreign wives, foreign brothers and foreign sisters-in-law. Even the family of the monarch in the male line is almost always of foreign origin.

What about a Navaho living in Arizona? Racially he will be an “Amerindian,” ethnically a Navaho (not an “Allindian”!), legally a U.S. citizen and we can hope that he will be as loyal to his tribe (“nation”) as he is to the United States of America. Yet what about a country like the Ivory Coast? Of course, its inhabitants are racially black African. Ethnically the Ivorians are still divided by a variety of local dialects and idioms, yet their education is French and an increasing number of “Ivorians” speak French at home. In other words, these people are slowly becoming French ethnically. In Abidjan many people go at noon to the main square waiting for the arrival of the morning papers from Paris. Some day the French language, customs, notions and even faith may completely prevail. Indeed, the Ivorians are now building the biggest Catholic church in the world, larger than St. Peter’s in Rome.

Language is important: languages are the rails on which our thoughts move. Had Heidegger grown up in France, he could not have produced the famous Heideggerian philosophy which we know, but possibly another one. For his form of existentialism he needed the pliable German language.

Race and ethnicity demand tolerance and even something more than tolerance: a delight in variety, in multiformity. Only small minds caught up in a deadening uniformity are apt to ask of other



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nations and races: "Why, oh why, can't they be as we are?" The answer to this question is a phrase we can read in the novel *The Conspiracy of the Carpenters* by Hermann Borchardt, the great German conservative author who became an American: "We believe that equality is of the devil, and the Lord our God delights in multiplicity."<sup>35</sup>

### NOTES

1. My father was one of the pioneers of radium and x-ray treatments. My mother, without any physical or medical knowledge, saw the enormous dangers. Her words of warning are still ringing in my brain. She was terribly right—and my father ridiculed her fears. He died as a result of his research work.
2. Cf. Georg Simmel, *Philosophische Kultur* (Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1923), p. 83-84.
3. Goethe's love at the age of 74 for Ulrike von Levetzow (whom he wanted to marry although she was only 19 years old) enriched him very much. This was his final great emotion.
4. It provides them with a bird's-eye view of a theme, but to a person without imagination even an over-all view is no help.
5. As professor Mel Bradford (University of Dallas) has rightly pointed out, the passage referring to equality in the Declaration of Independence (which is an American Declaration of Independence and not a World Revolutionary Document!) merely emphasizes the fact that the Americans are not inferior to the British who have no right to rule over them. This document, after all, was signed by many a slaveholder.
6. R. L. Bruckberger O.P. has rightly pointed out that the New Testament is a document of human inequality.
7. The vast majority of Central Africans are brown: real "blacks" are a small minority. This term applied to Americans of mixed ancestry is a rather silly one. Only 4 percent of Americans referred to as "Blacks" are pure-blooded Africans.
8. Alcoholism, however, has a very strong racial (and not ethnic) correlation. Alcoholism is rare among the "Mediterraneans," frequent among Nordics. (This has nothing to do with climate). Scandinavian skippers like Spanish sailors, as they are very rarely alcoholics. Red Indians easily become alcoholics, but the Japanese, who get drunk easily, do not. Alcoholism in an "intermediary" country like Austria is distinctly a disease of the lower classes, but not in Britain, Prussia, or Scandinavia.
9. The *Cassa* is like a Reconstruction agency for the Italian south.
10. The U.S. immigration laws of 1921 and 1924 worked against the "dirty-white immigration." The Po River was designed as a border between North and South Italy, which is like choosing the Massachusetts-Connecticut border as a border of the American South. Yet the Italian South is the homeland of great saints, great artists, great thinkers. One hundred years ago Naples was the largest Italian city.
11. Yet today among modern biologists we find a real rebellion against the Darwinian explanation of evolution. Man, as Lecomte de Nouy has shown us, is not an accident. Konrad Lorenz, Nobel-prize laureate and a professed Darwinist, was unable to explain the fur of the sloth with Darwinian principles. (Lecomte du Nouy saw man "pre-programmed" by God.)
12. There is, actually, among the Japanese, but not among the Chinese, a "Caucasoid" strain. The original population of Japan was "white"—the "hairy Ainus" (who are not hairier than we are.) Their origin is a riddle. The hair of Japanese babies in their first months is dark brown rather than black and I have known pure-blooded Japanese who were perfectly white.
13. The term "Caucasian" is, naturally, quite silly. There is not the slightest reason to believe that the Indo-Europeans came from the Caucasus, where the oldest known populations are non Indo-European.
14. The Colored in South Africa are a mixture of Dutch, (yellow) Paleo-Africans and a few Malays. Today, politically emancipated, they claim to be the "real South Africans." Ethnically-culturally they are more or less Dutch.
15. Henry Kissinger, as a recipient of the Charlemagne Prize in Aachen, delivered a magnificent, conservative speech in flawless German. One has to bear in mind that after Chinese, the correct English (British or American) accent is the most difficult among the important languages.
16. As a rule he is a BASP, a Brown Anglo-Saxon Protestant. Whereas the South African *Kleurde*

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is very conscious of his part-Dutch ancestry, the American "Black" had been driven artificially into some sort of African romanticism. (In Brazil the *moreno* is always distinguished from the *preto*.)

17. And more than that. I last talked to him three weeks before his death in Beverly Hills. He was convinced of every tenet of the Catholic faith, but insisted (quite irrationally) that Hebrews should not approach the baptismal font. (This can also be found in his writings.)

18. Freud, although an atheist, has been very much misunderstood. He was politically right of center, opposed promiscuity, praised Christianity for its ascetic qualities, saw in Woodrow Wilson a fool and a criminal, insisted that all great cultures rest on repression, feared the rule of the masses, and was afraid that his theories (good for cultural analysis and education) might fall into the hands of doctors. (Vide the revelations of Bruno Bettelheim.) Religion always "worried" his soul. (In the English translation the German word *Seele*—soul—has been changed into "psyche.")

19. In that Revolution, people were persecuted who looked and behaved differently—as the nobility, the Jews and the Alsations did. The latter spoke German and not "the republican language" (French). Proposals were made to take away their children, to settle them family by family in French villages and, finally, as the simplest solution to this problem, to guillotine them all. When Robespierre fell, two of his plans were not carried out: to destroy all church spires as "undemocratic" and to put all Frenchmen into one uniform and all Frenchwomen into another. Equality is the brother of Identity!

20. Poland was the most liberal country in ancient Europe. It had a parliament, the *Sejm*. In this body all decisions had to be made *unanimously*. Majorities and minorities did not come into play. (The fact that this system was suicidal is another matter.)

21. These three nations, ethnically very mixed, have a slight Catholic majority; nearly half are Lutherans. They are proud little nations, Lithuania with a very ancient history. Lithuania and Eastern Latvia are culturally Polish; the rest of Latvia and Estonia are German (and a bit Scandinavian).

22. A number of her books were also published in America. She was a woman of genius. (Besides her books on Mary Ward and Theresa of Lisieux, she wrote a splendid book *Between the Times*.)

23. From Pierleone, brother of the Counter-Pope, Anaclet II, the "Pope from the Ghetto" and from Fatimah, Mohammed's daughter. A Moroccan Prince, descendant of Mohammed who fell into Castilian captivity, became a Christian and intermarried with European royalty.

24. One finds these details in the excellent book *Das Geheimnis des Bluts* (Vienna-Leipzig: Reinhold; 1932) by Otto Forst de Battaglia.

25. The pre-Celtic population of the British Isles (The Stone-Henge-people) was probably non-Indo-European and *perhaps* related to the Basques; they were short and dark haired.

26. This great writer and master of the English language was a Polish nobleman with the original name of Józef Korzeniowski. (He never lost his Polish accent!)

27. Among them one finds occasionally the "Mongol Spot," a small spot of darkish pigmentation over the lower part of the spine. It appears before birth, but usually disappears in childhood.

28. An intelligent Turk from Istanbul is still able to converse with a Yakut living in North-Eastern Siberia. The Turk-Tartar language family (with iron-clad grammatical rules) shows few variations.

29. An Austrian bishop on the crusade was amazed that God had given to such a strange looking people such a fertile land. (I am putting Oriental in quotes since outside of the United States this term is used for countries and people in the Near East; Damascus is in the Near East or Orient.)

30. Imre was translated into German as Emmerich, then into Italian as Amerigo—from which (through Amerigo Vespucci) America derives its name!

31. Racism is the child of Darwinism (in Germany through Darwin's disciple Ernst Haeckel), but much of German racism was inspired by American authors—Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard. (Stoddard, whom I visited, disagreed, however, with the National Socialists.) Cf. also Albert Jay Nock, "The Jewish Problem in America," *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 1941.

32. The Church identified the "Jews" with the *Ioudaioi*, the Judeans, just one tribe of the Israelites (or Hebrews). Christ was a Judean by descent but a Galilean by upbringing. Among the Apostles probably only Judas was a Judean, the rest Galileans. See Acts, 2:7 and especially St. Paul in 2 Corinthians, 2:22-24 and Philippians, 3:4-5. He considered himself to be an Israelite, a Hebrew of the tribe of Benjamin—but not a Judean. Still, the Church was never "racist." Jews who converted in old Poland were automatically nobilitated. Antisemitism, which, after an interlude of tolerance, replaced Anti-Judaism, and led finally to Auschwitz had not a religious, but a "biologistic" outlook. Cf. Daniel Gasman, *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Eric Haeckel and the German Monist League* (London: Macdonald, 1971.)

33. A friend who applied for French citizenship was one day congratulated by an acquaintance for getting it. He was surprised, because he had only just applied. Yet the other man had read it in the *Moniteur Officiel*. A week passed, then he received a postcard which told him to come to the *Mairie*, the local townhall, the "receive information important to you." He went there and then

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someone handed him several papers, held together by a rubber band. Among them was his citizenship-certificate—no oaths, no ceremony! In Britain the public is informed of the impending grant of somebody's honor to become a British subject and invited to give information if there might be an impediment—all similar to a marriage ban. Then an oath is required and loyalty to the ruler is sworn.

34. In Switzerland there are many foreigners, mostly guest-workers. The citizenship is not given by the Federation, but by a community. It is called the *bourgeoisie* (*Bürgerschaft*). It can be reinvoked after a lapse of many generations on the male line.

35. This brilliant novel was published with a preface by Franz Werfel in 1943 in New York by Simon & Schuster.

## APPENDIX A

*[The following article first appeared as an "Ombudsman" column in the Washington Post on May 6, 1990, and is reprinted here with permission (©The Washington Post, 1990).]*

### **A Weekend in April**

*Richard Harwood*

As the political nannies of the age, newspapers forever preach civic duty to the citizenry: End apathy! Grapple with the day's great issues! Care! Get off that couch!

The Post can nanny with the best of them and often puts its newsprint and manpower where its mouth is. Witness its "Earth Day 1990" performance: 56 stories during a period of several weeks, 77 columns of space, 42 authors, 44 pictures and drawings and the direct involvement of the main news sections, the Style section, the Financial section, the Thursday Weeklies, Outlook, the editorial and opposite-editorial pages and Book World.

One may safely deduce from all this that the newsroom directorate made a value judgment that the Earth is endangered and in need of saving, that the "Earth Day" rally of April 22 would be a significant event on the road to salvation, that The Post should get involved and provide substantial promotional support: "free media," as the politicians put it. The rally was declared a success. Park police estimated the crowd at 125,000 people, although the organizers claimed 350,000.

Six days later another rally was staged in Washington, this one designed to save what its sponsors believe to be an endangered species: "unborn babies" or "fetuses," as the case may be. Their aim is to halt the 1.5 million legal abortions performed in the United States each year. This "civic action" event stirred no juices at The Post. Many editors were unaware it was taking place. The coverage consisted of a 13-inch story and two photographs on the first page of section "C." The rally was declared a success. The Park police estimated the crowd at 200,000, although the organizers claimed 500,000 or more.

The Post's trivialization of this demonstration was, to many of the participants, the ultimate and undeniable proof of the paper's "bias" on the abortion issue. A year ago when "pro-choice" forces rallied in Washington—125,000 by Park police estimates—The Post "nannied" the event, devoting to it a dozen stories, more than 15 columns of space and a few marchers as well. It was treated on the front page as the leading story of the day.

There can be no serious debate about the existence of "biases" in American newsrooms. Journalists are opinionated people. Most of them are pigeonholed fairly by the social scientists as "liberal Democrats." But that, in the view of some of us, is less of a problem in the presentation of news than the "biases" we carry around as members of a social class whose magnetic pole is the metropolitan East Coast and whose residence is inside the Washington Beltway.

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This larger “bias” explains better than any attitudes on abortion The Post’s embarrassing performance in the coverage of last week’s rally. Other newspapers, staffed with our ideological brethren, treated the rally on their front pages as a newsworthy national event—The New York *Times*, the Los Angeles *Times* and the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, for example.

Leonard Downie, The Post’s managing editor, recalls that in the weeks leading up to last year’s “pro-choice” assembly there was a pervasive awareness of that event among editors and reporters here: people in the newsroom, many of our relatives and many of our friends were geared up to participate. Like “Earth Day 1990,” it was an “in” thing to do.

But a week ago Friday, a day before the antiabortion rally, the subject was not even mentioned at Mr. Downie’s regular meeting on weekend coverage plans. Journalists here, he thinks, not only are not part of the antiabortion movement but don’t know anyone who is. The movement is seen as one of those “fundamentalist,” “fringe” things somewhere out there in Middle America or Dixie. Those are not the circles in which we travel or from which we draw intellectual nourishment. As one of last weekend’s editors put it: “I didn’t even know this was anything important.” Others took the position—with which I often sympathize—that demonstrations, per se, are so commonplace they have gotten to be boring, but you can’t be selectively bored.

This affair has left a blot on the paper’s professional reputation. Out of a sense of guilt, it has subsequently misplayed a couple of stories relating to the abortion struggle. It has angered many readers and has been driven into a defensive crouch. That’s what a weekend’s shabby work will get you. It’s not worth the price.

## APPENDIX B

[*Mr. Paul Johnson, author of the widely-praised Modern Times and many other books, writes a regular "media" column for the London Spectator. The following column ran in the June 23, 1990 issue, and is reprinted with permission (©The Spectator, 1990).*]

### Couldn't Happen Here, Could It?

*Paul Johnson*

What is the outstanding under-covered news story in Britain today? I can give it to you in one word: abortion. You can't say the same of the United States. There, it is true, powerful newspapers would like to hush things up and their treatment of the issue is certainly one-sided, but they are forced to cover it by the sheer intensity of the public debate. In fact it is probably now the biggest issue in American politics. And rightly so, for with the end of the Cold War it is, perhaps, the most important battle being waged about the nature of our civilisation. Last week Cardinal O'Connor of New York gave the debate new impetus by arguing, in a 20,000-word article in his diocesan journal, that it might be necessary to excommunicate Catholics who are not only "perceived as treating church teaching on abortion with contempt" but support pro-abortion legislation and help to make taxpayers' money available for acts the Church condemns as wicked.

One of the offenders the Cardinal has in mind, I dare say, is Governor Cuomo of New York State. The *London Times* describes him as a "devout" Catholic. I don't know why. This is the politician who refused to condemn the homosexual-abortionists' demo in St. Patrick's Cathedral in which a consecrated host was desecrated—he thought it might lose him votes—and supports the public funding of pregnancy-terminations. Operators like Cuomo have hitherto traded on their religious status to corral the Catholic vote while feeling free to ignore their Church in fishing for the suffrages of anyone else. The Cardinal rightly reminds them that Catholicism is not about political horse-trading but about truth, faith and morals and that the Church has the duty to expel those who reject its beliefs. Needless to say, in the United States telling the blunt, awful truth in public is a rare event and what the Cardinal said has excited fearful cries of rage, fear and pain among the hedonistic multitudes of the City of Gotham. He has already been accused of seeking to revive the Spanish Inquisition.

Over here there is no such ecclesiastical prince as O'Connor to take on the massed battalions of the modern world. The Anglican Church has long since thrown in the sponge over abortion and related issues. When the question of the morality of research on human embryos—unborn children—came up in the House of Lords recently, only six of the 25 bishops who sit in there even bothered to vote and they divided four-to-two. The latest Anglican pronouncement, by the Bishop of Gloucester, was that abortion is "a grave

moral evil” but permissible if the circumstances are difficult. If “progressive” opinion moves in favour of infanticide (by no means impossible the way things are going), will Anglican prelates soon be trudging concernedly behind it? The Catholic bishops have so far stood firm against the slaughter of unborn life but they lack an outstanding leader who can make his voice heard and heeded.

Meanwhile the media dodges the issue. As the Catholic Bishop of Middlesborough pointed out in a letter to the *Times* last Saturday, the public has been given the impression that abortions can now be performed legally only up to the 24th week of pregnancy, whereas in fact the amendments recently passed to the Embryology Bill will have the consequence of allowing such operations right up to birth in a range of cases. The abortion industry has been given a green light to do, in effect, what it wills. A fully formed child can be ripped from its mother’s womb, screaming and gasping for breath, and then coldly butchered on the waiting slab by men and women—“specialists”—whose sole job in life is performing such lawful operations.

The horrors and details of the abortion industry have never, so far as I know, been fully exposed either in the press or on television. What, exactly, goes on inside an abortion clinic? How does the money change hands, and who gets paid what? What does a skilled, professional, legal abortionist earn in a year? Is it true that the speed at which abortions are performed varies enormously, and that some doctors—using drastic methods—can get through many more than their squeamish colleagues, and earn more accordingly? How many unborn children does a really top-notch quick-kill abortionist rid the world of in a year, and what is his income likely to be? Is it true that a fast, hard-working abortionist can dispose of more living human creatures during his career than the late Dr. Eichmann? Then again, how exactly does the killing take place? Is it true that many of these unborn children scream with pain and fear as they are assaulted? What happens to their bodies? Are they buried or incinerated? What efforts are made by the authorities to inspect these institutions and ensure that they observe the law, such as it is? Have there been any prosecutions for infringements? And what about the profits—where do they go? What are the relations between the abortion industry and MPs who support its interests in the Commons? Are all those politicians who vote for easier abortions solely concerned, as they claim, for the “rights” of the mother who wants to get rid of her unwanted child?

These are some of the questions—there are plenty more—that are not only not answered but seldom even asked by the media. We all know that the issue is a difficult one, and that immensely powerful arguments can be ranged on both sides. But silence plays into the hands of those who run the institutions which, ceaselessly, day after day, week after week, year after year, are processing the innocent unborn. I think a great many people are vaguely uneasy about the issue: they know there is something wrong, that things are taking place in this country which they ought not to condone and which, if brought into the

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light of day, would compel the public to rise up in wrath and say, "These things must cease." But they still their consciences by averting their gaze and the media makes this cowardice possible by itself turning the other way. Thus did the Germans permit the death-camps to function; they too operated round the clock, year after year, while people who considered themselves decent human beings tried not to know about their existence. But at least the Germans could argue that the media was government-controlled, the Gestapo was everywhere and that those who spoke out would end up in the camps themselves. We have no such excuse.



## APPENDIX C

[The following article appeared as an "On Society" column in the magazine U.S. News and World Report on August 6, 1990, and is reprinted here with permission of the author.]

### The abortion protesters and the police

*John Leo*

After people from Operation Rescue invade and occupy an abortion clinic, they frequently protest about police brutality. These complaints are almost never taken seriously. Op-R is a pariah group, shunned even by the National Right to Life Committee. Its members are instructed to turn each "rescue" into a media event, so journalists, who are generally unsympathetic in the first place, tend to assume that cries about brutal treatment are just part of the show. In Pittsburgh, for instance, female protesters said they were stripped, fondled and kicked between legs, but reporters didn't believe it, so nothing much came of the complaints.

This column is about allegations of a truly brutal police response to an Operation Rescue blitz. I interviewed 17 of the 261 arrested at the Summit Women's Center in West Hartford, Conn., on June 17, 1989. Here are three of their voices.

□ Lillian Loughlin, mother of 12, grandmother of 3, was at a peaceful anti-abortion picket outside: "I noticed that the police officers had all removed their badges and name tags. I asked one, 'Where are your badges?' But all I got was stony silence. A minute later, we heard a bullhorn. The police wanted us to move to an outside sidewalk farther away. We turned to walk where they wanted us to, but I guess we weren't moving fast enough. I was shoved ruthlessly from behind with a riot stick and knocked to the ground flat on my stomach. My husband came up and said 'Hey, get off my wife.' Three policemen jumped him and put him in handcuffs. Someone straddled me from behind and took my hands, one at a time, and twisted them violently behind me. I screamed in pain. This wasn't part of handcuffing me. He did it to inflict pain. I got a glimpse of him, and it was the same policeman I had asked about the badges. It was not just him. There were other sadists, too. They were banging people against the iron seat railings as they went down the aisle. They dragged me off the bus and threw me on the floor of the station. I was in shock and pain and trying to get myself under control. I was dragged into another room and left there face down for a half-hour or so. One of the other prisoners said, 'Your hands—they're all purple.' They had swollen to twice their normal size, and I thought they were broken. It turned out later that they weren't but my doctor said the tissue damage was as serious as a break. I was in terrible pain, and an officer said, 'Stop faking.' Finally, they booked me and pushed me out a side door, gently this time, and I sat down on the grass trying to figure out what had happened. Finally, a stranger came along and helped me up. They

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never gave my husband his medicine for high blood pressure, and he never got his glasses back. That's \$125, and we had to get a ride home because he couldn't see. Then I got a registered letter naming me as a conspirator in a RICO suit filed by West Hartford against Operation Rescue. Why am I a racketeer? I didn't break any laws. I gave my name, moved along when they said and cooperated in every way. I come from a police family. My father and two brothers were New York City cops. I never believed it when blacks and protesters yelled police brutality. Now, I'm inclined to listen."

■ Dean Gavaris, a born-again Christian from New Jersey, was one of those who occupied the clinic: "At the courthouse, one woman was dragged along the floor by her hair. A police officer kicked a handcuffed man hard in the ribs, for no reason, right in front of the judge, and the judge made him stop. A half-hour after the judge started, I heard terrible screaming. I remembered that sound for weeks on end. They were bringing people down some steps into the court behind the judge, and the bodies coming down sounded like basketballs thumping downstairs. These people were in bad shape. One of them was a priest. His face was totally black, with marks all over. They had roughed him up pretty good. They cut one guy's jacket open to see if he'd had a heart attack, but it was just his shoulder in agony from the pain holds. Another guy flipped out. He didn't know where he was or who he was. If he was acting, he deserved an Oscar. But he wasn't acting. His eyeballs were rolling around in his head.

"At Enfield State Prison, a guard accidentally scratched my eye. The injury was pretty serious, a torn cornea, so they sent me out of the prison three times to see an ophthalmologist. I was manacled hand and foot for 2 hours each time. The way they did it, with my arms crossed in front of my body, it hurt my shoulder more than ever. They never did treat the shoulder. A doctor said it was some sort of deep shoulder pain that would go away in three weeks. But it's still here. Thirteen months later and I still can't lift my arm without pain. I can't even throw a soccer ball to my kid."

■ Catherine Jersey, typesetter for a weekly paper in Washingtonville, N.Y.: "I was hurt in the April 1 rescue, but it was only nerve damage to my wrists. My friend Bill Waugh has it worse. His right wrist and forearm constantly go into spasms because of what they did to him. But mine was mild. It hurts when it rains or when the air conditioning is on, and I have trouble wearing a watch, but it's nothing to complain about. But on June 17, they really hurt me. A policeman said, 'Oh, here's the one with the bad heart.' On April 1, I had told them I had a heart problem, and he remembered me. They pounced on me, cuffed me from behind and raised me up with one riot stick under my arms and another under my abdomen. I started to hemorrhage. There was severe bleeding, and I was held three days with no medical attention. In the courtroom, I was going to give my name and make bail but I got angry. I figured they should pay the medical bills. I showed the judge my clothes all covered with

blood, and demanded medical care. They took me to Niantic Prison, and I ended up having a D & C. There was gynecological damage, and I still have problems.”

Genuine tones. There are many such horror stories. Diane Holland, an epileptic, says she warned police for hours that her shoulder pain and lack of sleep were likely to bring on a seizure if her husband, a minister, was not allowed in with her medication. Later, she was rushed to a hospital after apparently suffering two grand-mal seizures. One or two tales, featuring improbably time-consuming and bizarre cruelty, were hard to believe. But many of the stories I heard seemed genuine. There are internal touches that help induce belief. Loughlin says she is not a frail grandmother-martyr but a robust woman of 64. Jersey describes her April 1 damage as nothing to complain about. And the medical records of both are consistent with their accounts. Jersey’s physician, Bernard Nathanson, a well-known pro-life gynecologist, confirms that she had menstrual disruption and alarming bleeding leading to a D&C within a few days after her release.

But there is another side. West Hartford Police Chief Robert McCue says Lillian Loughlin was part of a crowd that refused to move after twenty minutes of warnings and was pressing back against police at the time of the arrests. Police say that the priest with the allegedly blackened face—the Rev. Norman Weslin—simply suffered a facial bruise during arrest by flailing about, holding onto furniture and other protesters when everyone else simply went limp. The chief says he thinks Holland faked the seizures and adds that the police cannot allow an unidentified man to supply unmarked medicine for a prisoner who refuses to give her name. The other stories, he says, are either false or colorfully embroidered to attract press sympathy.

In the absence of disinterested witnesses, some things are almost impossible to sort out. Take the strappado, Operation Rescue’s name for a dangerous and very painful hold formed by two policemen crossing and raising their nightsticks under wrists cuffed from behind. Is this an intentional and common hold, as Op-R maintains, or is it a position rescuers slump down into for the benefit of photographers and reporters, as the police allege?

The police videotape shows officers yanking quite hard on plastic cuffs that seem quite tight enough, but the police say that many of the rescuers had coated their wrists with maple syrup and raw eggs to make cuffing difficult. The tape shows no instances of horrible mistreatment, but a good deal of kneeling on the backs and heads of people who were offering no resistance, simply going limp. At one point an arrested man asks, “Who is the arresting officer?” And Chief McCue responds, “One of them is the guy with his knee on your chin . . .” and then gives his name as the person to be sued. He now says that this comment was an attempt to lighten a tense situation with humor.

Police were under a great deal of pressure, dealing with rescuers to shut down

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a clinic for the day and to flood and perhaps break the criminal-justice system. Many policemen clearly expressed concern about avoiding injuries. But not everything went by the book. Badges and name tags came off. Cameras and onlookers were seized and film exposed. One woman said a cop produced a clipper and cut the strap of her video camera, causing it to break on the ground. Out-of-town reporters who had no connection with the invasion were arrested. Protesters were left for hours in painful plastic cuffs that tighten with movement and tend to cut off circulation. For at least two days, those arrested were not allowed phone calls or access to attorneys. Gavaris says he was allowed his first phone call on the fifth day and used it to tell his wife where he was. When they were finally arraigned on the third day, the courtroom was closed to the public, and police were allowed to use pain holds on prisoners right in front of one judge, though another judge sharply forbade it.

**Local Praise.** As often happens after disputed police performances, the West Hartford Town Council passed a resolution praising the police for their actions, and the local newspaper, the *Hartford Courant*, ran an editorial hailing police for their professionalism and restraint.

Beyond the dispute over the facts of what happened in West Hartford, there is the policy issue of whether pain-compliance holds should be used on nonviolent passive resisters. Operation Rescue is not popular, and I think its tactics breed anger, polarization and disrespect for the law. But remember that the structure of an Op-R occupation is very much like that of a civil-rights sit-in. Would we want pain holds on Martin Luther King, or would we shout about on-the-spot torture doled out to stop an unpopular political movement by extralegal means?

Pain holds were invented to cope with dangerous criminals resisting arrest. Under the law, going limp constitutes resistance, so police are free to twist and bend body parts painfully to get arrestees to come along. But it's a dubious technique, ignored by many departments, which simply cart protesters off or put them on stretchers.

Larry Williams, a reporter for the *Hartford Courant*, says he went to the police academy in Meriden and asked an instructor to show him a pain hold. "The instructor put my arm behind my back and twisted it a little bit, and I was in agony. I would have walked off a cliff to avoid that kind of pain. But that was only the barest hint of what they gave people at the clinic. If my arm was sore for two days after a little demonstration twist, I can believe that those people are still feeling the effects a year later."

My own feeling is that yearlong pain should not be part of the arrest of nonviolent protesters, particularly political ones. Punishment should come from the courts, not the cops. This is not a banana republic. This is America.

## APPENDIX D

[The following column appeared in the *Washington Times* (September 6, 1990) and is reprinted here with the author's permission.]

### When the bugle calls mommy

Suzanne Fields

*Pregnant women should be given free prenatal care, free day care, 10,000-day paid maternity leave, Medicare, Medicaid, and daily home visits by the Surgeon general of the United States. To combat sexism, pregnant men should be given the same things.*

—P.J. O'Rourke, "Modern Manners"

It's hard to write satire any more. You can't be sure Mr. O'Rourke is kidding until you get to the part about pregnant men. And even then you'll have to read it twice to make sure.

Modern child care is considerably easier to satirize than to take seriously. But we're making an incredible mistake as a society if we continue to separate rhetoric from reality.

Consider the children of the military as Exhibit No. 1 (and No. 2, No. 3 and No. 4). It's bad enough that a lot of the kids have to say goodbye to daddies called by President Bush to the sands of Araby. But what about the children who have to say goodbye to mommies, too?

"Shortly after President Bush announced that he would activate reserve military forces, Air Force reservist Jane Probst called her parents," reported *The Washington Post*. "Not to say goodbye or to allay their fears about a daughter facing active duty, but to ask a favor: Could one of you baby-sit?"

Mrs. Probst is not alone. Thousands of reservists are looking to take care of personal business quickly, to be able to ship out with only 24 hours notice. But when Mom is the soldier activated, the personal business is a question of a child's psychological security.

Who will take care of the children? And when both parents are called up, the care for children is doubly troubling.

"They should have been planning for this from the moment they said, 'Yes, I'll be a reservist,'" says Lt. Cmdr. Michael Smith, a spokesman for the Defense Department and himself a member of the reserves.

Yes, but we should have been planning for the chaos wreaked upon children from the moment we said, "Yes, Mommy, you can be a reservist, too, just like Daddy."

The policy rhetoric which supports Mommies—and Mommies and Daddies from the same family—in the service doesn't look ahead to the consequences for the children. So much that is said on behalf of equal rights for women ignores the reality that babies need equal rights, too. The single-issue feminists who are critical of women "shipping out" argue not that there are better things

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for Mommy to do at home with her children, but rage that the government isn't furnishing better day care for the mommy-soldiers.

Kenneth McDowell is a Washington banker whose wife, a nurse at Bethesda Naval Hospital, left for the Middle East aboard the USS Comfort, a hospital ship. Their year-old daughter Caitlin was left in the care of the child's father. But Mr. McDowell works long hours and has a long commute. He's grateful that his daughter's part-time babysitter can keep her most of the time.

"My daughter is spending 10 to 11 hours a day at the sitter's," he says. "It is a stressful situation for me." But does anyone think how stressful it is for Caitlin, whose first sentence was "Mama, bye-bye"?

Women have throughout our history done what's required of them, and much more, for the good of family and country. But women have never before been so mercenary—or more encouraged by their men to be mercenary—as to seek "rights" at the expense of their children.

A society that sends mommies off to participate in a war when there is no actual military need to do so is a society that devalues its children. Women and children were not so long ago exactly what men went to war to defend, and fought to come home to. Now children are readily abandoned to the care of others when the bugle blows to call their mothers to more important tasks, like driving a truck or unloading an airplane.

We've lost sight of the home truth that women and men are different, that their equality is expressed in different ways. If women cannot bear and nurture healthy children, who can?

How can it be possible that we have come to so cheerfully sacrifice a child's right to a sense of well-being, just to protect a woman's whim to prove that she can make war as efficiently as a man? A child is singularly unimpressed by the stripes on his mother's sleeve, but yearns for a tender word and a mother's touch to assuage awesome fears when grown-ups go off to war. A child worries only about what's going to happen next to him.

Why should we deliberately magnify these childish terrors?

## APPENDIX E

[The following excerpts are from a letter to the editor that we found unusually interesting, and which we think our readers may enjoy as well. Stella Morabito lives in Cheverly, Maryland.—Ed.]

### A Reader Writes . . .

*Stella Morabito*

I think the main reason I find your journal so exciting is that it really compels the reader to be honest about life and its meaning. I don't think most people realize how far-reaching and powerful the ramifications of the abortion debate are. Even though I have always understood abortion to be wrong, only lately have I been able to focus clearly on the many reasons why. I guess the deceptive rhetoric of pro-abortion forces must have had some effect upon me because it's taken me a long time to understand that pro-abortion arguments actually have little to do with equality or control over one's body or reproductive freedom or even about women. It's actually about giving up on all of those things, isn't it? Choice really means deciding whether to ignore or to ridicule suggestions that the compromise of the unborn will lead to even greater sacrifices. Anyway, the *HLR* is such stimulating reading that I have to avoid it at night if I am to fall asleep easily.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the insightful article on Sun Tzu's *Art of War* and *Ms.* ["Thoughts of Sun Tzu," by Faith Abbott, Winter 1990]. (It's interesting that *Ms.* has recently decided to change its layout, isn't it? Looks like they're going for the hard-core image.) As I read the article, I pondered once again the mentality of pro-abortion advocates, population control enthusiasts, and like-minded types who have contorted the meaning of so much in the abortion debate. Lately, when I am subjected to their rhetoric, one thought keeps creeping into my consciousness: how utterly adolescent. I mean, doesn't Ehrenreich's appeal to the 25 million "beneficiaries" of *Roe v. Wade* have the ring of "Well, everybody else is doing it!"? While some may think that countering "life" with the term "choice" is a coup of sorts, it has a commercial tone to me. And I don't just mean an ad for hamburgers. It has the feel of: "selection, quality, choice, value . . ." as though it's an ad for a supermarket or car dealership. Then, I start thinking about their chants, the idolized movie stars, the peer pressure to avoid looking like "one of those pro-life nerds," and it all strikes me as insufferably juvenile. I liked Abbott's allusion to [C.S. Lewis's devil] Screwtape. He fits so well into all of this. He's always going to do his best to distract his patients from the truth by showing truth as stodgy and the lie as something that looks so

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good and feels so easy. It reminds me of something from a Billy Crystal routine: "It is better to look good than to feel good."

Of course, I'm talking on a gut-level now. I realize such talk is no way to influence anyone who'd feel offended by it. But am I correct, for the most part, in feeling this way? I certainly don't mean to badmouth teenagers. But there is no doubt in my mind that an adolescent (that is, a sophomoric or self-serving) mentality is ingrained in the pro-abortion culture. I guess I'm a little tired of the euphemism "liberal."

Sobran's article ("Death Comes to the *Style* Section," Winter 1990) left me with some of the same impressions. But I have to confess that after reading it, I felt somewhat at a loss for solutions. I'm not a "liberal" and I don't try to look like one. But I suppose my frequent decisions to remain silent on the issue imply "cowardice" which is caused possibly by the "fear of appearing not sufficiently progressive." (Peguy? I had to look him up.) But let me indulge in a rationalization. How might those of us who don't share Sobran's way with words speak out effectively to our hostile audience? His article serves as a nice decoder ring. I'd love to be able to speak out in *their* language, since they don't speak mine. Unfortunately, too many of their words and phrases are empty. How can one have any hope of carrying on a dialogue aimed at truth under such circumstances? I have occasionally attempted such dialogue. One attempt resulted in a total blowout. In the other situations I found myself able to do little more than try to disarm with a friendly little interrogation along Socratic lines. That predictably ends in some discomfort on the part of my interlocutor who changes the subject or just doesn't listen and doesn't answer a particularly sensitive question. I wonder how many people like me have strong visceral reactions against pro-abortion arguments, but have generally kept their mouths shut to avoid pointless emotional interchanges, or to save friendships and try not to lose the respect (for what it's worth) of their peers. Is it worth keeping the lines of communication open, even if for the time being they are one-sided? What might someone like Sobran prescribe for those of us who shrink from burning bridges, but who hope to eventually make a difference?

Anyhow, I have another matter I'd like to bring up. Do you know who I think is the most despicable in the whole pro-abortion culture? The men. The men who quietly sit back and smugly identify themselves as "feminists." Particularly the male movie stars and legislators who like to picture themselves as champions of women because they would give them a "choice." I don't understand why I don't see more criticism of these guys. I've never seen them treated as a focus of the debate. Is there a good reason for this? Or have I definitely been missing something? What about that "Feminists for Life" organization? Do they discuss men who blissfully evade



their responsibilities while reserving the right to treat women like dirt? They must. Especially when it comes to men who say they are “sensitive” to the “needs” of women because they’ll hold the woman’s hand at the clinic, foot the bill (it’s “the least” they can do), and all that garbage. Pro-abortion women don’t ever seem to mention those guys, do they? I finally figured out that it’s not in their interest to give men any responsibility because they may end up having to give them a say in the abortion decision. It just gets worse and worse doesn’t it? Actually, now I wonder who’s worse: these men or the women who deliberately let them get away with it?

An anecdote, if I may. Several years ago, a fellow student told me she had recently had an abortion. I don’t know why she had to tell me. We weren’t really close. My reaction at the time was a stunned, but not condemning, “Oh, no. How awful.” I really couldn’t say much else except that I was sorry. I let her talk. She went on about her big career opportunity, which involved an imminent and long-term trip abroad, and how she just couldn’t do it with “the baby.” I know that although I did not appear unsympathetic, she was looking for a certain kind of assurance and comfort that I could not offer. I just felt so bad about the whole business and didn’t know what to say. Even now I’m not sure how I would handle it. She cried and told me about her hours of prayer and her hope that God could forgive her. I know she felt disgusted and angry and hurt. And she was desperately looking for a way out of the guilt. But what I remember most vividly are her last words to me on the subject: “It really makes you hate men.”

I just don’t understand why this isn’t a bigger issue. What am I missing here? Are there laws in many states which discourage loathsome male behavior? Encourage it? I don’t know. I think the law in Wisconsin (and other states now?) which holds the parents of teenage boys financially responsible for their sons’ babies is a move in the right direction. They just have to learn that there are consequences involved in encouraging boys to sow their wild oats. I know the problem runs deeper—irresponsible advertising, the media, the “biological function” of the male, etc.—but isn’t it time people learn to respect one another as human beings? I’d love to see a change of focus in the abortion debate to the responsibilities of men. I suppose the following is pure fantasy: State legislators start introducing bills requiring counselors at abortion clinics to inform clients of their right to paternity support and the fact that they can get a court order to have the father tested for paternity. Maybe they throw in some co-legislation on withholding child support payments from the father’s paycheck. Who’s going to say this puts an undue burden upon the woman? Yes, many of the fathers are poor, paternity support is notoriously unenforceable, and it won’t stop

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most abortions. But, so what? Promoting this message is at least as important as the practical applications. Are feminists, and all pro-abortion women for that matter, really going to argue against the responsibility of men towards women who *choose* to have their babies, especially if the choice is informed? I suppose the sad truth is that they are. But they are backing themselves into a corner at the same time, aren't they?

I think the issue of male responsibility is too often sloughed off as legally ineffective. Naturally you don't read much about it in the mass media since it hints at what seems to be a positively archaic connection between responsibilities and rights. But it seems inevitable to me that the age-old problem of male irresponsibility is going to have to be addressed more thoroughly if we're ever to move towards mutual respect between the sexes. In fact, I think it wouldn't hurt in bringing about respect among all people. Isn't respect what this whole thing is about anyway? . . . .

Yours truly,

Stella Morabito

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**Special Notice:** we also have available copies of *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation* by President Ronald Reagan, which has been published in a hardcover book by Thomas Nelson Publishers. The book includes the complete text of the President's essay (which first appeared in the Spring, 1983, issue of this review). To order send \$7.95 per postpaid copy.

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# News

# Release...

## ***Human Life Review* features special section of Cardinal John O'Connor's 'Excommunication' statement plus Nat Hentoff on 'Changing the Odds' in The Abortion War and James Hitchcock on Archbishop Rembert Weakland**

New York City, Aug. 1: The new issue of the Human Life Review (Summer '90) features the text of New York Cardinal John J. O'Connor's controversial "23 Questions and Answers on Abortion."

The Cardinal's lengthy (some 15,000 words) statement made national headlines when the media zeroed in on his brief (63-word) discussion of the possibility of "excommunication" for Roman Catholic politicians who support abortion, describing it as a "threat" to New York Gov. Mario Cuomo and others.

In a related article, James Hitchcock, a well-known Catholic historian, describes the very different abortion statement, issued by Milwaukee Archbishop Rembert Weakland, which contained sharp attacks on "pro-life" Catholics, whom Weakland calls "abrasive," "uncivil," "judgmental" and "narrow."

In the lead article, Village Voice Columnist Nat Hentoff argues that anti-abortionists have been ineffective because "The pro-life side has been too kind and gentle in this battle" while "The truth is usually neither."

In other featured articles, Faith Abbott tells the story of a woman doctor who refuses to forget the "fourth child" that she aborted. And Christine Allison asks why -- when 1.6 million babies are aborted yearly in America -- there are still a million couples who cannot adopt a baby.

Martha Bayles, a Wall Street Journal columnist, writes on "Feminism and Abortion," charging that "Pro-choice" arguments "reflect the ambitions, hypocrisies, and contradictions of contemporary feminism." Professor Christopher Lasch puts the abortion conflict in the larger context of "cultural conservatism" and wonders if the anti-abortion mentality is "compatible with economic liberalism."

Columnist Joseph Sobran writes on "Cuomo and the Cardinal" -- a commentary on Cardinal O'Connor's "Excommunication Pastoral" -- and Francis Canavan., S.J. tells how he would handle the "easy cases" before the vexed rape/incest dilemmas.

For further information contact: Maria McFadden, Managing Editor  
The Human Life Review  
150 East 35th Street  
New York, NY 10016  
Tel. (212) 685-5210

# When Psychotherapy Gets Stuck in Gridlock

## BOOKS

*Patricia Holt*

**G**iven the increasing demand for psychotherapy in the past decade or two, you'd think a lot of books would be written about problems that come up between psychotherapist and client during the therapy process.

Not so, writes Orinda psychologist Sue Nathanson Elkind, who hopes to correct the imbalance in her much-needed and enlightening book, "Resolving Impasses in Therapeutic Relationships."

A supervising teacher at Berkeley's Psychotherapy Institute and a controversial author in her own right (her 1990 book, "Soul Crisis," was one of the few books to discuss the agony of abortion from a pro-

### Resolving Impasses in Therapeutic Relationships

By Sue Nathanson Elkind  
Guilford Press, 72 Spring Street, New York, NY 10012, 335 pages, \$32

choice woman's point of view), Elkind has searched the field and found, as she said in a recent interview, "remarkably little that

doesn't blame the patient's pathology or see the therapist as having worked through personal problems through training and analysis."

"The assumption," she said, "is that any impasse that does occur must come from the patient, not that the therapist is a human being who can trip badly and sometimes be irrational, lose control, and get over-involved or under-involved

during therapy."

Elkind begins her book with four brief summations of painful experiences — two from patients, two from therapists — identifying just such impasses. As "Dr. R" explains, "A patient recently terminated abruptly after I misunderstood her and there was nothing I could do. I wonder how she is doing, I ruminate about what I might have done to help her remain in therapy. I think about her often."

The long-range consequences of such problems are felt by the patient, too. As "Mark" describes it, "I had an impasse with a therapist three years ago that was just devastating. We terminated abruptly. I feel damaged by the experience and don't know if I'll ever be able to recover. I've barely been able to talk about it."

Elkind says the paradox of her book is that "just by virtue of speaking out about this I've been inundated by requests from patients and therapists who really are in trouble and want a resource that can help them out of the trouble so the whole therapy doesn't have to collapse around it. At the same time, though, people have said the book is something of a 'radical heresy,' because there's been this notion that the therapist-client dyad is sacrosanct, inviolable."

#### State of Impasse

Elkind attempts in the book to find "constructive ways of (discussing) the vulnerabilities of psychotherapists without discrediting their capacity to help patients, as well as those of patients in understanding the experiences that occur within the therapeutic relationship." She quotes her own research, a survey of 330 therapists in 1986, in which "as many as 87.5 percent of the therapists who responded reported that they had had patients leave them in a state of impasse."

She breaks down this "state of impasse" into understandable categories ("mismatch," "stalemate," "wounded patients") and their consequences ("rage," "betrayal," "hopelessness," "mourning") and weaves enough case studies into



**Sue Nathanson Elkind suggests therapists are also vulnerable**

the text to show how theory can be applied to real-life situations. Although the book is written primarily for therapists, Elkind's respectful writing style and compassion for patients as health consumers makes her findings accessible to lay readers as well.

#### Third Party

Perhaps her most controversial conclusion is the notion that a third party, a psychotherapeutic consultant, can be brought in "to help patients and therapists reach an expanded consciousness of their vulnerabilities and defenses."

Again, the notion that professional therapists might seek help outside the "dyad" from another therapist has been seen as "radical heresy," and Elkind admits that in her own work as a consultant, some therapists have refused to meet with her and the patient in distress.

Nevertheless, Elkind writes convincingly that despite the fact there are "no established rules" to such treatment, patients who are desperate and "grieving," can at least be helped by a consultant who acknowledges "that an irreparable loss has occurred . . . Losses of any kind, openly acknowledged and mourned, are bearable. But losses that must remain hidden and grieved for in isolation remain an ongoing source of anguish."