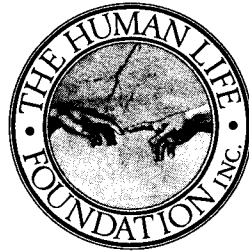


the HUMAN LIFE REVIEW



FALL 1997

Featured in this issue:

Faith Abbott on Going Out of Business

Malcolm Muggeridge on Meeting Mother Teresa

Margaret White on The *Longchamp* Generation

Extra: Steve Forbes gives An *Ad Hoc* Interview

Ann Coulter on Women: Prey for Brennan

Candace C. Crandall on None of Our Business?

William Murchison on Al Gore's Tobacco Road

Jo McGowan on A Deeper Stillness

J. Budziszewski on Why We Kill the Weak

Also in this issue:

Ray Kerrison • Brad Stetson • Wesley J. Smith • Frederica Mathewes-Green

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE . . .

. . . we mark with sadness the death of Mother Teresa, perhaps the greatest “prolifer” of all. Her life was truly “something beautiful for God,” and we will continue to be inspired by the beauty of her life and the simple truth of her words. We thank the *Catholic Herald* of London for allowing us to reprint the also late-great Malcolm Muggeridge’s article after first meeting Mother Teresa in 1969 (see page 17).

We also mourn the death of our old and dear friend (and tireless advocate for the sanctity of all life) Dr. Joseph Stanton, and extend our condolences to the Stanton family (see the *Postscript* to the editor’s Introduction).

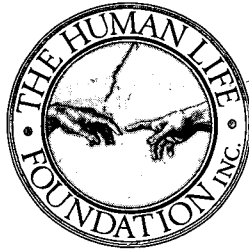
There are several people to thank for the Steve Forbes interview (see “An *Ad Hoc* Interview,” page 30), starting with Mr. Forbes himself, for taking the time to meet with our Contributing Editor William Murchison, and Murchison, for agreeing to do the interview for us. Forbes is the Honorary Chairman for Americans for Hope, Growth and Opportunity, a national issues advocacy organization, and we thank Communications Director Joel Rosenberg (and Jackie De Maria, Forbes’ assistant) for working out a time and place for us (not an easy task with Mr. Forbes’ current schedule!). Americans for Hope, Growth and Opportunity can be contacted on their World Wide Web Site (www.AHGO.org), or at their address: 1400 Route 206 North, P.O. Box 38, Bedminster, NJ 07921; tel. 800-760-1610; fax: 908-781-6001; E-mail: Forbes@AHGO.org. Got all that?

Dr. Margaret White has written about the European scene for us (“The Longchamp Generation,” page 22); she also mentions that the Anna Fund, which helps pay for ground-breaking treatment for Down’s Syndrome children at Lejeune Clinics, is in need of help. For information about the Fund, contact The Anna Fund, Phyllis Bowman House, 5/6 St. Matthews St., Westminster, London SW1P 2JT.

Thanks again to Candace Crandall and *The Women’s Quarterly* for permission to reprint “None of Our Business,” from their Summer issue. This vibrant quarterly is published by the Independent Women’s Forum; for membership and subscription information, write to 2111 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550, Arlington, VA 22201-3057; tel. 1-800-224-6000.

This issue completes our twenty-third year of publishing a big and (we’d say) highly-professional quarterly for which there is absolutely no “commercial” justification whatever—an unusual feat, surely?—so we take this opportunity to add our thanks to all those whose contributions have made such a “bad investment” possible, there is nothing else like it (or *them*) in this world.

MARIA MCFADDEN
EXECUTIVE EDITOR



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INTRODUCTION

THIS ISSUE IS HARD TO DESCRIBE: it “covers more ground” than any previous one that readily comes to mind—there is certainly no one theme or story-line to it, and thus no obvious order for what we think is an unusually good collection of articles. So we will play it safe, and begin with Faith Abbott’s *memoir* of what it means to realize that Woolworth’s won’t be *there* anymore.

As usual, Faith goes on to a great deal more, including a moving *postscript*: just after she had finished the piece, word came first that Princess Diana had been killed, and then that Mother Teresa had died. As it happens, Faith and your servant share an amusing “real life” memory of that formidable woman, which I’ll try to tell briefly now. Some 15 years ago, the Human Life Foundation (our “parent”) helped sponsor a forum in Washington; “Mother T” was to be the featured speaker, and we invited our contributors to donate for a “purse” we’d present her there. In the event, it came to just a few dollars short of \$25,000, so we gleefully took a check for that amount to Washington; on the train down I composed a little presentation speech to go with it.

She duly spoke her usual piece (she never failed to attack abortion, as everybody knows), and was then surrounded by well-wishers—but the meeting’s chairman managed to get her aside for my “presentation” and, bending down from his six-foot height to whisper in her ear, explained what I was there for. As he did, I cleared my throat and prepared to give *my* speech. Mother Teresa then turned and looked up, straight in my face. My hand came forward with the check, my mouth opened, and I heard myself say weakly “*Here.*” She took the check with a smiling nod, went back to her place at the table and, after lunch, *left* it there—a waiter saw it, and ran after her to put it back in her hand. Faith was of course next to me through all this and, after my great, glorious moment, we looked at each other dumbfounded, and then burst into gales of laughter (later she claimed it was the only time in my life that I’d been speechless).

There is a *postscript* here too: a week later I got a sharp letter, from the then Boss-nun of the Missionaries of Charity up in the Bronx, telling me I had *no* business using Mother’s name to raise money—I’d better wash out my typewriter with soap, and never do it again! I hadn’t thought of that, but of course she was quite right: good intentions were never sufficient for Mother Teresa, who was eminently practical, like a saint *should* be.

That’s what so impressed Malcolm Muggeridge when he first met her. Again,

we need to pause for a bit of history: it was Muggeridge—then Britain’s foremost TV “personality”—who in effect produced Mother Teresa’s original world-wide audience *via* his 1969 film for the BBC. Shortly afterwards, he wrote about the shock of that experience for the London *Catholic Herald*, which reprinted it after Mother’s death, and has kindly permitted us to do likewise here. We think you’ll appreciate what amounts to a “first-hand” account of a meeting that *changed* the history of our time. We ought to add that “St. Mugg” later became our editor-at-large; he often recounted tales of Mother Teresa, both in our pages and in person—later still, he cited her as a principal influence in his conversion to Roman Catholicism (in turn, *he* was largely responsible for her Nobel Peace Prize—he was a most effective agitator!).

What follows is also inspired by saintliness: Doctor Margaret White begins with the Pope’s amazing reception in Paris (*Le Figaro* headlined “Le triomphe de Jean-Paul II”) last August—the million-plus crowds were well over twice all “expectations”—but the French Left bitterly attacked *le Saint-Pere* for daring to make a “personal” pilgrimage to the tomb of his old friend Jérôme Lejeune, a world-renowned scientist who was *also* France’s leading anti-abortionist. Dr. Lejeune was a dear friend of Dr. White as well, and thereby hangs the remarkable tale she spins for you here, in which the late Princess of Wales plays a bit part: although it was not one of the “good deeds” she was praised for, Diana was the loving God-Mother to a little Down’s Syndrome girl, who is a patient at Dr. White’s “Lejeune Clinic”—but you will have to read it all yourself.

Next, we interrupt this issue to provide another “current events” story. Actually, it gets its own introduction (see page 30): all we need say here is that we think you will find our “exclusive” (as they say in the trade) interview with Mr. Steve Forbes very interesting indeed, not only because of his strong views on abortion, but also because his interrogator was our own William Murchison—as you will see, both men are quite outspoken.

Then it’s back to our regular articles, and more on a recent event that seemed to get too little—certainly too uncritical—attention. When former Justice William Brennan died (on July 24 last), all major obituaries portrayed him as a great champion of “rights” for “the people” (not least criminal people). Without doubt Brennan exercised enormous power and influence on the Supreme Court during his long tenure, and his name is linked to many seminal decisions, famous or infamous depending on one’s viewpoint. As you will see, Attorney Ann Coulter considers his pornography decisions to be *most* infamous, and we expect that, after reading even her quite brief descriptions of the stuff Brennan legally baptized, most of our readers will agree—we also expect that some of you (at *least*) will be outraged at the language, and/or that we would print it in our usually-chaste pages. Alas, we had to agree with Miss Coulter: you can’t know how bad it is *without* seeing it for yourself.

To us, however, Brennan’s great claim to infamy was a rarely-noted fact: he

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was the intellectual “god-father” of the historically-infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision; it was the “good Catholic” Brennan who dominated small-minded Justice Harry Blackmun’s “thinking” on the disastrous *fiat* that legalized the slaughter of the innocents (surely well over 30 million, and *counting*). Thus we also agree with Miss Coulter’s title—“Women: Prey for Brennan”—and think that many readers will second the notion.

The awful fact is, *Roe* was in effect a “snap” decision: in their rush to win a “final solution” on abortion, its advocates (on and *off* the Court) gave scant thought to what defying Western moral history would actually *mean* in practice—especially for women. So we are glad to reprint here a sobering rundown of some answers to those un-asked questions, by an experienced “health reporter,” Candace Crandall—sobering is too mild a word, a great deal of what Miss Crandall reports is shocking stuff to be happening in our “health-conscious” society—but then on abortion, the *ordinary* rules don’t apply?

At this point the reader may long for some comic relief—it’s been pretty heavy going so far—we wish we had some to offer, and indeed Mr. William Murchison may give you a few laughs, however wry. His topic is The Great Tobacco Purge in general, and Vice President Al Gore’s shameless exploitation of it in particular. And what *can* you do but laugh at the spectacle of smoking being raised to Public Enemy No. #1 status, not only above the mass-killer abortion but also above obviously equal “health hazards” (which kills more Americans, *fat* or tobacco?). Then there’s the hilarious irony that “government’s” answer is to raid the rich tobacco conglomerates for more spending loot, while leaving the “killer” loose! We couldn’t blame you if you light up while you laugh (even second-class citizens have rights?), the hypocrisy of it all is *too* much. But as Mr. Murchison makes clear, no smoke-screen can hide Mr. Gore’s blatant hypocrisies, even if many come second-hand from his Mentor.

It’s also possible that you will find a certain kind of relief in what follows: our old friend Jo McGowan’s short story about the decline of her beloved adopted daughter Moy Moy into a sad state that only a mother could endure; while politicians calculate “programs” and the like, many “ordinary” people face extraordinary problems no government can alleviate. The question is: What would you do if it happened to you? Lord willing, exactly what Mother Jo is doing, however unimaginable it may seem to you (as it surely does to us) now.

Believe it or not, we think we have a fitting *finale*, even (perhaps especially) after little Moy Moy’s saga. It comes from Professor J. Budziszewski, who begins his unusual essay by admitting that it is all too human to *will* good while *doing* evil—that this mystery cannot be solved unless we admit “that one can only understand the bad from the good, not the good from the bad.” Makes you uneasy? The Professor’s whole approach to “Why We Kill the Weak” will, we predict, make you ponder a great deal that seems “new” (in the magazine trade, it’s rightly called a “think piece”), whereas it is all about what we ought to have

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known long since: just as darkness is the absence of light, so evil is the absence of good—"spoiled" good, he calls it, because there's no such thing as *perfect* evil (we imagine Thomas Aquinas would like this one).

* * * * *

Our appendices this issue are somewhat fewer than usual—just half a dozen—but they are a varied lot, beginning with two columns by the redoubtable Ray Kerrison, in praise of the indomitable Mother Teresa (*Appendix A*). Kerrison writes:

What never ceased to amaze me about Mother Teresa was her unwavering public stand against the degradations of modern culture while, at the same time, winning the hearts of everyone from kings and presidents to waifs and orphans.

Sure, he adds, she "had her critics, inside the Church and out, but they were mercifully few"—yes, and few of *them* reputable, the *tablout* Christopher Hitchens personifies their typical disreputability. Of course we don't know what some others *might* have said if they dared: e.g., Mr. & Mrs. Bill Clinton when, on her last "official" visit to Washington, Mother T yet again denounced abortion while the President and First Lady flanked her on the speaker's dais.

In *Appendix B*, you get more praise in Bill Murchison's "Death of a Saint" column (which first ran in his home paper, the Dallas *Morning News*); we might add that, unlike Kerrison, Murchison is not a Roman Catholic (he might fairly be called an "Anglo-Catholic" Episcopalian), but such mundane distinctions really don't apply *vis à vis* Mother Teresa?

On another occasion we were there when Mother Teresa addressed (at the invitation of then-Sen. James Buckley) a beyond-capacity audience in the U.S. Senate's largest hearing room; she was "delayed" while her unprepared hosts scrambled to find a milk crate so she could reach the microphone, after which she began "Our Fater who aarr 'tin Hayven. . . ." as if it were the most natural possible opening—in startled confusion, the jam-packed crowd tumbled all over each other like Keystone Kops trying to get to their knees. She then went straight to her message: abortion was the great destroyer of "peace"—an evil that begat *more* evil. Surely that prophecy is being fulfilled by the latest "rage" among unwilling young mothers who have made headlines by *having* their babies before killing them, or simply tossing them in the trash? In *Appendix C*, Mr. Brad Stetson argues that we have indeed spawned an "Abortion rights mind-set" that encourages this grotesque "choice" to deny the reality of unborn life.

If we've lost Mother Teresa, an Angel of Mercy, we still have our Archangel of Death in the ghoulish guise of "Doctor" Jack Kevorkian. In *Appendix D*, Mr. Wesley Smith—who has written a great deal about the "assisted suicide" craze—points out that Kevorkian not only gets away with murder but also demonstrates his utter contempt for the disabled: you need not be dying to qualify for his lethal ministrations, just "imperfect"!

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In *Appendix E*, you get a very interesting review of a new book that attempts—for the umpteenth time—to provide a “justification” not only for abortion but also for government funding of it “for rich and poor women alike.” The author, with the disarming name of Eileen McDonagh, argues in effect that the unborn baby “without permission or consent” invades the body of its mother, and thus can be evicted with deadly force as a matter of self defense. Mrs. Frederica Mathewes-Green provides an analysis of this “latest spin” in the Abortion War which we think makes an important addition to our permanent record.

Finally, we have Professor Budziszewski again (*Appendix F*); here he reviews not one but five recent books on “death and dying”—obviously publishers see a lucrative new market in the current fascination with “assisted suicide” and the like. Without doubt there is, and long has been, a lot of “mercy killing” going on, in hospitals and elsewhere—the Professor calls it simply “playing God”—despite the fact that there is “A law written on the heart” that tells us “We can’t *not* know that killing is wrong; we can only hold the knowledge down.” *Amen* to that—this one too belongs in our “active archive,” to which we expect to add much more, coming soon.

J.P. MCFADDEN
EDITOR

Postscript: sad to say, there is something that ought to be here, but is not. On September 9 last, Doctor Joseph R. Stanton died, aged 77, in Needham, Massachusetts. No mere obituary can do him justice—it would take many more pages than we have here to even try. We always called him the God-Father of the anti-abortion cause: indeed, he was an “activist” before there *was* a “pro-life” movement; he saw what was coming years before *Roe*, and it is accurate to say that the immediate resistance to that infamous 1973 decision would not have been possible but for the groundwork Dr. Joe put down. All this from a man who, stricken with crippling polio at age 15, was strong only in mind, heart, and spirit: to watch him drag himself from the White House to Capitol Hill on the annual March on Washington (which he insisted on doing for many years) made you want to laugh and cry simultaneously—he was the purest fool about courage. Happily, he had many blessings in this life; an honored physician and teacher, he was an almost laughably-perfect “family man,” father of ten himself, avuncular elder to countless others, and perhaps best of all, his good works were done with irrepressible good humor (his jokes were legendary, not least for bizarre twists). But no, best of all is his Mary, the prototype Good Wife who shared it all: if you can imagine the Movie Director telling Central Casting “She’s gotta be not just sweet and look the part, she’s gotta make it *believable*”—you can see Mary herself, as tough as Himself, in her own way (she *had* to be). *R.I.P.*

Bloomington provided my lunch. There were no fast-food places in those days, and no one “ate in”—at least not in offices on Madison Avenue. Lunch Hour *meant* hour, for secretaries, so if I walked fast I could make it to Woolworth’s and back, with a sandwich and coffee under my belt, within the allotted time.

When a New York Working Girl found a kindred spirit and they found an apartment, to Woolworth’s they’d go for the essentials: a broom and dustpan, paper towels, soap, things to eat with and off of.

When you were a new housewife, Woolworth’s had what you needed for your *real* apartment. And, as things were then, within a year or so you’d be there buying baby things. (I still have our daughter Maria’s first saddle-shoes: they’re about two inches long.) A few days after our fifth child was born, I bought her first outfits from the toy department: Tina was tiny and the *doll* clothes fit just fine. When the saddle-shoes-baby had *her* first baby, I went to Woolworth’s for his stroller: I could have got it elsewhere, of course, but Woolworth’s was *there*.

Columnist Florence King wrote about Woolworth’s *thereness* in the September 1st issue of *National Review* magazine. “This seems to be the season for chipping away at the diminishing rock of my childhood,” she wrote: “First Jimmy Stewart died, and then Woolworth’s five-and-ten announced that it was going out of business.” Although Jimmy Stewart was the “antithesis” of her taste in men (“the lovable guy-next-door type has always irritated me”) she liked him anyway because he was *there*, and “Where childhood memories are concerned, *thereness* is what counts. I probably wouldn’t shop at Woolworth’s today, but I want it to be there, and now it won’t be, not ever again.”

She remembers how Woolworth’s had something for everyone: her Granny took her there and let her buy her first pet, a miniature turtle. The store, Florence King wrote, “served our regular needs—a ten-cent envelope of phonograph needles, Granny’s advanced knitting books with instructions to rival the quantum theory—as well as some highly irregular ones, e.g., the glittery earrings my father bought to decorate the head of the banjo he made, the oil my mother used to soften her baseball glove . . .”

So Woolworth’s and other family-related things we took for granted have lost their *thereness*; gone the way of the Family Doctor and New York’s Checker Cabs. My husband and I saw one of the two or three remaining-in-service Checkers the other day: it was like glimpsing the Hale-Bopp comet. When Checkers were abundant they could accommodate whole families, like ours. Soon there won’t be *any* Checkers; and it looks bad for

family *thereness*, too. Can the traditional family be Going Out of Business? The writing on the wall is there, though it's not as obvious as all those huge printed signs and yards-long yellow CLOSING banners on the fronts of the F.W. Woolworth buildings. The "normal" family still has *thereness*, but it's under threat from certain groups whose agendas include the re-invention and re-definition of Family.

I first focused on the efforts to re-invent and re-define the basic family unit back in 1991, when *Ms.* magazine ran a story about a lesbian couple and their daughter. The little girl and her "two mommies," the sperm donor "father" and his new boyfriend were all getting along splendidly. And the *New York Times* had run a long article about polygamy. I wrote about these new "families" in this journal ("Family Is as Family Does," *Summer*, 1991) and quoted the Colorado, Arizona mayor (and husband of five) who said "In this liberal age, with all the alternative lifestyles that are condoned . . . it is the height of folly to censure a man for having more than one family." Another mayor was featured in that *Times* piece: Alex Joseph of Big Water, Utah, husband of nine, father of twenty. The "seventh Mrs. Joseph"—Elizabeth, the "lawyer-wife"—was quoted extensively in that article. Polygamy, she said, is the ideal way for a woman to have a career and children: "In our family, the women can help each other care for the children. Women in monogamous relationships don't have that luxury."

Well, guess what? Elizabeth Joseph has surfaced again. In the Summer issue of *The Women's Quarterly*, Julie Ann Kessler has a report about the Utah chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) embracing polygamy as a solution to the problems of working mothers, and she begins by introducing Elizabeth Joseph as "one of the eight women 'married' to Alex Joseph of Big Water, Utah." (Wonder what happened to the 9th wife?) It seems that Elizabeth Joseph's career has really taken off: she works as the news and public-affairs director of two radio stations in Page, Arizona, and as the City Attorney of Big Water, and as an instructor in law, business and journalism at Coconino Community College. Last May she was a featured speaker at a meeting of the Utah chapter of NOW where she (a self-proclaimed feminist) promoted the polygamous "lifestyle" as a great boon to career women. Without her "current domestic arrangement" her various high-profile jobs might not have been possible. (She boasts that her eight-year-old son "has never seen the inside of a day-care center"—wonder if he ever saw the inside of a Woolworth's?)

Ms. Joseph has a point, writes Kessler (who is director of academic programs at the Claremont Institute in Claremont, California) when she

argues that “I’ve maximized my female potential without the trade-offs associated with monogamy.” Indeed, says Kessler, if women are going to have careers like men, someone has to look after the kids, and what better “high quality” child care than another mother—or several? “In these times when our understanding of family has expanded to include gay parents, blended families, and single-parent families, why not include polygamous families?” The spokeswoman for NOW’s Utah chapter, when asked whether she thought the organization would support polygamy, said “Why wouldn’t it? We fight for lesbian families and single-parent families. I don’t know why we wouldn’t support this.” Another member of NOW (who also serves on the national board) agreed, saying that since NOW supports “an expanded definition of family including same-sex parents” it would be “very difficult to look at that and not support other configurations of families, including polygamous families.”

How did the Utah audience react to Ms. Joseph’s talk? Well, it seems that the crowd was more surprised to hear from Mormon feminists (who were also on the program) than from a polygamist feminist: Elizabeth Joseph is *not* a Mormon—the Mormon Church excommunicates members who practice polygamy.

A bit of history here: the Republican party platform of 1856 condemned “those twin relics of barbarism—Polygamy and Slavery.” In 1879 the Supreme Court ruled in *Reynolds v. U.S.* that Mormons were not exempt from laws forbidding multiple wives; the justices wrote that a “free, self-governing commonwealth” presupposes monogamy, upon which “society may be said to be built.” Whereas polygamy “leads to the patriarchal principle, and which, when applied to large communities, fetters the people in stationary despotism, while that principle cannot long exist in connection with monogamy.”

So it’s rather mind-boggling that feminists who fight for equal rights and against any form of “patriarchy” would even *think* of endorsing polygamy, which is intertwined with the history of slavery. Julie Ann Kessler writes that “contrary to what Elizabeth Joseph insists, polygamy places women in a condition of servitude, reducing the woman to a fractional wife rather than an equal partner with her husband.” And she thinks it’s ironic that feminism, ostensibly an attack on patriarchy, “would find its logical support among those who would promote the patriarchy in its grossest form.”

But this isn’t the only contradictory strand now threading through NOW. You may have heard of “Promise Keepers,” the organization that has men of all races and creeds gathering together and pledging to become better

husbands and fathers, to be more responsible and less selfish? To keep the promises and the vows they made when they entered the institution of matrimony? Close to three million men have attended regional gatherings so far, and the Promise Keepers rally in Washington D.C. in October rivaled the numbers gathered at the Million Man March. Doesn't an organization calling for male responsibility sound like something NOW would endorse, even applaud? *NO*, says NOW. Absolutely not. In fact, in anticipation of the Washington event, its members overwhelmingly passed a resolution declaring Promise Keepers to be "the greatest danger to women's rights." They've developed a NOW "action kit" to use in exposing the group's "deceptively innocuous agenda." NOW's intrepid president, Patricia Ireland, said (in her speech at the organization's national convention in Memphis early last July) that "The Promise Keepers talk about men taking responsibility, but what they mean is men taking charge." So NOW is dedicated to caricaturing Promise Keepers as a Women-Hater's club, with its he-man members keeping their women in the kitchen. The usually unflappable Ms. Ireland says "I am afraid" (which of course she is *not*), "I am very afraid. And I am angry." (For more about Promise Keepers, see William Murchison's "Promises Are for Keeps," *HLR*, Winter, 1996.)

Actually, Ms. Ireland might feel just a bit *threatened*, because Promise Keepers tend to be Christian and conservative, and therefore threaten the cherished ideals that dominate NOW's agenda: abortion and gay rights.

Do the NOW-type feminists have any *positive* programs for the males in our society? Indeed they do, for the really difficult ones—the domestic abusers. "It's Always His Fault" is the title of another piece in the Summer issue of *The Women's Quarterly*. The feminist zeal to condemn men may be endangering the lives of battered women, reports Sally L. Satel (who ought to know—she is both an M.D. and lecturer at the Yale School of Medicine).

I had not heard of these "profeminist treatment programs" and was astonished to read that they are already in place, in many states. It seems that Gloria Steinem's assertion that "the patriarchy requires violence or the subliminal threat of violence in order to maintain itself" has now been heeded by public officials, who are spending tax dollars to pay for actual programs to "re-educate" batterers. (The definition of "domestic abusers" has been stretched to include "psychological battery" such as acts of lying, humiliation, refusing to help with kids or housework—the very things Promise Keepers wants to end.)

Some of the money for these "treatment programs" comes from

Washington, thanks to the 1994 Violence Against Women Act, or VAWA. To obtain passage of VAWA, feminist organizations like NOW (and even Donna Shalala, secretary of Health and Human Services) kept on bombarding legislators with (greatly exaggerated) statistics, such as that “Family violence has killed more women in the last five years than Americans killed in the Vietnam War.” If the \$1.6 *billion* authorized by Congress to fund VAWA were truly effective in protecting women, taxpayers (if they *knew* where their money was going) might not mind. But there is increasing evidence that the money is being used to further the ideological war against men, which puts many women at *greater* risk. The theory on which this “feminist therapy” is based is that domestic abuse is an essential element of the male conspiracy to suppress and subordinate women so that, as Dr. Sally Satel writes, “the real culprit in a case of domestic violence is not a violent individual man, it is the patriarchy. To stop a man from abusing women, he must be taught to see the errors of the patriarchy and to renounce them.”

A position paper by the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women’s Network explains that “Battery is a fulfillment of a cultural expectation, not a deviant or sick behavior.” And a Seattle-based psychologist (and prominent feminist practitioner) says that feminist psychotherapy is “an opportunity to help patients see the relationship between their behavior and the patriarchal society in which we are all embedded.”

Does this make you think that NOW and other feminist organizations are a tad schizophrenic? On the one hand they blame many evils on patriarchy, but applaud polygamy, where the man is the head of *many* “families.” They want men to realize the errors of their ways and change to become good and faithful husbands and fathers but they don’t want them going off to Promise Keepers. Rather, they want them going to feminist-therapy, which is likely to backfire: your husband/boyfriend might come back angrier and more violent than he was before he’d gone through all the (in many states *mandated*) sessions of indoctrination in the feminist approach to male violence.

Guidelines in at least a dozen states preclude any treatment other than “feminist therapy” for domestic batterers; another dozen states are now drafting similar guidelines, which explicitly prohibit social workers and clinicians from offering therapies that attempt to deal with domestic abuse (as a problem between a couple) unless the man has undergone “pro-feminist” treatment first. But, as Dr. Satel writes, “. . . there are virtually no convincing data that this feminist approach to male violence is effective.”

I wonder if there are any cases of domestic abuse in polygamous

marriages? Maybe not: if one wife were abused, the others would gang up on their “spouse”? Anyway, the patriarchs may be too contented to be abusive: as Elizabeth Joseph gushed back in 1991, “Plural marriages offer men the chance to escape from the traditional, confining roles that often isolate them from the surrounding world.” And she added: “More important, it enables women, who live in a society full of obstacles, to fully meet their career, mothering and marriage obligations. Polygamy provides a whole solution. *I believe American women would have invented it if it didn’t already exist.*” [Italics mine.]

True: you can’t invent something that already exists. You can’t re-invent an invention, so how can you re-invent Family? The most you can do is re-define, and that’s the worst you can do, with Family.

One person who wouldn’t agree is Leslie Wolfe, head of Washington, D.C.’s Center for Women’s Policy Studies. “We’re living through the re-definition of the family,” she said in the *Dallas Morning News* (“And Baby Makes Two,” April 8, 1992). Wolfe thinks “the change” is inevitable; that single motherhood is a new and wonderful “vocation.” She herself had chosen, the year before, to become an unwed mother.

But Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, in that memorable *Atlantic* article (“Dan Quayle Was Right,” April 4, 1993) wrote that “children in single-parent families are six times as likely to be poor” and “two to three times as likely as children in two-parent families to have emotional and behavioral problems. They are also more likely to drop out of high school . . .”

There was a long and sad report in the *New York Times* last August 17, headlined “From Old South Boston, Despair Replaces Hope.” It seems that since December, 1996, six South Boston teenage boys have committed suicide and about 70 teens, mostly male, had been hospitalized for *trying* to (or “thinking about it”). The *Times* reporter interviewed one post-teenager, Jimmy Connolly, now twenty—a highschool dropout who had spent six months in jail for aggravated assault with a weapon. Asked about the future, the young man said “Around here, you don’t hear no one talking about college. Half my friends didn’t even finish high school.” But, he said, there *was* one guy from his [South Boston] project who *did* go to college. That man, said Jimmy Connolly, had an advantage: “He had a mother and a father his whole life.”

But back to Woolworth’s. Not literally, of course: we can’t go back. It was the first neighborhood store that our son Patrick knew by name, when he was a pre-schooler, though he didn’t get the name quite right: he had seen all those liverwurst sandwiches going off to school with his siblings,

so to him it was “Woolwurst.” But it wasn’t the name that mattered: it could be the five-and-dime, the tencent store; maybe it was Kresge’s or Lamston’s. It was the concept that mattered. It was a store, usually a few blocks from home, that could take you and your family through all the seasons and holidays, secular and religious (though shopping there was hardly a Spiritual Experience). Of course all the seasonal promotions began much too early: Halloween costumes began appearing in September, and you could expect to hear “Jingle Bell Rock” and Bing Crosby warbling about White Christmas when your Thanksgiving leftovers were still appearing in new formats. Woolworth’s could be annoying, but it was *there*; and it *did* have something to do with family.

One mother, who is a New York Family Court Judge, wrote in the New York *Daily News* (August 2) that when she heard the news about the closing of F.W. Woolworth, she believed that *hers* would somehow be spared. Under the title “Down Memory Lanes” Sara P. Schechter wrote that when she saw all the storewide “10-20-30% Off” signs she knew the end was near. She was too sad to go into the store (right across the street) but knew she should stock up on all those things she wouldn’t know where to get elsewhere, and remembered how, as a new bride, she “floated down the Woolworth’s stairs” to buy Rubbermaid things for her first kitchen.

Later, “hugely pregnant,” she “lumbered” down those same stairs to buy needlepoint kits of clowns. Some time later she “descended ever so carefully” holding her baby daughter in one arm, her free hand steadying her son. But now, in the basement, all was silent—where had the parakeets gone? She fled past other memories with a stiff upper lip, trying to buy supplies: she thought that socks were safe, but it was the socks that did her in. “Baby socks no bigger than a father’s thumb, anklets with frilly cuffs just right for Mary Janes . . .”

When she got to the check-out there were many lines, but she stood in the longest one because it was the line of the manager, who had been there as long as the store had. By the time her turn finally came, she had composed herself enough to say: “We’ll miss you.”

Not every New Yorker had a “personal relationship” with Woolworth’s, I thought, as I walked to the Woolworth’s near our office, during the last week of August. This store is in Midtown Manhattan, on 42nd Street and Third Avenue: hardly a residential area where shoppers would know the manager, who surely had not “been there as long as the store had.” It was a very large and, I thought, totally “impersonal” store, but I hoped there’d be some of those *faux* clay flower pots left, along with some other things

I wouldn't know where to get elsewhere. No pots; lots of large empty spaces, but back-to-school supplies were being stocked and so were Christmas decorations and ornaments. So I figured this wasn't one of the stores scheduled to close that very week.

I did find a few bargains (jewelry—50% off) and as I stood at the check-out, the cashier hollered a greeting to an elderly woman who was approaching slowly on bad legs but with a big smile. While my (black) saleswoman was efficiently processing my credit card, she carried on a conversation with the (white) elderly woman. The saleswoman, whose name is Esther, asked "How old is he now, eighteen?" "Oh, Billy's *twenty* now," glowed the elderly woman. (I assumed Billy was her grandson.) Esther said: "I remember him here in his carriage." Yes, said the Granny—that was twenty years ago. Esther said "We've known each other for twenty years?" "*More,*" said Granny. Then they caught up on family history—"How's your sister?" (Very, very sick) and "Is *this* store closing?" "Yes," answered Esther: "All the 400 stores in America are closing." Granny: "Where will you go?" Esther: "I don't know—guess I'll have to start looking." Granny: "How can I get in touch with you?" Esther: "Don't worry. I have your phone number at home in my bible. I'll call you."

As I left the store for the last time, I thought: So there *was* something *family* about that chain store: it did link young and old, black and white, in its 117-year history. It's too late to save Woolworth's, but maybe it's not too late to save the family—to reclaim and celebrate what remains of its *hereness*.

* * * * *

Postscript: I'd finished writing this just before the unforgettable week that began with the death of Princess Diana and ended with the death of Mother Teresa. "Thereness" and "hereness" suddenly became shockingly real. Woolworth's death is, it seems, gradual: many stores remain open. Princess Diana's death was horribly sudden. Whether or not we were "fans" we had all taken her *hereness* for granted: because of the media, she was a kind of presence in our everyday lives. Suddenly she isn't present anymore.

Mother Teresa's death six days later was sudden too, but not as shocking. She had been at death's door many times, but had miraculously revived, as though her Lord had a different timing in mind. She had travelled to Rome and to New York, where she'd had that private meeting with Diana in the Missionaries of Charity convent in the Bronx; then, back home in Calcutta, having just celebrated her 87th birthday, her heart simply stopped.

FAITH ABBOTT

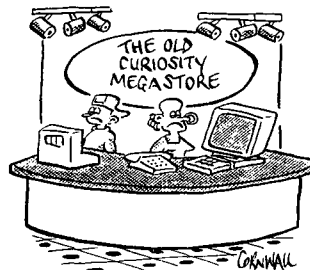
Princess Di was not at home when she died. She never really *had* a home. The one she came from was dysfunctional; her marriage was a royal wreck and she became a single mother of two boys. She wanted to be known as a good and devoted mother, but the world was more interested in other aspects of her life.

Mother Teresa had no biological children, but is known the world over as Mother.

As the world struggled to grasp the significance of these two close-together deaths, many columns of words were written contrasting the glamorous princess and the tiny wrinkled nun, with endless speculations about their connection—for surely as the two were linked in life, they are now permanently linked in death, and linked in our minds.

We will go on pondering, but out of it all there seems already to have come a new awareness of the importance of family. After Diana's funeral, her ex-husband and father of her sons, Prince Charles (hardly a Promise Keepers type), cancelled his Royal Engagements so as to spend more time with motherless William and Harry, who had dramatized their need by walking behind the flag-draped coffin in the funeral cortege.

That will remain in the minds of many of us, long after the other pictures have faded, and so will that single white envelope on top of the casket. Whether the childish handwriting on the envelope was that of the future king of England or his little brother—whether there were *two* farewell notes inside that envelope—we don't know, nor do we need to know. What we'll remember is that the envelope was addressed, simply, to "Mummy." Mother Diana now.



THE SPECTATOR 6 September 1997

Going Out of Business

Faith Abbott

The news that F.W. Woolworth was closing its 400 stores nationwide took almost everyone by surprise. Some people went into denial (“They won’t close them *all!*”), others went to the nearest Woolworth’s to take advantage of the sales. When large signs outside all the stores proclaimed, in block letters, GOING OUT OF BUSINESS and ENTIRE STORE ON SALE, those in denial had to face reality. It was true: Woolworth’s would soon be just as gone as Jimmy Stewart, and we were just getting over *that*. Now here was another passing that sent columnists into paroxysms of nostalgia—and they spoke for many of us.

But why all this rampant nostalgia? What was so “personal” about a chain store? Was there perhaps a subliminal realization that somehow this “chain” had links to our childhood and to those who came before us and connected various stages of our lives? That’s a lot to “read into” what was promoted just as a “variety” store, not specifically a *family* one; but it did serve families, when families were intact and stable and, like Woolworth’s, their permanence was taken for granted.

It was usually an older family member who took you to Woolworth’s when you were very young. When we lived in St. Louis, my Great-Aunt Minnie would say “Let’s go bummin’ for a treat,” and off we’d go to “the dimestore” where she would buy things like thread and a jar of Postum and some small trinket for me, and we’d always leave with ice-cream cones.

When you got old enough, and had an allowance, it was a thrill to go alone to Woolworth’s for presents: Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, birthdays. I remember buying purple nail polish for my highschool sisters one Christmas. When adolescence came along, I don’t know what the boys did but we girls spent after-school hours at the lipstick counters: such a great variety of colors, and lipstick wasn’t as expensive as at your local drugstore (and you wouldn’t want your friendly drugstore-person thinking “Aha, little So-and-So is growing up!”).

Woolworth’s gave you anonymity. It sort of followed you through life, accommodating each new stage. When in the early ’50s I got my first job and became a New York Working Girl, the Woolworth’s near

Faith Abbott, our senior contributing editor, writes from the viewpoint of someone who secretly believed for many years that Heaven would turn out to be one huge Woolworth’s.

The Day I Met Mother Teresa

Malcolm Muggeridge

Something beautiful for God. This is one of Mother Teresa's favourite sayings. She used it when, after much persuasion, she agreed to subject herself to a BBC camera crew for the purpose of making a television programme about herself and her work. "Let us then," she said, "use the occasion to do something beautiful for God."

The extraordinary thing is that it has so worked out; I really believe that the very cameras—let alone us, the five individuals concerned; director, camera-man and assistant, sound-recordist and myself—fell under her spell.

We went along to the house of her Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta soon after arriving there. It was, even for Bengal, a hot, steamy day; the teeming streets seemed menacing, with a 24-hour general strike threatening. Her house, needless to say, is in one of the poorest quarters. She was waiting for us in the courtyard. To say that I was pleased to see her would be an understatement. Ever since I interviewed her for BBC Television I have been longing to get closer to her in her life's chosen setting.

As far as I was concerned, Calcutta might have been one of the world's beauty spots instead of one of its most desolate and tragic cities. The light that shines in her made, and makes, the days we spent with her stand out for me as a time of great happiness.

Like all her kind, she is immensely shrewd, practical and humorous, with no trace of sentimentality in her makeup. In making a saint, as it seems to me, God, as it were, takes as the basic ingredients the earthly rather than the transcendental qualities. He mixes common earth, as Our Lord did to put on the blind man's eyes. The saints are nearer to Mistress Quickly than to Virginia Woolf.

We mentioned that in view of the probable general strike the following day we might not be able to start filming 'till the day after. "I'll come for you," Mother Teresa said, and she did, in her rickety old ambulance, which drove up exactly on time to the entrance of our hotel.

We were almost the only vehicle on the road, and I should suppose, almost the only foreigners able to carry on with our work that day. It was

Malcolm Muggeridge was a renowned British author, journalist and TV personality; in 1969 he went to Calcutta to film Mother Teresa and her work for the BBC; the resulting program ("Something Beautiful for God") gave Mother Teresa her first world-wide audience. Muggeridge wrote this article for the London *Catholic Herald*, in which it first appeared (May 16, 1969); it is reprinted here with the kind permission of *The Herald* (all rights reserved, The Catholic Herald Ltd).

weird driving through the empty streets, with everything closed, and even the people somehow subdued.

We began by filming the Sisters' daily life, which begins at 4:30 am with meditation followed by Mass. Their chapel is very simple and rather beautiful, though the street outside is so noisy (except on the day of the strike, which, as it happened, fitted in well with our filming's exigencies) that, what with clanging trams, street cries and car hooters, it is often difficult to follow the words of the services.

This, Mother Teresa contends, is appropriate, and in keeping with their situation—right at the heart of the world's tumult, among the poorest of the poor. Those beloved poor, so very dear to them all!

After Mass, the Sisters do their washing and other chores with great vigour. Everything is done vigorously. They each have a bucket; pretty well their only possession. After breakfast they go off to their various outside duties—some to the derelict and dying brought in off the streets, some to schools and dispensaries, some to the lepers and some to the babies and children they acquire out of dustbins, or from midwives who have them left on their hands; all the unwanted children who come to them in increasing numbers as it becomes known that, however overcrowded and overworked they may be, none will ever be refused.

Before leaving, the Sisters fill their bags with bread, provided, I was proud to learn, by British schoolchildren. If any of them see these words, may I tell them how infinitely worth-while their gift is.

It is an austere and tough life, especially for the Sisters—the majority, actually—who came from middle-class Indian homes. Yet I never met such enchanting, happy women, or such an atmosphere of joy.

Mother Teresa, as she explained to me, attaches the utmost importance to this joyousness; the poor she says, deserve not just the service and dedication, but also the joy, that belongs to human love.

Notoriously the religious orders are nowadays short of vocations. Nor has permitting nuns to use lipstick and wear mini-habits served to reverse the trend. On the other hand, the Missionaries of Charity are multiplying at a fantastic rate; their Calcutta house is bursting at the seams, and each year three or four new enterprises are started, in India and elsewhere.

As the whole story of Christendom shows, when everything is asked for everything—and more—will be accorded; when little; then nothing. Curious, when this is so obvious, that today the contrary proposition should seem to be more acceptable!

Accompanying Mother Teresa, as we did, to these different activities—to the dying from the streets, to the lepers, to the unwanted children (some

of the babies so minute that it seems inconceivable they could survive, yet many did) I found I went through three phases.

The first was horror mixed with pity, the second compassion pure and simple, and the third, reaching beyond compassion, something I had never experienced before—the awareness that these dying and derelict men and women, these lepers with stumps instead of hands, these unwanted children, were somehow not repulsive or pitiable, but rather dear and delightful; as it might be friends of long standing, or brothers and sisters.

How can I explain it—the very heart and mystery of the Christian Faith? To soothe those battered and old heads, to grasp those poor stumps, to take in one's arms those children consigned to dustbins, because it is His head, as they are His stumps, and His children, of whom He said that whoso received one such child in His name received Him.

On the flyleaf of the little manual of devotion the Sisters use which Mother Teresa gave me (a precious possession), she wrote: "Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world to live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy."

Such is their work, and such the spirit in which they undertake it. I had various conversations with Mother Teresa before the cameras and away from them.

Her faith is a personal relationship with God and Incarnate Christ; the Mass the spiritual fuel which keeps her going, the Church something she belongs to and serves as revealing and fulfilling God's purpose on earth.

The various conflicts and controversies now shaking it scarcely touch her; they will pass, she says, and the Church will remain to perform its divinely inspired and directed function.

Her efficiency is staggering; everything is perfectly organised and administered without any organisation or administration. Two Sisters with two old typewriters represent the total administrative staff.

Mother Teresa writes whatever needs to be written by hand in the night hours. Then, too, I suppose she makes her plans, or rather receives them.

She lets out things casually; as that she bought a printing press for the lepers so that they could print pamphlets and letters and make a little money. How, in God's name, I asked myself, did she know what press to buy and where to buy it?

And with those stumps, how could they set type? Fatuous questions! The press is there and working, the lepers are delighted with it.

She has a geography of her own—of compassion. Somehow she hears



Woodsculpture by Faith Abbott

that in Venezuela there are abandoned poor; so off the Sisters go, and a house is set up. Now she has heard that the aboriginals and half-castes in Australia need love and care; they will be forthcoming.

When she is away in Europe or America she only longs to be back in Calcutta with her poor. If you raise questions like the undesirability of pulling children out of dustbins when there are too many in India already, they do not seem to impinge. She looks at you with a kind of wonder, as if you said there were too many bluebells in the woods.

On leaving India after his visit there the Pope gave her his car, for the disposal of which she shrewdly arranged a raffle, raising enough money thereby to start building a settlement for her lepers on a piece of ground given her by the Government at Shantinagar in Bengal. I don't believe she ever took a ride in it.

Walking with her among the people queueing at one of her dispensaries, I kept hearing the muttered word, "Mother!" It wasn't that they had anything to say to her or ask her; they just wanted to establish contact. I quite understood. The Sisters likewise need her presence; the ones away from Calcutta long for her visits.

Fr. Andrew, an Australian Jesuit, has joined her to look after the Brothers, attached to her, who go to places—the Calcutta Railway Station, for instance, a strange wild, world of its own—where the Sisters might be at a disadvantage. He was a perfect choice; a man of the utmost gentleness and sweetness with a houseful of turbulent, cheerful boys.

To me, Mother Teresa represents love in action, which is surely what Christianity is about. Perhaps the geneticists and family-planners and abortionists and euthanasia enthusiasts will succeed in constructing a boiler-house set-up where Mother Teresa is unneeded, but even then I expect there will be some drop-outs with wounds that need healing, wants that need satisfying, and souls that need saving. There she will be.

On the last day I saw her off in the early morning to Shantinagar, where she was having trouble with the building contractor. I left her seated in a third-class carriage (she has a railway pass provided by the government) with Sister Lourdes beside her.

Outside, the day had still scarcely begun. The Calcutta streets were strewn with sleeping figures; the day before's garbage piled up, and a few picking it over for anything edible. Yet I swear that, thanks to Mother Teresa, I saw God's love and compassion shining down with the early morning sun as I never had in Piccadilly or the Rue de Rivoli or Park Avenue.

The Longchamp Generation

Margaret White

We are often reminded that the future of the world lies in the hands of today's young people. Judging by the huge number of them—estimated at well over a million—who crammed into the famous Longchamp racecourse outside Paris to hear Pope John Paul II say Mass last August, I presume we need have no fears about the future!

The fact that even the French Bishops grossly underestimated the number who would attend (by over 100%) shows that the constant harping by the media on the imminent demise of Christianity has been so effective that even *they* were deceived. Since Longchamp, there has almost been what might be called a paradigm shift. On August 30 the London *Times* published a half-page article headlined “Catholic Church ready to be born again,” which goes into great detail on the turning back of the “Tide of decline.” A very interesting fact it gives is that though the number of priests in the rich countries is still declining, in the Third World the number of both priests and Catholics grows apace. I have always believed that Christ's words, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven” apply to countries as much as to individuals.

Shorn of the ability to mock at the numbers attending the papal ceremonies, his enemies fastened on the Pope's private visit to the grave of Professor Jérôme Lejeune, who was one of the greatest scientists of the century. Lejeune has been honored throughout the world for his work on Down's Syndrome and “Fragile X” children—he discovered the extra chromosome on the 21st pair (Trisomy 21) that is present in Down's Syndrome. He was also a most faithful Catholic, and the founder of the main pro-life organisation in France, *Laissez les vivres* (Let them live).

It was of course his tireless efforts to oppose abortion that gained Lejeune such bitter enmity, especially from the French Left, which (like Leftists elsewhere) promotes abortion. The most rabid press assault came from *Liberation*, a “Maoist” tabloid that attacked the famed Professor as “an ardent militant anti-abortionist” on its front page (August 23). But even *Le Monde*, which claims to be France's “serious” paper, editorialized that “the Pope's visit to Jérôme Lejeune's tomb could be interpreted as legitimizing

Margaret White, now retired, was a London doctor and Ob-Gyn specialist who also had extensive experience as a magistrate; she has written widely on sex education for the young.

the violence which the Church has always condemned.” First off, there has been notably little violence from French “pro-lifers” and none of the Pope’s critics cited any actual instances of it, much less evidence that the good Professor Lejeune ever approved of violence himself. Moreover, *Le Monde* might have “interpreted” John Paul’s visit as what it was, his personal pilgrimage to the grave of a dear friend?

Most shocking of all was that Premier Lionel Jospin, leader of the newly-elected Socialist government, issued an unprecedented personal attack on the Pope for “fomenting intolerance” and “encouraging” opposition to abortion, when of course everybody knows that this Pope opposes abortion everywhere in the world. More, their Premier’s rude insult was particularly galling to French Catholics, because Jospin is a Protestant.

But then I suppose it was inevitable that a man as saintly as Dr. Lejeune would provoke such hatreds. Among his many talents was a great eloquence, and not in his native French only. He and I both spoke at a pro-life conference in Vienna. I had struggled to get my talk into reasonable German, which was a wasted effort because they decided to arrange for simultaneous translation. Lejeune, however, without notes, gave his talk in perfect German and later another in flawless English.

We met first in Holland in 1973 for the inaugural meeting of the world federation of doctors who respect human life. There used to be a song called “We meet in the strangest places.” I quoted it once when called upon to introduce Lejeune at an English pro-life conference, and I listed Holland, Mexico, the U.S., Austria, Italy, France and England. He was always welcome at the Vatican. He once told me that at the height of the cold war the Pope, desperately anxious for the peace of the world, sent four distinguished Catholics as emissaries to the leaders of the U.S., Britain, China and the Soviet Union. Lejeune was sent to Russia. Brezhnev at the time was in poor health. After Lejeune had fulfilled his papal brief he inquired after the health of the dictator, and was amused when the avowed atheist told him “Thank God I have a good doctor who keeps me going.”

The Professor abhorred all killing. He was utterly dedicated to helping children with learning difficulties, and was determined to try and stop the mass slaughter of the unborn. He shared my belief that the efforts to devise more and more tests for the purpose of detecting even the smallest abnormality in the foetus—so that the child could be killed before birth—were a form of “eugenic cleansing” and a particularly vicious form of neo-fascism.

I realised the intensity of his feeling at a Family Life conference in

Acapulco. The faculty were staying in a luxury hotel because its owner was pro-life and had offered a low-price package. Talking together after a barbecue lunch by the sea, he said to me: "It doesn't seem right that we should be enjoying this luxury when we came here to help the unborn," to which I replied that we had no option about our accommodation. His reply was magnificently Gallic: putting up his hands—palms upwards—in a gesture of resignation, he said, "I fear we must just *endure* it."

I should add that when Pope John Paul II went to the grave of his old and saintly friend, Professor Lejeune was even accused by some French papers of being a neo-fascist and anti-semitic. (As Goebbels used to say, If you are going to tell a lie, make it a *big* one.) The French family planning movement called the visit "a provocation against women and families" (wouldn't they just!). This about a loving doctor who treated over 8,000 Down's Syndrome children, and remembered the names of 5,000!

But in fact the very strength of the attack can in one sense be looked on as encouraging. I once complained in the presence of Malcolm Muggeridge about our meetings and marches being constantly broken up by people who dishonestly—but very cleverly—called themselves "pro-choice." Malcolm rebuked me, saying "You are wrong Margaret, it's when they don't attack you that you should worry, because it means you are too insignificant to bother about." I am sure he was right.

Part of the reason for the present attack on the Pope is that on this side of the Atlantic the abortionists have recently been getting quite a bad press. Partial birth abortions have been condemned as have the euphemistically-named "selective reductions." This sounds rather like liposuction to reduce the hips, but what hides behind those benign-sounding words is a revolting procedure. When a mother is carrying more babies than she desires at the moment—often but not always as a result of *in vitro* fertilisation—the "surplus" ones are killed under ultra-sound by injecting poison into their hearts. Also, RU-486, in spite of being pushed by family planners, has been a total flop in Britain and, because we are getting more and more cases of post-abortion syndrome, people are beginning to realise that abortion is not the harmless procedure that it is made out to be by the feminists.

The Anna Fund was founded to pay for the air fares of parents and their Down's Syndrome child for treatment at Professor Lejeune's clinic in Paris and to subsidize his research. In spite of lack of funds (his government research funds were cut off by the late Socialist President François Mitterand) he was able to follow up his original discovery of the extra chromosome with further discoveries, and to devise a method of treatment.

One of the most important of his discoveries was the high percentage of his children who also had thyroid deficiency, which was by no means always present at birth.

In Britain every newborn baby has a thyroid check and that is the end of it; Lejeune checked every year and found many cases developing in childhood. Because of the similarity of the facial appearance of thyroid deficiency and Down's Syndrome, without regular checks it is often missed. Treated properly, there is an almost instant improvement in both intelligence and alertness. Nearly everyone has seen obese adolescent Down's Syndrome children; much of this could be due to thyroid deficiency.

A recent example of the difference a thyroid test can make is Russia's President Boris Yeltzin. Before his heart operation he was both obese and strangely behaved. We in the West put it down to alcohol. A check on his thyroid by an American doctor (called in consultation before his heart operation) spotted his thyroid deficiency, and he is now a quite different man. There is a condition known as "myxoedematous madness"—people with untreated thyroid deficiency become excitable and even manic. (Many viewers of television will remember how on one state occasion Yeltzin grabbed the baton from the conductor of a brass band and waved it around while jiggling to the music. Throughout history, many an international crisis has been due to bad medical treatment of important people!)

Following Professor Lejeune's death we were able to get a clinic going in London—the clinic in France had to be closed. We have called it the Lejeune Clinic, and the research he began continues. It has already become a busy and recognised centre with one of the largest series of Down's Syndrome children (nearly 100) in the country. One in four of them had a low serum iron (far above the average—especially as most are middle or upper-class children); the effect of this upon cognition and memory has previously been well established in young children, adolescents and college students. Thought and memory loss occur in iron-deficiency states whether or not anaemia is present.

A further important finding was the number of children with a high blood cholesterol. Normally this is less than one percent, but seven out of the first 38 children had high blood cholesterol. Both these conditions can be treated easily and even cheaply—the latter being a question of diet—and both the child's health and intelligence improved. Possibly because our research is in a more "world" language than French, word has spread widely and there are now Lejeune clinics in Liverpool, New York, Chicago, Malta, Verona and New Delhi. We hope for one in Australia soon—"Great

oaks from little acorns grow”—Jérôme Lejeune planted an acorn many years ago, we intend to help it grow into a great oak. All children, born or unborn, healthy or handicapped, have the right to the best life that we can give them—God doesn’t make “throw-aways.”

Although the press did not make much of it at the time, Princess Diana came to visit our clinic earlier this year. Diana was the God-Mother of Domenica Lawson, who was born with Down’s Syndrome two years ago; her mother is Rosa Monckton, Diana’s “best girlfriend”—they had been on holiday together in Greece shortly before the Princess’ fatal accident in Paris (Domenica’s father is Dominic Lawson, now editor of the London *Sunday Telegraph*).

The Princess arrived quite alone, having arranged to meet Rosa there when she brought Domenica for her appointment. In fact, nobody recognised the Princess of Wales as she sat in the reception room, waiting for her friend, until a second receptionist came in and—much embarrassed—“noticed”! Diana stayed the full two hours while Domenica got a thorough examination (by a paediatrician, psychologist, speech therapist, and haematologist). Little Domenica has every chance to live a very happy life in spite of—or even *because* of?—her Down’s Syndrome; sadly, the same can’t be said of her kind and beautiful God-Mother.

As it happens, my own granddaughter Anna was born with Down’s Syndrome; the Anna Fund was established in her name. We took her to Dr. Lejeune’s Paris clinic, where he prescribed treatment, and she grew into a happy and thriving baby. Tragically, she died at six months, from an overwhelming meningitis infection—not related to Down’s Syndrome. The Anna Fund is now helping to pay expenses for families that cannot afford even the modest 25 pounds that clinic users are “invited” to contribute. Alas, the Fund is now badly in need of additional financing itself, but that is another story—I really had meant to say a bit more about events connected with the Pope’s triumphal visit to Paris.

For instance, the *Reuters* agency reported that a French “ecology” group handed out “Holy Condoms” to the young people gathered in Paris. The group, called “Chiche” (“Choice”), claimed that it was only trying to educate them on the benefits of using condoms to guard against AIDS. I have always mistrusted ecology groups. My brother had the misfortune to be the British Ambassador to Brazil at the time groups of anarchists and Marxists were kidnapping ambassadors. The first victim was the American ambassador who never recovered completely from the rough treatment. Later they kidnapped both the Swiss and German ambassadors. My brother

was forced by the Brazilian government to have two armed soldiers with him at all times, as there was evidence that he was next on the list. They finally released the ambassadors in return for an ever-increasing number of communist prisoners.

The kidnapers were not poor and down-trodden peasants (of whom there were many) but the drop-out sons of wealthy Brazilians. My brother wrote a book on his diplomatic career after he retired and, after describing his rather traumatic three years in Brazil, ended with the sentence, "After I had left they gave up kidnapping ambassadors and took up ecology instead." Quite right.

Further, I believe there exists a close relationship between ecology and eugenics. The French ecology group should certainly not be trusted: condoms used by young people under 25 have a failure rate between 18 and 25 percent. For this reason in Britain the young unmarried are given both the condom and the pill by "family planners"— what we call the "belt and braces policy" (braces in our language are not something you wear to straighten your teeth but what you call "suspenders"). As the group are so keen on their use to prevent AIDS, we can presume they promote the use of condoms by homosexuals, and here they are totally useless and even *harmful* because they give a false sense of security.

Not only are they far more likely to tear in "Gay" sex but even an intact condom is not proof against AIDS. In 1993 the trade magazine *Rubber World* published a report after research at a naval base in the U.S. which showed that the latex from which condoms are made has very small holes naturally. They are small enough to stop a sperm passing through an intact condom, but the AIDS virus is much *smaller* than the sperm. Should they wish to do so, a dozen could dance a jig in the natural apertures of the condom. Also, the editor of *Rubber Chemistry and Technology* stated: "We believe that it is misleading and possibly dangerous to those involved in AIDS to suggest that condoms are intrinsically impervious to the human immuno-deficiency virus."

It was these useless bits of latex that the French "ecologists" had cheek to try and force on young Catholics, to "liven up the participants' long nights of prayer"!

There seems to me little doubt that the viciousness of the attack on the Pope is because the winds of change are starting to blow in a pro-life direction. This is being helped by recent reports that the most "social democratic" welfare states have a rather nasty neo-fascist skeleton in their cupboard. At the end of August this year the London *Times* published an

article under the headline “The Nordic race and its rejects” and sub-headlined “Forced sterilisation did not end with Hitler”—the article describes how, for “racial purity,” forced sterilisations were carried out in Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland on “selected mentally ill or racially inferior women.” These included—of course—the mentally disabled, even those with bad eyesight and, incredibly, “Unmistakable Gypsy features”! This, they said, was done for their welfare, a sort of “Mummy State knows best” policy. Also incredibly, such brutal, compulsory sterilisation did not end until 1976. The article goes on to say that “recent revelations show that altogether 60,000 Swedes were compulsorily sterilised, 2,000 Norwegians, 6,000 Danes and thousands more in France, Belgium and Switzerland.” It makes a horrifying point about Sweden: “Swedish housing workers were told to list tenants who were unsuitable for procreation.” *This* in the 1960s and 1970s when “Sweden was offering asylum to draft dodgers puffing on marijuana joints and presenting itself as a standard bearer of freedom.” Not surprisingly, Sweden was the first western European country to legalise abortion.

The abortion-euthanasia mentality always leads down the drive to Dachau. Sweden has long considered itself to be the most ethically advanced welfare state in Europe. It smiles on easy abortion, lax sexual behaviour, pornography, bans mothers from giving their children the mildest of smacks, and encourages mothers to put their children into state nurseries at an early age and go back to work. They claimed that all this was good for their country and especially Swedish women who, in the words of International Planned Parenthood, it “empowered.” What it has done to their children only time will tell. The auguries are not good—over half of Sweden’s children are born out of wedlock.

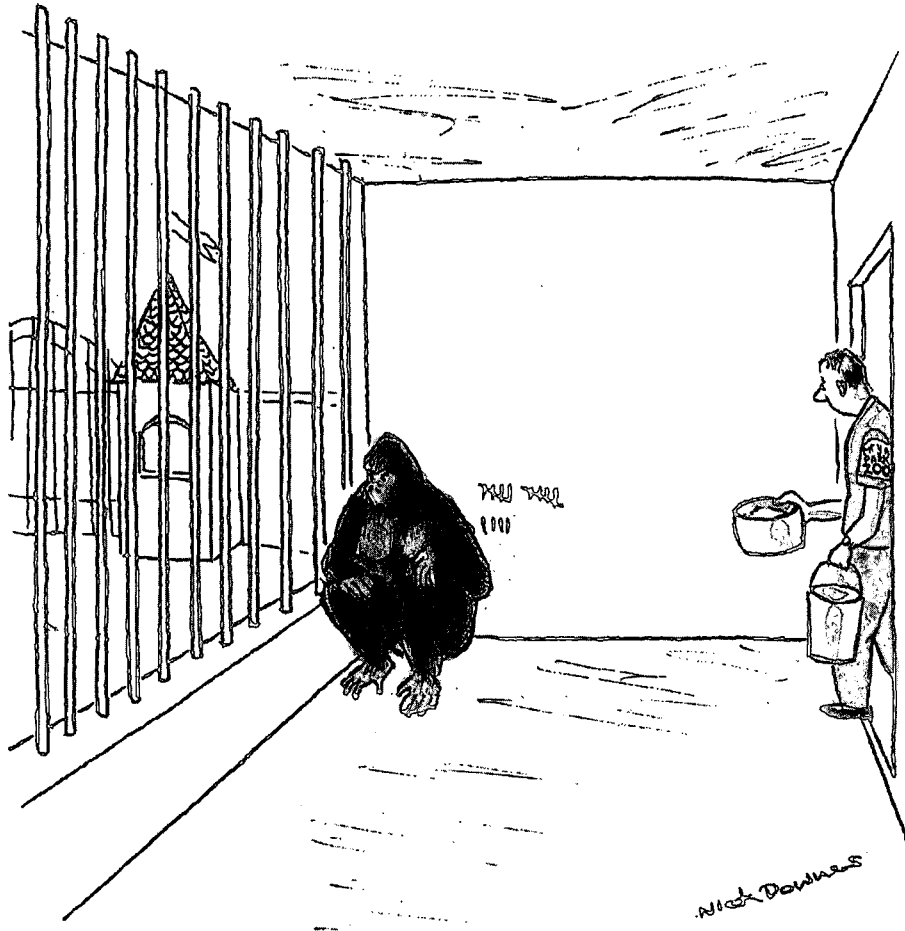
What puzzles many older people is that so many intelligent people have such a strong faith in “liberal” socialism. When Sir Christopher Wren (who designed St. Paul’s Cathedral and other beautiful churches) was asked before his death what sort of a memorial he wanted, he said he didn’t need one—all anyone needed to do was to look around them—excellent advice for those who blew up condoms and mocked Pope John Paul II.

It was at the beginning of this century that the eugenics movement was most popular. It was considered to be a way to improve the health of the nation. A better way was chosen by General Baden-Powell, the Boer War hero who founded the Boy Scouts. Left-wing atheists preferred eugenics. Margaret Sanger in the U.S.A. and Marie Stopes in Britain both believed themselves to be liberal and democratic, but called for “Racial Hygiene.”

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This fits: according to Chambers' Dictionary the word "eugenics" is from the Greek meaning "well-born" and also "pertaining to the development and improvement of offspring, especially human offspring, through judicious breeding."

Ecology, on the other hand, sounds much more innocent, being merely "Concerned with the relations between organisms and their environment," but too many ecologists care more for small snails and tall trees than humans. In Britain, thanks to ecologists, the Natter-jack Toad has more protection than the unborn child made in the image of God. But then the French ecology group, and many other ecology groups, don't believe in God—which of course is why they attack a great man like this Pope.



An unexpected interview:

“From Conception to Natural Death”

By chance one day we happened to hear Mr. Steve Forbes quoted (on the news radio station that provides background noise in the office) as saying that “Life begins at conception and ends at natural death.” That caught our ear, but by the time we turned up the volume, the reporter was already onto another item. Not surprisingly, we wished we had heard the whole story—it was surprising to hear from an “active political person” a phrase that would have been at home in a papal encyclical.

Why not hear more? We had never met Mr. Forbes, but of course we “knew” him *via* his dramatic intervention into the 1996 Republican presidential primaries. During that campaign, our impression was that he had begun with the typical “I’m personally opposed *but*” position on abortion, but had then made overtures to the “pro-life” side before his withdrawal from the race. If the news report was accurate, he had since come quite a bit further in that direction? We decided to find out, from the source if possible.

We called his office (not far from our own here in Manhattan), and were referred to his “Americans for Hope, Growth and Opportunity” group in Virginia; we explained both our interest and what our journal was all about, and suggested an interview. A few days later we got a Yes answer, and fixed the date for the morning of September 10. Our Contributing Editor William Murchison flew up from Dallas the night before, to join Managing Editor Anne Conlon for the interview.

The next morning—a wet, foggy one—we heard that Mr. Forbes was grounded at the Atlanta airport, and would have to fly direct to Dallas for a speaking engagement that night! Back to Dallas flew Mr. Murchison and, after a bit more confusion, the interview duly took place there that evening.

The interview speaks for itself. We transcribed it from an audio tape and, but for a very few “cosmetic” deletions (a repetition here, an extra “ah . . .” there) you get a record of what was said. Indeed, the recording was remarkably “clean”—both gentlemen are articulate and well-spoken—the questions were clear and the answers unusually concise, as we think you will agree.

More, there is very little to explain: Mr. Forbes early on mentions “Fitzsimmons” without identifying him—he knew that Mr. Murchison knew the name, and we imagine most of our regular readers do as well—for those who do not, Ron Fitzsimmons is the Executive Director of the National Coalition of Abortion Providers, the Washington lobby for “independent” (i.e., not part of Planned Parenthood *et al.*) abortion mills; it was Fitzsimmons who admitted that

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he “lied through my teeth” when he told Ted Koppel on TV’s *Nightline* (in November, 1995) that partial birth abortions were both “rare” and done only in “hard cases” when in fact he well knew that up to 5,000 are done yearly with *no* “medical necessity” involved, etc.

Likewise, many readers will remember that *Plessy v. Ferguson* (which Mr. Forbes compares to *Roe v. Wade*) was the 1896 Supreme Court decision that baptized “separate but equal” segregation, and that U.S. Senator Paul Coverdell is a Republican from Georgia. Beyond that, we find nothing obscure, so we’ll recall the advice of an old malaprop friend of ours, who often said “Don’t lard the lily”—read it all for yourself, it’s refreshingly honest stuff, certainly from someone who clearly intends to *remain* an “active political person”?—JPM

* * * * *

A footnote: this journal does not typically concern itself directly with political matters, if only because so few “political persons” say things that bear directly on our concerns. But it is fair to note that we first published then-President Ronald Reagan’s historic “Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation” in our Spring, 1983 issue; earlier, we also ran an article by Edmund G. “Jerry” Brown, then the Democratic Governor of California (see the Summer, 1977 issue). It is also true that we have offered our pages to a number of political figures (e.g., then-Vice President George Bush) who declined the offer; we intend to extend more such offers in due course.

A Conversation with Steve Forbes

HLR: —Mr. Forbes, you are generally identified with economic issues, but recently you've been talking about cultural issues. You have said that it's time for conservatives to take the moral high ground, which would imply that we are inhabiting a moral valley or maybe even a swamp. And I wonder if that would be an appropriate characterization of what you think about the moral tone of this country in the 1990s?

Mr. Forbes: Well, Ronald Reagan rightly recognized that if you don't have a strong moral foundation, you are not going to have real progress in this country for very long, because they go hand-in-hand. We live in a time when people have some confusion about what are the lines or guideposts, about what is right, what is wrong. I think people sense that we do need to get our bearings again. I think we are on the cusp of a renewal. You see it around the country, in the Promise Keepers. We see it in the ministries in the inner cities. We saw it in the tone of the welfare debate, which is about the fact that the old system hurt and destroyed the very people it was supposed to help and save. Now people are recognizing they've got to do it themselves, that it's not going to come from on high. We've always been a bottoms-up country, and I think you will see that again.

HLR: Something else that you have said lately is certainly very striking: that life begins at conception and ends at natural death, and I must say that's a forthright statement, and it's got strong policy implications. I am wondering what brought you to this conviction.

Mr. Forbes: It's one I've always had, and I think that if anything, science is proving it more and more, that life does begin at conception, and I think it's very important today that we underscore that life ends at natural death—because as you know, this November in Oregon they have an assisted suicide initiative on the ballot again. I think there is a good chance to defeat that initiative or roll back what they did two or three years ago, and they all tie together. And, I think what has happened on the partial birth abortion debate is very encouraging, because it shows that you can move forward on these issues. When you take a specific issue, it makes people look at it in a way they haven't done before, and that's how you gather support. As you know, experts said that there would be less support for a

ban on partial birth abortions in this Congress than there was in the previous Congress. But when Fitzsimmons acknowledged that they had lied last year on the statistics about partial birth abortions, the proponents, the advocates of a ban, went immediately to the public. They set the terms of debate, occupied the high moral ground, and therefore won more support than they had the last time. And so that's how you move an issue forward. You occupy the high moral ground, get the consensus, codify it, and then go to the next step.

HLR: So on this matter, which you have called a horrible form of infanticide, your view would be that we have moved the issue forward.

Mr. Forbes: Absolutely. And that is why even people who are normally identified as pro-choice, such as Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the senator from New York, are supporting a ban, and that's why you saw the people like Tom Daschle, the Democratic minority leader, suddenly say, "Well, we would advocate banning abortions after quickening." Well, they left a big loophole obviously, but the fact that they felt they had to put that on the table at all shows how much the terms of the debate have changed in a very positive way.

"How do you defend infanticide?"

HLR: You think that in the near future, this issue is going to hurt those who have opposed a ban?

Mr. Forbes: How do you defend infanticide? There have been several ugly examples of pregnant teenagers who abandon or kill their babies. There was one in Delaware, you may remember, who dumped the baby in a dumpster late last year.

HLR: Yes.

Mr. Forbes: And the girl at the prom. They are in legal trouble. If they had gone a few hours before to an abortionist and said, "Kill the baby," it would have been legal. That would have been legal. And people recognize that . . .

HLR: Given your stance that life begins at conception, what other steps, besides the abolition of partial birth abortions, as you have indicated . . . What do you do in order to affirm, in a public policy way, the notion that life begins at conception?

Mr. Forbes: Well, we have to recognize the ultimate goal of abortions disappearing in America. Abortions are a moral wrong. They are a great

tragedy. And given the moral progress we've had in the last twenty-three or four years—since *Roe v. Wade*—the question is, how do we get the issue moving forward on the legislative side. I think in terms of the country it is beginning to move in the right direction. But how do you push it forward? And the way you do it is to recognize that to change the law, you must change the culture. To change the culture, you change the law little by little. On partial birth abortions, there is an overwhelming consensus to codify that ban. Federal funding for abortions, most people oppose that, codify it. Abortions in late pregnancy, unless the life of the mother is at stake—ban it. Codify it. Fetal tissue research. Ban it. Also, abortions for purposes of sex selection of the baby. Codify that ban. Then you go and persuade, and go to the next step. And then the initiative is with you, because you define the terms of debate, people look at the issue in a way they've averted their eyes from before, and that's how we move forward. That's what the other side is worried about. They know that if you win one major issue, then logically you've got to go to the next one, and then the next one, and that's what they fear.

HLR: You mentioned very appropriately *Roe v. Wade*, where all this began, and I would like to know your thoughts on that decision, which destroyed in a public policy context the conviction that life begins at conception.

Mr. Forbes: Well, there are very few legal scholars who put much stock in the reasoning the court used. Even those who might agree, who might be pro-choice, recognize that the judicial reasoning was pretty sloppy and hasn't stood the test of time. It is a prime example of what has happened all too often in the last thirty or forty years, where courts act like legislatures, judges act like legislators, in effect acting like the consuls and imperators of Rome, issuing decrees from on high, and it has had a very bad impact on political life in this country. Now the fact that state legislatures were passing pro-abortion laws in the early '70s meant that, okay, you may have lost there, but then you could come back and fight the issue another day. But the Court shouldn't have gotten involved in that way. And ultimately judges do read election returns, as the saying goes, and that's why partial birth is so important. Once you establish milestones of a shift in public opinion, then I think *Roe v. Wade* will eventually go the way of *Plessy v. Ferguson*.

HLR: Let me ask about the second part of your declaration, that life ends at natural death: How would you handle the euthanasia issue?

Mr. Forbes: It's a very dark and fearful issue, because the advocates of assisted suicide are deceitfully cloaking it as a way of helping people

suffering from intense pain. They cloak it as helping somebody who is dead in all but name, but they can detect brain waves on a respirator or something like that. What we're talking about here is a fundamental violation of the principle of American law, which is that law is supposed to protect the weakest of us as well as the strong. So assisted suicide breaks a fundamental bond in a democratic society, and that is mutual support. You get in trouble, you get help; when others get in trouble, you provide help, and we're all the stronger for it. What assisted suicide does is say you are wrong to keep fighting. You are using resources that others can use, you are being selfish. It brings out the worst in human nature in a fundamental way . . . everything from greedy relatives to hospitals trying to save costs, it's turning doctors into killers. Just look at the Netherlands. They have unofficially sanctioned euthanasia, and as a result, it has now been proven by those who have studied it that thousands of patients have been killed, and they didn't even ask their permission. It's devastating, it must be fiercely resisted. It would be a bleak society where if you get ill, you're in effect told, "Don't bother us, go away."

HLR: The life issues, and I suppose abortion in particular, have united the Republican Party in the past. What do you say to arguments that the Republican Party has to be the party of the Big Tent on this issue?

" . . . a party's task is to provide worthy goals . . ."

Mr. Forbes: There is no real contradiction in the sense that with a nation as large and diverse as the United States, we're not going to have unanimity on all issues within a national party. That's a given. But what you do is acknowledge that your ultimate goal of having abortions disappear is not yet fully shared by public opinion. This is a goal . . . we have to persuade, actively persuade, to reach that goal. That's legitimate. But you don't abandon the goal just because you don't have a full, overwhelming consensus yet. Part of a party's task is to provide worthy goals, even if you are not there yet. And so voters may say, "We're not with you but at least you recognize that you have to move *us*," and they'll respect you more than if you pretend that the issue is not controversial.

HLR: What about the GOP platform?

Mr. Forbes: Again, you say with the plank, this is our goal. We don't have the public support, indeed we haven't come close to it yet. But we can agree, can we not, on partial birth? Yes. We can agree on parental

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consent for minors. Yes. And so you move them, you acknowledge that we don't have unanimity, we are not there yet, but we do hope to persuade. How can people get angry with you for saying we hope to persuade?

HLR: Are you by any chance a Fabian? *[laughter]*

Mr. Forbes: That's what I am told. *[laughter]* Certainly I am not a Fabian socialist, believe me.

HLR: Definitely not.

Mr. Forbes: Quite the opposite. Leave that to George Bernard Shaw . . .

HLR: And Sidney and Beatrice [Webb] . . .

Mr. Forbes: Who saw great things with Stalin and Hitler, but anyway that's . . .

HLR: Oh yes. I have been reading Malcolm Muggeridge's biography in the last few days.

Mr. Forbes: He saw the light.

HLR: He did indeed. He did indeed. Can the Republican Party then successfully take your message to the American people in an election and have the American people say, "Yes, this is the message that we want engraven in our law."

Mr. Forbes: Well, yes. And if you look at it just from a political point of view, we've done it successfully in the past. Part of being in the public square is to say: "How do we move an issue? How do we persuade?" If you just go by surveys or focus groups or whatever pundits are pontificating on that day, you drift, and people sense—which is one of the challenges of the Republican Party today . . . people don't believe, or are being in doubt whether there's a compass and a core in the Washington political leadership, and they are upset by it.

HLR: How do you regard the religious and cultural conservatives in the GOP? Just speaking in economic terms, as assets or liabilities . . .

Mr. Forbes: Assets. They provide the energy and the goal for the party, if you are looking at it just politically. And if you try to base the party on what political pundits in Washington tell you it should be, you won't have a political party that is a true alternative to the other party. It's very basic. And the question is not goals. The question is how do you move forward to achieve those goals? But you don't abandon the goals.

HLR: A major theme . . . *[At this point Mr. Forbes was interrupted for a moment by an aide.]*

Mr. Forbes: Okay, we've got a few minutes.

HLR: I've got just one more question to ask . . .

Mr. Forbes: Okay.

HLR: A very major theme of what I've been reading in your literature, which we pulled off the World Wide Web, seems to involve helping the American family through educational savings accounts, school choice in D.C., and even the flat tax. Comment on this, if you would.

“ . . . the tax code . . . punishes people if they get married . . . ”

Mr. Forbes: Well . . . families have been under enormous pressure in recent years, obviously from the coarsening of the culture, and from the tax code, which punishes people if they get married. And this is where Republicans missed an opportunity. Why didn't they abolish the marriage penalty? Let Bill Clinton say we can't afford to stop punishing people who tie the knot. Let him defend the indefensible. Put it on the table and pass it, put it down as a challenge. The flat tax gives generous exemptions for children, which the tax code has steadily chipped away over the last fifty years. These tax credits in the last bill, are a nice . . . you know, they provide some relief, but they've really made the tax code very complicated. But at least they acknowledge that Congress had to do something to give relief, as the code used to do, to people raising children. Don't punish the families who—a man and woman who wish to get married. That's not social engineering. That is the government stopping punishing people who are trying to do what we've been doing for 200 years. And so the flat tax is pro-family, but it also gets to the sense of civic duty in America. Americans have always hated paying taxes. They don't like them, but we've always felt it our duty to pay taxes. Our voluntary compliance has been the wonder of the world. But that sense of civic mindedness has been steadily eroded by a code that most people don't believe is fair, that they understand is absolutely incomprehensible, and that they believe is becoming a sucker's game. If you have the power, you get the break, if you don't, you get the short end of the stick. And they feel that that's unfair, and they're right. It's corrosive.

HLR: How about the school choice issue?

Mr. Forbes: Well, here is another missed opportunity. Senator Coverdell had an amendment passed that would allow people to use these new

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education savings accounts, not just for college but for primary and secondary education as well. Now those education savings accounts are funded by parents, and so it would seem basic fairness that you could use it for all forms of education, all levels of education. Clinton got the word from the bureaucrats and unions who didn't like that parents might have more choice, that they might have more control over the schools, and so he threatened to veto the whole package. We should have called him on it, gone to the people on it. Parental control of the schools is absolutely necessary. When you know you are accountable, you are more responsive. You do your job better. I visited some excellent schools recently, one called the Family Academy in Harlem, another one called the Chad School in Newark. The Family Academy does not cherry-pick its students, they—it's random selection of students each year. One sixth of those students come from homes where there are no natural parents, yet they do better, far better, on achievement tests than their peers do at many other schools. Kids can get educated if the schools do their job. But there is no accountability in a lot of those schools, especially in the inner cities.

HLR: I've got just one quick question—

Mr. Forbes: Sure.

HLR: —and then we will finish and let you get back to what you need to do. But if you were . . .

Mr. Forbes: No, no, no, we're in good shape . . .

HLR: If you were to run for president, and if the media were to label you "pro-life" Steve Forbes, how would you feel about it?

Mr. Forbes: I have always been in favor of life, and I think that's why you take an issue like partial birth abortions and begin to use that as the march forward. Otherwise, we won't make progress, and I think we can. I think the mood of the public is beginning to shift. I don't think they've realized how much they *have* moved, and an issue like this brings it to the fore. There is a shift there . . .

HLR: All right . . . [*thanks all around*]

Women: Prey for Brennan

Ann Coulter

On the occasion of Justice William Brennan's thirtieth year on the Court, his law clerks threw a party with the names of some of Brennan's most significant opinions festooning the room. When Justice Antonin Scalia dropped in, he looked at the case names and said: "My God, Bill, have you got a lot to answer for!" If the feminists are right, and God is a woman, Dante's *Inferno* will look like "Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure" compared to what Brennan must be answering for now.

Brennan is often cited for his remark that the nation's history of "romantic paternalism" had "put women, not on a pedestal, but in a cage." In the same opinion, he cited with contempt Justice Bradley's statement in a case from 1873 that "Man is, or should be, women's protector and defender."

There was certainly no danger of Justice Brennan being women's protector.

This much is evident in his determinations of what constituted pornography. Brennan used his position on the Court to grant full constitutional protection of animalistic portrayals of women. Dehumanizing depictions of men, however, Brennan deemed "obscene." In Brennan's world view, despotically imposed upon an unsuspecting public, movies with close-up shots of naked women being strangled to death or drugged and sexually assaulted were chock-full of redeeming social value. But the appearance of a single erect male member, and Brennan would whisk away the movie's constitutional cloak. Thus, according to *The Brethren*, by Bob Woodward and Scott Armstrong, Brennan's clerks referred to Brennan's obscenity test as the "Limp D--k" standard.

Pursuant to this test Brennan voted to reverse an obscenity conviction for peddling a movie, "Night of Lust," in *Hartstien v. Missouri*. The Missouri supreme court described the intriguing plot of "Night of Lust" thus:

The picture begins with a 'stripper' removing her clothing with the usual gyrations. There is then shown a scene where a girl is taking a shower. She answers the telephone and is strangled to death by an intruder. During the strangulation scene the camera presents a closeup view of the gyrating nude breasts of the victim. A few minutes later a girl is forced into the the back seat of an automobile

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and drugged. One of her captors unbuttons what appears to be a sweater or blouse revealing, again in a closeup portrayal, her gyrating naked breasts, and there occurs what appears to be an attempted sexual assault. Subsequently, at the home or place of operations of a narcotics runner and manager of prostitutes, the picture portrays several girls in various stages of undress, most of them in the nude except possibly for an almost invisible “G-string,” . . . “Night of Lust” is approximately 65 minutes in length, and approximately 40 of those minutes consist of scenes of nude girls in various poses, actions and sequences, which bear no relation to a plot, and apparently are presented for the sole purpose of depicting nude girls in activity suggestive of sexual intercourse or homosexual activity.

No naked men were shown. Consequently, viewing the uplifting “Night of Lust” now constitutes one of our precious first amendment freedoms. (However, thanks to Brennan, at least women being drugged and raped in the back seats of cars would soon have access to birth control and abortion.)

In *Pico v. Board of Education*, Brennan’s opinion for the Court ensured that there would be audiences for free speech of “The Night of Lust” genre in generations to come. He held “unconstitutional” a local school board’s removal of certain books from the school library. Brennan, it seems, couldn’t bear the thought of “local bluenoses” engaging in “censorship.” Unless every public school district in America was going to bankrupt itself buying every book ever published, the only issue was who would decide which of a limited number of books would be available: the local school board or the local school librarian.

Nonetheless, in *Pico*, Brennan sonorously wrote: “A school library, no less than any other public library, is ‘a place dedicated to quiet, to knowledge, and to beauty.’ . . . If petitioners intended by their removal decision to deny respondents access to ideas with which petitioners disagreed, and if this intent was the decisive factor in petitioner’s decision, then petitioners have exercised their discretion in violation of the Constitution.”

Here are some (not-atypical) examples of the “knowledge” and “beauty” the local bluenoses had deemed inappropriate for school children—in violation of the Constitution according to Brennan:

“. . . There are white men who will pay you to f--- their wives. They approach you and say, ‘How would you like to f--- a white woman?’ . . . And there is the type who only wants you to pile on her for a little while, just long enough to thaw her out and kick her motor over and arouse her to heat, then he wants you to jump off real quick and he will jump onto her and together they can make it from there by themselves.” *Soul on Ice* by Eldridge Cleaver, 157-158;

“sh--ty, goddamned, pissing, ass, goddamned beJesus, screwing life’s, ass, sh--. Doris was ten and had humped with who knows how many men in between . . . her current stepfather started having sex with her but good . . . If I don’t give Big

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Ass a blow he'll cut off my supply . . . and Little Jacon is yelling, 'Mama, Daddy can't come now. He's humping Carla.'" *Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous, 81 & 84;

"He had a prophylactic kit containing two tough condoms 'For the prevention of disease only!' . . . He had a dirty picture of a woman attempting sexual intercourse with a shetland pony." *Slaughterhouse Five* by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., 34.

These are only a few of the less racy quotes from the books in question. (For more, see the Appendix to Justice Powell's dissent in *Pico*.) It took the feminists—and then only some of the feminists—another decade to figure out that perhaps the local bluenoses, so despised by Brennan, were on to something.

Brennan's First Amendment jurisprudence corresponded nicely with his Eighth Amendment jurisprudence. In 1972, Brennan discovered something about the Constitution that had been long overlooked by almost 100 Supreme Court Justices, the Framers of the Constitution, countless constitutional scholars, and many others: the Constitution forbade imposition of the death penalty under any circumstances.

Perhaps not surprisingly, in view of his extension of "constitutional" protection to "Night of Lust," Brennan first discovered that the Constitution prohibited capital punishment when contemplating the fate of two convicted rapists and one murderer, who gave the case its name (*Furman v. Georgia*). One of the rapists, Lucius Jackson, had escaped from prison and broken into the house of a woman, brandished a pair of scissors demanding money, then raped her holding the scissors to her neck. The other rapist, Elmer Branch, crept through the window of a 65-year-old widow's home at 2 a.m. and proceeded to rape her. Branch continued to torment the elderly widow for another 30 minutes, demanding money and threatening to rape her again. He said he would come back and kill her if she told anyone. Both rapists were apprehended within a few hours of their crimes and positively identified by the victims.

Despite the fact that the Constitution makes three separate (and nonchalant) references to capital punishment in the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments, Justice Brennan wrote in *Furman*, "We have very little evidence of the Framers' intent including the Cruel and Unusual Punishments Clause among those restraints upon the new Government . . ." Brennan was famous for his self-serving descriptions of the "adapt[able]" Constitution. Any attribution of meaning to the Constitution's words, he disdainfully deemed sentimentality for "a world that is dead and gone." But apparently he was not above pretend-references to the "Framer's intent" for his own purposes. The rape cases convinced him that he was against the death penalty.

Amazingly—it must have been *deja vu* all over again—he found the Constitution was in accord with his views.

Brennan's deep concern for the life of convicted rapists did not extend to the life of the guiltless unborn. So, in time, the Constitution would sprout a "right" to abortion, too.

Though Brennan was one of the staunchest advocates for abortion on the Court, he never wrote an abortion opinion himself, presumably to avoid testy letters from his Bishop. It was, after all, only through the good graces of Cardinal Francis Spellman that he was on the Court. In 1956, President Dwight Eisenhower was looking for a successor to fill Justice Minton's slot on the Supreme Court, and he wanted a Catholic in order to please the influential Cardinal Spellman. So Eisenhower floated Brennan's name to Spellman, overlooking the fact that Brennan was a registered Democrat. Spellman checked with Brennan's parish priest, who gave assurances that Brennan was a good Catholic. But blood was thicker than the wafer.

In addition to his reliable pro-abortion vote, Brennan worked tirelessly behind the scenes promoting a constitutional right to abortion. But only in *Eisenstadt v. Baird* did Brennan make a public contribution to the brave new world under *Roe v. Wade*.

Brennan is credited with inventing the "privacy right," which made its debut in 1965 in *Griswold*, and which provided the necessary first step for the "right" to abortion. Though Justice Douglas's name adorns the opinion, his first draft had proposed to locate the marital "right" to birth control in the First Amendment. Brennan wrote back to Douglas suggesting instead the invention of a "right to privacy" lurking in the penumbras and emanations of the Third Amendment (against the quartering of soldiers), Fourth Amendment (against unreasonable searches and seizures) and Fifth Amendment (against taking of private property). From the newfound "right to privacy," the right to birth control for married couples would flow. Q.E.D. The logic wasn't dazzling, but it didn't need to be. As Brennan well knew, a five-vote majority means never having to say you're sorry.

In dissent, Justice Black pointed out that discerning a right to "privacy" in amendments that prohibited specific governmental intrusions was not even a logical—if far-fetched—extension of these amendments. "The average man would very likely not have his feelings soothed any more by having his property seized openly than by having it seized privately and by stealth. He simply wants his property left alone." But they didn't need his vote.

The majority opinion leapt from the heretofore unnoticed "privacy right" to an exposition on the sacredness of marriage that would make Barbara Cartland blush: "We deal with a right of privacy older than the Bill of

Rights—older than our political parties, older than our school system. [!?] Marriage is a coming together for better or for worse, hopefully enduring, and intimate to the degree of being sacred. . . . It is an association for as noble a purpose as any involved in our prior decisions.” Therefore: married men have a constitutional right to buy condoms. The house of cards built on this newly-minted “privacy right” seemed to be about as high as it could go. Then Brennan weighed in with *Eisenstadt v. Baird*.

The *Eisenstadt* opinion is significant for a number of reasons. First, it provides the crucial link between the risible “privacy right” invented in *Griswold v. Connecticut* and the sickening one invented in *Roe v. Wade*. Second, it is a profoundly stupid opinion, even by Warren Court standards. Third, it effectively announced a constitutional right to abortion, while Justice Blackmun, amidst mountains of Mayo Clinic textbooks, continued toiling away on his *Roe* opinion, like Jack Nicholson in “The Shining.”

In *Eisenstadt*, Brennan discovered another long-overlooked constitutional right: the single person’s right to contraceptive foam. This—despite the purple prose on the “sacred” marital relationship used to justify the Court’s discovery of a *married* person’s right to contraception (based on the primacy of marriage) to single coeds in *Eisenstadt*. “Whatever the rights of the individual to access to contraceptives may be,” Brennan wrote for the Court, “the rights must be the same for the unmarried and the married alike.” Suddenly the noble and sacred relationship so analytically crucial to the Court’s holding in *Griswold*—older than the Bill of Rights itself!—was incidental *dicta*.

In a calculated effort to ensure Justice Blackmun would reach the desired result in *Roe*, Brennan included this phrase in his contraceptives-for-coeds opinion: “If the right of privacy means anything, it is the right of the individual, married or single, to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion into matters as fundamentally affecting a person as *the decision whether to bear or beget a child*.” The case before the Court involved only contraception. But Brennan wrote in a right to abortion, one year before Blackmun would unveil his opinion in *Roe*.

When Blackmun finally did circulate his opinion in *Roe* to the other Justices, Brennan had several objections to the draft. According to *The Brethren*, Brennan thought that “connecting the state’s interest in the fetus to the point of viability was risky. Blackmun himself had noted that medical advances made fetuses viable increasingly early. Scientists might one day be capable of sustaining a two-week-old fetus outside the womb. *Advances in medicine could undermine the thrust of the opinion*.” Brennan also objected to Blackmun’s unseemly emphasis on the state’s interest in

the life of the fetus. Most of all, he did not think Blackmun had stressed that the woman's interest in having an abortion was the most important factor.

Consequently, Brennan sent a 48-page memo to Blackmun with his proposed revisions. He did encouragingly write that he liked Blackmun's draft very much and described his own memo as mere suggestions. Brennan intensely wanted to avoid having his 48-page list of suggestions become the majority opinion, since he was the "Catholic Justice." It was in incorporating Brennan's suggestions—particularly Brennan's objection to viability as the proposed cut-off point for his new constitutional right—that Blackmun's infamous trimester system was born.

Thus, thanks to Brennan's prodding, the Court produced probably the most analytically laughable edict ever to emerge from any branch of government in America. It was one thing for the Court to be hallucinating from "penumbras" and "emanations" to envision broad, legal-sounding (though nonexistent) "rights," such as a "right" to contraception, or a "right" to have incriminating evidence excluded in criminal trials. For the chimera to produce a "constitutional" right that was contingent upon demarcations in the development of a human fetus—and this, out of a document that simply creates a government of divided powers and provides certain specific citizen rights such as the right to bear arms and the right not to have soldiers quartered in one's home—*this* was a bald-faced absurdity.

The Mayo Clinic approach to constitutional rights was not, of course, *Roe*'s primary defect. In fact, the Court retreated from the trimester penumbra of *Roe* twenty years later, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, discarding, as Justice Scalia put it, "the arbitrary trimester framework" but retaining "the arbitrary viability test." The primary defect remained. And that was the constitutional holding, so important to Brennan, that the fetus is merely a *potential* life, unworthy of constitutional protection.

Responding in *Casey*, to "a few of the more outrageous arguments in today's opinion, which it is beyond human nature to leave unanswered," Justice Scalia wrote:

"Reasoned judgment" does not begin by begging the question, as *Roe* and subsequent cases unquestionably did by assuming that what the State is protecting is the mere "potentiality of human life." The whole argument of abortion opponents is that what the Court calls the fetus and what others call the unborn child is a human life. Thus, whatever answer *Roe* came up with after conducting its "balancing" is bound to be wrong, unless it is correct that the human fetus is in some critical sense merely potentially human. There is of course no way to determine that as a legal matter; it is in fact a value judgment. Some societies have considered newborn children not yet human, or the incompetent elderly no longer so.

The emptiness of the “reasoned judgment” that produced *Roe* is displayed in plain view by the fact that, after more than 19 years of effort by some of the brightest (and most determined) legal minds in the country, after more than 10 cases upholding abortion rights in this Court, and after dozens upon dozens of amicus briefs submitted in these and other cases, the best the Court can do to explain how it is that the word “liberty” must be thought to include the right to destroy human fetuses is to rattle off a collection of adjectives that simply decorate a value judgment and conceal a political choice.

Interestingly, Brennan’s value judgments and political choices were generally indistinguishable from the presumed value judgments and political choices of Andrew Dice Clay. He brooked no obstacles to a “woman’s” right to abortion. Never again would a single guy have to flinch upon discovering that he had impregnated any girl. If the girl was underage, Brennan had voted to strike down parental notification laws. If the girl waited too long to break the news to him, Brennan had voted against state laws that provided a set time for viability.

Nor—under Brennan’s value judgments and political choices—would the decision to abort ever weigh on either conscience or the bank account of the irresponsible male. Brennan promoted the legal fiction that the decision to abort was entirely the female’s. Thus Brennan voted to strike down laws that required a husband’s consent. (*Planned Parenthood v. Danforth*). Men need only say the word—“What are you going to do about it?”—and the baby *and* future child-support payments would be gone.

Though he lost, Brennan also voted to subsidize men who father “unwanted” babies. In *Maher v. Roe*, a majority of the Court held that the Constitution did not necessarily require the government to pay for “nontherapeutic abortions.” Brennan joined the dissent. Had Brennan’s view prevailed, the irresponsible male would not even have to spring for the cost of an abortion, before moving on to his next conquest.

In other pedestal-bashing cases, Brennan overturned a state law that allowed girls to buy beer at age 18, while requiring boys to attain the age of 21 before enjoying that great constitutional liberty. In the case in which he declared his personal creed against putting women on pedestals, Brennan held unconstitutional a federal law governing housing and medical benefits for military personnel on account of the law’s presumption that husbands, in general, supported their wives, but not vice versa (*Frontiero v. Richardson*). Thus, husbands of women in the military were required to be *shown* as dependent on their wives, whereas military wives were assumed to be dependent on their husbands for such benefits.

Interestingly, Brennan’s blindly rigid gender-neutrality had no place in

his own life. When Brennan married his secretary of 25 years three months after his wife died, his secretary promptly retired, though she had worked for the Supreme Court almost exactly as long as he had.

In the military benefits case, Brennan cited as authority the as yet unratified Equal Rights Act. The sheer presumptuousness of relying on a law contemporaneously wending its way through the democratic process, produced a disbelieving dissent from Justices Powell, Rehnquist, and Blackmun. In the event, actual women were apparently not so enthralled with Brennan's vision of women as soldier-bread-earners, strippers, whores, and baby-aborting sexual playthings: The ERA, of course, never was ratified in a country where women are the majority, despite an unconstitutional extension of time for ratification. But—another part of Brennan's world view—"Faith in democracy is one thing. Blind faith quite another," as he told a Georgetown law school audience in 1985.

It was just this contempt for democracy and the rule of law that form the gravamen of the Borkian complaint with Brennan and his imitators. A judge who never issues an opinion reluctantly is not a disinterested interpreter of the law, any more than a referee who makes all calls in favor of the team he is betting on. Brennan's rulings were a lie, and he cheated Americans out of a democratic government time and again.

This is all true, but to stop there is a coward's criticism of the man. If Brennan's personal preferences had simply entailed allowing 20-year-old naturalized citizens to run for President, and he had employed his constitutional wizardry to so reinterpret the Constitution, his contempt for the rule of law would be intact, but so would be about 30 million fetuses. To leave criticism of Brennan at his abuse of process is a little like leaving criticism of Hitler at his being a fascist—*That guy's as bad as Franco*. It isn't just that Brennan despotically imposed his personal views on the rest of the country. It is what those views *were*.

It was that Brennan's vision for America entailed a world where school-children have a constitutional right to read about women being raped and sodomized, others have a constitutional right to watch movies with erotic scenes of women being strangled, drugged and sexually assaulted, still others have a constitutional right to rape and murder actual women without risking capital punishment, and preying males have a "constitutional" right to have casual sex without personal consequence.

Perhaps Cardinal Spellman misunderstood what the parish priest had said. Perhaps it was: Brennan preyed a lot.

None of Our Business?

Candace C. Crandall

A woman faced with the decision of whether or not to seek an abortion will ask herself many questions. The question she may least consider—until after the fact—is how an abortion will affect her future health. Will it jeopardize her ability to have other children? Will it increase her chance of developing a life-threatening disease, like breast cancer?

With tens of millions of women having undergone one or multiple abortions, these are questions for which there are still no definitive answers. Not because science is unable to provide them, but because political pressures work against objective research.

Instead, women who have had abortions are subject to an almost monthly assault of conflicting information about what risks, exactly, they may have incurred. On the cancer issue, for instance, media reports produced the following over three years: “Higher risk of breast cancer found in young women who had abortions” (October 1994); “Strong abortion-breast cancer link revealed” (October 1996); “New study questions abortion-cancer link” (December 1996); “Study finds no link between abortion and breast cancer” (1997). Reports have raised the specter of other potentially serious long-term health effects—among them infertility, miscarriage, and ectopic pregnancies—only to have them refuted by one study, and then raised again by another. Which is right?

Journalists often have their own ax to grind on this issue, of course, but even the few who attempt to interpret the research objectively run into a wall of half-truths and distortions. Try to obtain unbiased information on abortion-related health risks and here are some of the “experts” one encounters:

At one end of the spectrum is Joel Brind, professor of endocrinology at the City University of New York and a celebrity in the pro-life camp, who publishes a newsletter called the *Abortion-Breast Cancer Quarterly*. Brind is often quoted by journalists on the abortion issue, but his publication sounds less than scientific, fond as he is of words like “cover-up,” “crisis pregnancy,” “desperate mothers,” and “mainstream denial” of “a woman’s right to know.” “Is it worth \$45 a year,” he asks in his advertisements, “to spare even *one woman* the life-threatening agony of *breast cancer*?”

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[Emphasis his.] Subscribe now and he'll throw in a free, autographed copy of his latest analysis.

But are those in the pro-choice camp any more reliable? And should federal agencies responsible for monitoring the nation's health be disseminating these advocates' research as the last word in objectivity? Carol Rowland Hogue, a feminist academic who holds an endowed chair at Emory University in Atlanta, reviews research papers on the effect of abortion on future reproduction. Her conclusions are cited and distributed by the federal Centers for Disease Control. But get her on the telephone and it becomes clear that she prefers lengthy harangues against the pro-life movement to any boring discussion of health risks. And when she does discuss such risks, her views sound disturbingly tainted by personal politics.

Hogue notes approvingly, for example, that "many feminists now recommend barrier devices, backed up by abortion" as the "safest" contraceptive strategy for women. When asked if that wouldn't encourage multiple abortions, she replies that multiple abortions are not a problem. After all, she says, in Eastern Europe under the communists, it was not uncommon for women to have as many as twenty-five abortions and feel no ill effects at all. Besides, women who have multiple abortions really can't help it. Such women, Hogue insists, are simply "more fertile" than other women. And how does she know? Because studies comparing women one month after an abortion with women one month after childbirth show that the abortion group have much higher rates of repeat pregnancy during that period.

That such a remark might sound idiotic to some women—particularly those who know firsthand just how sexy they feel within a month of having a baby—apparently never occurs to Hogue. But don't ask her to elaborate. When I did she bristled: "It's apparent that I'm not talking to someone with an open mind on this issue!"

The effect is to leave those of us trying to sort out the facts caught somewhere between "The sky is falling!" and "What, me worry?" Anecdotal reports of risks related to abortion, particularly miscarriage, are troubling. Of the six women I know who have had abortions, five later experienced multiple miscarriages and were unable to carry a pregnancy to term. But this kind of evidence can be misleading too.

The problem—and this is true for epidemiological research as well—is that it is impossible for an observer to know all of the other risk factors such women may have incurred. Genetic predisposition, for example, may present the clearest risk for developing breast cancer, but other studies have implicated fatty diets, alcohol consumption, oral contraceptives, pesticides, a late first pregnancy, smoking, failure to breast-feed, age at the

onset of menstruation, and even a woman's weight at birth! Similarly, a woman's ability to become pregnant and successfully carry a pregnancy to term may be adversely affected by age, a history of IUD use, sexually transmitted disease, pelvic inflammatory disease, inherited physiological disorders, and even psychological problems.

Epidemiologists trying to credibly establish, or disprove, a connection between abortion and disease or dysfunction have to try to eliminate or in some way account for these other risk factors. Certainly many women experience infertility, miscarriage, and breast cancer, with no previous history of abortion; others who have had abortions may have no problems at all.

What is worse, getting sound health information to the public is hampered by the fact that we live in an era of grant-driven research, where vague conclusions and poorly designed studies are nevertheless used to grab headlines, whip up public hysteria, underpin absurd government policies on everything from radon exposure to secondhand smoke—and get more grants. Two years ago in the *New York Times*, Dr. Charles H. Hennekens of the Harvard School of Public Health characterized the situation with surprising honesty: “Epidemiology is a crude and inexact science. Eighty percent of the cases are almost all hypothesis. We tend to overstate findings, either because we want attention or more grant money.”

Those of us who follow this degradation of science tend to take a cynical view of new research results, particularly those announced with great fanfare at press conferences. But here are the troubling facts we do know: the incidence of breast cancer among women took a big jump after 1980, particularly among black women under fifty, a group that also shows a high rate of abortion. Breast cancer among men, a more rare condition, increased not at all. What is more, the possibility that undergoing an induced abortion can increase a woman's risk of developing breast cancer—or lead to problems with infertility and miscarriage—is biologically plausible, and that is the first test of whether a risk factor should be taken seriously or not.

What may link abortion to breast cancer is this: in pregnancy, a woman's body experiences a huge surge in the hormone estrogen—as much as twenty-fold—resulting in dramatic increases in the number of new breast cells. Because of the known link between estrogen and cancer, these rapidly dividing new cells are thought to be particularly susceptible to malignancy. But then something interesting happens. While estrogen begins the process of rapid cell division and tissue growth, a second hormone released during the last trimester shuts it down, allowing the cells to mature

and differentiate into specialized cells that can produce milk. This hormone also sorts out and eliminates cells growing out of control, making the woman's breast tissue actually less susceptible to cancer. An abortion, whether performed in a clinic or induced chemically—with RU-486, for example—would interrupt the release of this protective second hormone.

Evidence purporting to show a positive association between induced abortion and breast cancer was first published in 1957 in Japan in a comprehensive study examining risk factors for cancer. Since then, more than forty studies have looked at induced abortion as a possible risk factor for breast cancer but, like the Japanese study, the overwhelming majority were not designed to examine solely the breast cancer/induced abortion relationship. Instead, they combined induced abortion with spontaneous abortion (miscarriage), oral contraceptive use, environmental factors, and other risks, which tended to confuse conclusions about any effect attributable solely to abortion. Moreover, many studies did not control for age, family history, or other contributing factors such as diet, alcohol consumption, and income, which affects a woman's access to health care. When a positive association was found, it was often dismissed as largely due to "recall bias"—the notion that when women are asked to recollect risk factors, those stricken with breast cancer are more likely to reveal a past abortion than those free of disease.

As a result, little public attention was paid to a possible breast cancer/abortion link until 1994, when Janet Daling, of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, published a paper in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*. She concluded that women who had undergone an induced abortion incurred a fifty percent greater risk of developing breast cancer before age forty-five, with even higher risks for women under eighteen or over thirty at the time of their abortions, or for those who had aborted a pregnancy after the eighth week. For the women aged seventeen or younger who aborted a first pregnancy after the eighth week—a small subset of Daling's study—the risk went up an alarming eight hundred percent.

Interestingly, Daling found that a miscarriage did not elevate a woman's risk of breast cancer. She speculated that, with miscarriage, the fetus may have died days earlier than when it was actually expelled or that the woman may not have experienced a sufficient hormonal surge to sustain the pregnancy to begin with. Even more intriguing, Daling tested for "recall bias" by conducting a concurrent study of induced abortion and cervical cancer. Experts agree there is no relationship between abortion and cervical cancer, but if "recall bias" was a factor, this study should have turned up a similar elevated risk; it did not.

Daling, who is pro-choice (in the current climate, scientists must now state their politics along with their results), was unprepared for the furor her report touched off. Pro-choice activists sought to discredit her conclusions; even some of her own colleagues implied that she had somehow cooked her results to impede a woman's legal right to abortion. Editors at the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* got so testy, they took the unusual step of publishing an editorial disclaimer in the same issue as Daling's report.

But since 1994, seven additional studies have been published, honing in on the breast cancer/induced abortion relationship. Results have been mixed. Daling also published a study of abortion and breast cancer among young white women in August 1996; she found a ninety percent increased risk. In December 1996, the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* published a Dutch study that also found a ninety percent increased risk, but the editors—and the authors themselves—then went to great lengths to explain why the results were irrelevant, including a claim of reporting bias among Catholic women.

Then, this past January, a retrospective look at the medical records of 1.5 million Danish women was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The authors concluded that induced abortion posed no increased risk of breast cancer and only a tiny risk for those having late-trimester abortions; indeed, an editorial in the same issue stated flatly that now “a woman need not worry.”

Unfortunately, the Danish study has since been shown to have serious flaws. The authors admitted in their report that they “might have obtained an incomplete history of induced abortions for some of the oldest women” in the group, an error that likely misclassified tens of thousands of women with breast cancer as having had no abortions. In addition, many of the younger women studied—those who'd had the most abortions—had not yet reached an age where most breast cancers begin to develop.

So what are women to make of the cancer risk? To begin with, the association between induced abortion and an overall increase in the risk of breast cancer is still weak. Even Joel Brind concedes this. Claims by some pro-life activists that thousands of breast cancer deaths are attributable solely to induced abortion cannot be credibly substantiated, and allegations of a “cover-up” are needlessly inflammatory. But neither can we confidently insist—as some in the pro-choice movement do—that there is no risk. Scattered throughout these studies are unsettling results among certain subsets of women: Daling's teenagers in her 1994 paper, for example; women who have undergone second- and third-trimester abortions (also

heavily represented among teenagers); or women who aborted a first pregnancy after age forty.

It would be premature to draw any conclusions from the incidence of breast cancer in these women, because the smaller the group studied the larger the margin for error. But researchers are getting better at identifying high-risk populations. What is needed now is to locate such women at the time of their abortions and to track them over time. That is a costly process that yields no quick answers, but it could yield some conclusive ones.

For many women, however, risks to future pregnancies are a much greater and more immediate concern than cancer, especially since environmentalists in recent years have repeatedly promoted various bogus cancer scares, even as life expectancy has gone up and up. Surveys by the Alan Guttmacher Institute show that just over seventy percent of the women undergoing abortion do intend, at some point, to have other children. And here, some noteworthy developments have taken place. The Family Growth Survey of the National Center for Health reports that women who have never had a child, who once accounted for just seventeen percent of all women experiencing infertility and miscarriage, now account for half, with married black women showing higher rates than married white women.

In fact, women have been flooding into fertility clinics in recent years, and physician visits to treat infertility have more than tripled in the last three decades. Researchers peg this change to a greater prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and pelvic inflammatory disease and, perhaps more important, baby boomers delaying marriage and childbearing until their late thirties or early forties. But how much of that delay is due to abortion, no one seems to know.

Abortion and Women's Health, a publication of the Alan Guttmacher Institute—which is partly funded by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, an abortion provider—reassures women about future fertility, citing “an extensive review of the worldwide literature,” conducted by researchers from the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Population Council—*i.e.*, Carol Hogue and colleagues. It concludes that a single, first-trimester abortion by vacuum aspiration entails no increased risk of subsequent infertility, ectopic pregnancy, or miscarriage. But it is only by reading the footnotes that one learns that this review was published way back in 1982. Moreover, Hogue’s review hedges on the effect of multiple abortions or abortions after the first trimester, saying only that additional research is needed.

Susan Tew, deputy communications director for Guttmacher, concedes that its data on long-term risks are pretty old and “pretty poor.” The National Abortion Federation should have this information “but they don’t

because the providers don't follow up on their patients." Also, she says, pregnancy risks can be difficult to measure because the primary cause may be STDs or infection.

Ay, and there's the rub. Aside from those instances where an abortion turns out badly and the woman ends up with a hysterectomy, only a handful of infertility cases have been attributed solely to induced abortion—such as cases where fetal bone fragments have been left in the uterus where they act, researchers believe, in much the same way as an IUD. But several studies have now shown an association between induced abortion in women with untreated sexually transmitted disease—largely chlamydia—and infertility and miscarriage. Chlamydia, it must be noted, has reached epidemic proportions in the United States, with nearly half a million cases diagnosed each year.

In 1992, a Danish study found that twenty percent of the women harboring chlamydia at the time of their abortions progressed to pelvic inflammatory disease, a serious chronic infection which can result in miscarriage and/or scarring of the fallopian tubes. Of those, ten percent became infertile and twenty-two percent miscarried a subsequent pregnancy. The researchers advised that women seeking abortion be examined for chlamydia and treated with appropriate antibiotics no later than at the time of their abortion. Another Danish study, published in Germany in 1994, found that seventy-two percent of the women studied whose chlamydia was not treated at the time of their abortions, progressed to pelvic inflammatory disease within two years. Debates over whether pregnancy problems that may arise from this effect are truly "abortion-related" hinge on whether the STD is considered the primary cause, even if the abortion was the mechanism for introducing infection into the uterus.

Meanwhile, each year some seven hundred thousand American women undergo at least their second abortion, some three hundred thousand at least their third. According to the CDC, about fifteen percent of all abortions in the United States will be performed in the second trimester or later. Yet incredibly, there is little research being done on the effect of multiple and late-term abortions on women's future reproduction. In the dozen or so states that have Supreme Court-sanctioned informed consent laws, women are told that multiple abortions may make it difficult to have children later in life. Some infertility support groups also list two or more abortions as a risk factor for infertility and miscarriage.

But an updated review of the literature published in 1990, again by Carol Hogue and colleagues, still focused only on single, vacuum-aspiration

abortions performed during the first trimester. The report concluded that there were generally no long-term risks, except in those abortions complicated by infection, but noted that “a variety of conditions”—among them sterility, miscarriage, tubal pregnancies, stillbirths, premature births, birth defects, and emotional disorders—had been “ascribed anecdotally to induced abortion.”

So what we have at this point are some associations between induced abortion and long-term health risks that are biologically plausible, and some evidence along the lines of what we might expect to see if indeed there were a cause-and-effect relationship. What we don't see (and unfortunately the definitive studies are not being done) is conclusive statistical evidence linking the two.

This controversy, however, should provoke caution. Political pressures—as demonstrated by the editorial disclaimers accompanying abortion studies published in scientific journals—work against the funding of abortion research. Moreover, because breast cancer in women usually develops after age forty, if there is any increased risk to certain subgroups—i.e., women who aborted a first pregnancy before age eighteen—the first of these cancers would only just now be showing up twenty-five years after *Roe v. Wade*.

It cannot be stressed enough that having an abortion, whether chemically or surgically induced, can carry certain risks. As Susan Tew of the Alan Guttmacher Institute puts it, the magnitude of these risks may “depend on how well the patient chooses to inform herself.” In the current political climate, obtaining accurate information is almost impossible. And as deliberately misleading as some pro-life activists can be, much of the blame for this situation must fall on those who have made abortion an unassailable shibboleth.

The bottom line is that women seeking abortions would do well to identify factors that may put them into one of the groups thought to be at a higher risk for breast cancer, and take that into consideration when making their decision. They should certainly ensure that any sexually transmitted disease is diagnosed and treated before undergoing an abortion. And, given the uncertainties, women should regard the idea that multiple abortion is a reasonable contraception strategy as the obvious nonsense that it is. There are many debatable points about this issue. Health should not be one of them.

Al Gore's Tobacco Road

William Murchison

Long before he was a presidential aspirant, second in command of the U.S. government, and dialer-in-chief for Democratic dollars—long before this, Al Gore was a brother. He had a sister, named Nancy.

At age 18, Nancy began to smoke cigarettes—a common enough pastime in those relatively innocent days; almost too common to excite notice. She ignored subsequent pointed warnings that tobacco smoke was slowly killing her and, at age 45, Nancy Gore Hunger died of lung cancer. Most Americans had not known of her life and death until August 28, 1996, when Al Gore, accepting his party's vice-presidential nomination, gave them international currency.

The still-grieving brother—increasingly a full partner in the let-it-all-hang-out style of modern America—spoke of his sister's death in terms that awoke in listeners the pangs of anguished sympathy. In Nancy's last moments, Al related, he held her hand tenderly. Quietly she passed from this world to the next one.

Then the peroration, the thunderous coda, with rhetorical kettle drums banging in the background. The Vice President of the United States, next in line for the most powerful job in the world, pledged forevermore to—“pour my heart and soul into the cause of protecting our children from the dangers of smoking.”

No doubt it had to happen. Save the world from Communism and what's left for the world's mightiest secular enterprise—the United States government—to save us from? Cigarettes, anyone?

The semi-comical nature, in this solemn context, of a pledge to combat the Manufacturers and Purveyors of Tobacco sailed completely over the heads of Gore's audience, which was feeling keenly the pain he had wanted them to feel. As they used to say in show biz, there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

Better than a year later, the election over and done with, the music Gore sought self-consciously to make strikes false chords. Tears, emotion, a pledge to fight and contend with and conquer . . . cigarettes. Something is not quite right here. Suppose that *Nessun Dorma*, as its concluding stanzas arc heavenward, dissolved suddenly into “Luckenback, Texas”? There is

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something of the same falseness, the same impropriety, in Gore's attempt to enlist our society in a holy war against . . . cigarettes. Well, anyway, at a moment when deadlier, surer killers than cigarettes infest our culture.

Whether or not the Gore Anti-Smoking Pledge turns up in political anthologies, next page over from Daniel Webster's "Liberty and union, now and forever," it has important uses. It reminds us how deep is the chasm between . . . let's call them the material and the spiritual understandings of human life. Most of all, it reminds us on what side of the chasm our culture, contrary to its founding traditions, and the development of those traditions, and their flowering and flourishing, presently squats.

On Al Gore's say-so, we are to protect our children from cigarettes. All right. For all that Gore himself, stumping in Tennessee, used to parade his devotion to the tobacco industry, who will argue against the prudential exercise of personal choices? Not I, brother. Asthmatic from age two, I was solemnly warned by doctors and parents alike never ever under any circumstances to smoke because if I did, I would die, see? This is the sort of thing that tends to impress even thick-skulled individualists, not naming any names. With asthma it is difficult enough at the best of times to breathe. I have never ever smoked.

Gore's rhetoric, nonetheless, conceals a modern irony: to wit, if you don't get born in the first place, you won't have to worry about lung cancer or emphysema carrying you off. What about abortion as a health menace? It strikes many, no doubt, that interventions which kill you on the front end are of more immediate concern than personal choices which may—or may not kill you four or five decades later.

So the Vice President (and his political superior, the President) would protect us from cigarette smoke. Okey-dokey. Would they likewise stand between unborn babies and paid abortionists, or for that matter women whose first maternal act is to locate the nearest dumpster? They wouldn't? They've nothing whatever to say in this line? On the contrary, they would defend in the last ditch every American woman's "right to choose"? You bet they would, as would their political party.

As this particular coin flies onto the political counter, there is the dull clunk of phoniness. What we learn is this: Our nation's top office-holders see no hearts to be wrung, no votes to be gathered, from pleas to spare unborn life. Life, yes—we're in favor of life. Don't smoke! (Doncha know how finicky abortion clinics can get about air quality?) Sell tobacco stocks! Get the polluters!

What a flip-flop in just three decades' time: a cultural reversal more dramatic than anyone living on the cusp of the revolution could possibly

have foreseen. Remember when abortion was illegal and relatively few fretted about cigarettes? This was the old culture speaking. Its judgment concerning tobacco was, as circumstances have shown, hardly flawless but, *then*, the surgeon general's report on smoking was a new commodity—a matter that required some absorption. Turning against, or merely turning away from, an ancient practice like the smoking break comes less automatically, even with the light of new knowledge, than the anti-smoking lobby acknowledges.

Of greater moment, in any case, was the old culture's judgment on abortion, a far more ancient practice. The old culture condemned abortion sternly, vigorously. So what if the culture understood that to speak a prohibition is not the same as making it stick in every case? If the prohibition stuck only in the majority of cases, this meant hundreds of thousands of American lives spared every year. It meant, in a loftier way, the maintenance of official respect for life as over against human casualness and indifference.

In Robert Graves' words, goodbye to all that! Our political leaders today, addressing the wider public whose votes they covet, know with moral certitude that the public doesn't care to hear about unborn life, preserved or extinguished either one. No, what the public wants to hear about is the wickedness of particular habits that undermine personal health. Events have stood the old culture on its head. What formerly was evil is OK; what used to be OK is evil. It is a mighty mess—one that leaders like the Vice President (and their speechwriters) compound with their tear-jerking expostulations.

Not to beat too insistently on the highly exposed noggin of Al Gore, whose current problems, putting it mildly, have nothing to do with rhetoric and bathos. This essay is no more about Al Gore (including the formerly somewhat anti-abortion Gore) than it is about the pros and cons of cigarette smoking. It is about the whirlpool of contradictions in which secularism and materialism immerse us. Gore's speech to the Democratic National Convention is one of many examples that could be adduced. It just happens to be a particularly fetching example.

The secular culture that sways, without quite dominating, the 1990s claims a powerful love of life. Are we not impressed? It depends, possibly on what one means by life. One thing the culture unmistakably means by life is "health": the deliciously-toned body, firm where firmness is wanted, yielding when it ought to yield, glistening with life and with promise. Health clubs are as ubiquitous as churches, and many are better patronized.

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Public streets teem with glazed-eyed, thin-lipped joggers living out the commitment to physical well-being, their pounding feet substituting for the clasping together of hands in prayer, the conditioning of the body for the discipline of the soul.

Is anything amiss, broadly and generally speaking, with commitment to health? Hardly. The lazy old attitude toward exercise—defined supposedly by Dr. Robert M. Hutchins as “Whenever I feel in the need of exercise, I lie down until the feeling passes”—has lost resonance. Exercise lengthens life, keeps the body working. I do it myself—on a regular (likely enough, not regular enough) basis at the YMCA. My hero is a nonagenarian member, a Milton Friedman look-alike, who survived the Armenian massacres of 80 years ago, moved in due course to Texas and, until natural infirmities overtook him a year or two ago, began his daily workout with a brisk set of push-ups, always deftly executed.

If the body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, surely that temple should be kept fresh and clean. Why leave the door unlocked: an invitation to the disorders of daily life to walk in and take charge? Warnings to desist from smoking and other injurious pastimes make perfect sense.

Of course, as usual, humans act with mixed motives. There is more, in all this, than simple reverence for life. There exists always the human desire to thrust away death. Whoever thinks the 20th century invented this impulse has not looked lately at pictures of the Pyramids. There is likewise the continuing aversion to pain. As C.S. Lewis rightly reminds us, pain has its uses, but few seek it, and when they do, psychiatry calls them uncomplimentary names. As for others' pains, bred in modern society is a desire to minimize others' pains. This bespeaks compassion. Mother Teresa, on her death, was universally extolled for her holy war on the suffering of the poor. Princess Diana, who had died a few days earlier, was being exhibited then, and still is, as a humanitarian deeply attached to the plight of suffering children.

Then there is the factor—and it cannot be underestimated—of latent, lingering Puritanism. We never get rid of it quite—the wish to take from others their favorite diversions; ice cream, liquor, wine, tobacco. The busy-body instinct rises in the best of us. If it's bad for us (or if for subjective reasons we just plain don't like it), it must be bad for everyone else! Puritanism only *sounds* like a religious impulse. It exists in secular as well as religious circumstances. There are those who simply *deserve* our reproaches. At the top of that modern list are smokers, whose habit we take personally, having decided rightly or wrongly that smoke is lethal for non-smokers as for smokers.

For all these reasons, a modern vice president, accepting his party's second highest honor, is on solid grounds retailing to a theoretically political audience his personal knowledge of suffering and hardship, caused by a newly-famous health menace.

The task of a politician, prior to his leading in one direction or another, is connecting with the people he would lead. The old connection of shared economic suffering is less viable in a world where such suffering exists to a much smaller extent than it used to. Economic prosperity in the America of the 'Nineties is well-nigh universal; however, physical infirmities persist, hard as we work at thrusting them from sight. Breast cancer, prostate cancer, lung cancer pop up; heart disease; Parkinson's; lupus; Lou Gehrig's disease; almost supremely in our time, AIDS, which mocks the asserted ability to do whatever one likes without the piper's coming around, presenting a bill for payment.

In all these "daily spectacles of mortality"—the Book of Common Prayer's pious old phrase—we set aside claims, real or imputed, to transcendence. How mortifying is the experience! Few but saints relish the pain, the throbbing ache that whispers, in essence, "Gotcha!"

The ticket—the political ticket, that is—is assimilating this fact of nature while showing how needless were particular physical hardships and infirmities. "It didn't have to happen"—the eternal cry of victimhood—gives resonance to the purely political proposition that "Because it happened, we have to do something."

We do try to Do Something. All the time we try. Something is always going on in the relief-of-pain department, the lengthening-of-life venue. Just how much, I got to wondering one day in early September. I scrolled the national newswires to find out. Here is what I discovered.

The federal government was calling for better health programs on college campuses. The government had surveyed 4,609 students at 136 universities. The tidings were doleful: 27 percent said they drove after drinking, 31 percent smoked regularly, and nearly half had tried marijuana. Less than a third reported using a condom during their most recent sexual exploit. In light of such data, university health centers, it was suggested, need to Do Something.

Then we got into smoking. "Passive Smoke," said the headline, "Tied to Decline of 'good' Cholesterol." The point: Exposure to passive smoke at home lowers "good" HDL cholesterol—the kind that helps you fend off heart attacks—by up to ten percent. The researchers had reached this conclusion after surveying 103 children, ages two to 18, with elevated

cholesterol. We needed to Do Something.

Kids were far from the only victims of thoughtless family members. In Chicago, a retired Army colonel was suing his wife of 43 years under the federal Clean Air Act, asking that her cigarette smoke be declared a cancer-causing pollutant. His lawyer explained: "He feels that not only is she killing herself, but she is killing him." (And how were these incivilities affecting the marriage? "They get along except for this," replied the lawyer. "I don't think she cooks for him any more, probably just cold soup.") Well. Here at least was a guy who was Doing Something.

Illegal drugs drew attention in California. U.S. anti-drug "Czar" Barry McCaffrey, in San Diego, forecast overhaul of the process whereby Washington reviews and certifies the drug-impeding efforts of Mexico and other drug-producing countries. In Los Angeles, a city councilman was charged with one felony count of cocaine possession.

There was more, but you get the idea. Oh, what good boys are we—and good girls, as well. How energetic in the defense of life and health! With that one exception—which turns out to be an exception so large you could drive an 18-wheeler through it without sacrificing a fleck of paint. What are we doing about unborn life? Every story on the news directory, the day I scrolled it, dealt with born life exclusively. True enough, from time to time abortion is news, often big news, but not this day. Health was news; life, in its essence, wasn't.

The Preservation of Life as the 20th century breathes its last, turns out to be a part-time mission, dictated by the perceived necessities of existence. As long as we're here, let's make the most of it. On the other hand, if we're not here yet—or we're failing for one reason or another to make the most of things—well, that's different. The modern age's distinctions about life are fussy and exasperating. Not to say deadly.

What can the missing element be if not a theology of life? A spiritual theology as opposed to a purely physical one; a theology of soul to complement, sometimes to override, a theology of pure flesh and muscle.

Life that you can see and touch, indeed leave fingerprints upon; life stretchable, compressable, expandable—with such life secular society is wonderfully equipped to deal. Life fully formed; sweating on the treadmill, performing a hundred push-ups, signing an anti-cigarette petition, voting for Al Gore; above all, perhaps, engaged in acts of sexual fulfillment: here is what the expiring 20th century means by meaningful life.

The secularity and materialism of the century gleam in every pore. Materialism says, in essence, what counts is the present moment. What is

here and now is the thing that matters: *these* muscles, *these* organs. The barely formed (as with fetuses), the gradually disintegrating (as with the seriously afflicted and the dying) reduce to spirit much more than body. In matters of pure spirit—a non-material commodity that no one can see—who can truly arbitrate? The owner, comes back the answer. Who else? The womb-landlady, vital and vigorous, as against her troublesome tenant. The pain-wracked, or simply bone-tired, sufferer as opposed to loved ones and doctors and priests concerned not just about pain but about matters that transcend pain.

Leave aside its unremarkable priggishness; the late 20th-century's concern with life, and its abhorrence of suffering, are badges of honor. By all rights we should rejoice to see these things. Some of us don't? That must be because the angle of vision is wrong. We see only in part.

The century's equation of life with physicality can be accounted for to some extent by the sheer blood-thirstiness and cruelty of life ever since August, 1914. A little concern for mere living and loving would not have come amiss at the Somme, or in the Ukraine in the 'Thirties, not to mention the death camps of the Third Reich and the peasant huts of the Chinese countryside, where the Great Helmsman, Chairman Mao, starved to death untold millions.

Against 20th century compassion has to be weighed, nevertheless, 20th century materialism—the materialism that prefigured and blessed these great crimes in the first place. The times are deeply de-spiritualized. The body as a public concern comes first. The soul rates as too theological a thing for statesmen to worry about. God's connection to the physical realm, on which He long held the patent (until in latter times it was wrested from Him and assigned to Random Material Forces), seems to stop with the imputed miracles of the Old and New Testaments. When did he last knock over a city with trumpets and shouting, or feed more people than McDonalds, huh?

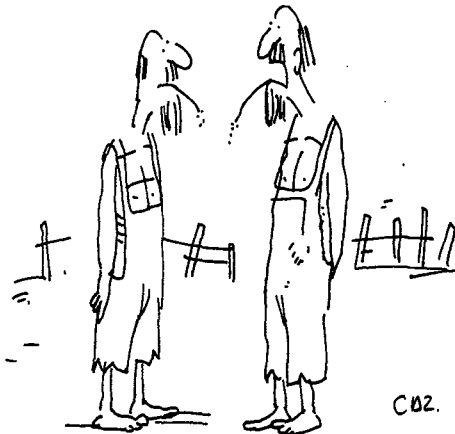
Small wonder the unseen elements of Divinity (grace, spirit, souls, etc.) never cross the political radar screen anymore. As the 20th century of the Christian era nears its close, God is in high degree a backdrop to the things that physical men and women are doing physically, to and for other physical beings. To note that souls come clad in bodies would be to disturb the intellectual equilibrium. Good materialists would take offense. They might even vote the wrong way, upsetting thereby the whole purpose of talking to them in the first place. Better to keep quiet about such things, avoiding stands that could be construed as coming down on one side or

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the other of questions concerning the Divine Backdrop.

The materialists have it half right: Matter matters. The other half of the proposition—spirit matters—they attempt to shove, often with the complicity of the nominally religious, out of sight and mind. Which is why body clubs and abortion clinics flourish as it were cheek by jowl. And why euthanasia and “assisted suicide” increasingly fascinate and tempt the culture. What’s to lose? A worn-out body. *Just* a body? Yes, that’s about it, reply the likes of Jack Kevorkian, whose interest in souls and non-material connections to the Creator God would have to be rated marginal at most.

A couple of weeks after first checking out such “health” stories as were in the news in early September, I tried again. Life went on in its familiar groove. Though Al Gore by now was busy hiring lawyers to defend him in the campaign-contribution scandal, his boss, the President of the United States, was pressing fearlessly ahead in the war against tobacco. He wanted a tougher, more stringent settlement with the tobacco companies than state attorneys-general had negotiated earlier; he wanted more money from these malefactors, tougher guarantees that America’s children won’t in future be tricked into lighting up, hence into signing their own death warrants. He spoke of “children” without the slightest touch of irony, I am certain.



*'I used to live on Tobacco Road,
now it's just Road.'*

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A Deeper Stillness

Jo McGowan

My daughter has seizures every night. Before we started her on the medication she now takes regularly, she was having as many as twenty before my husband and I would go to sleep ourselves. The medicine took a while to have any real effect, but now, two months later, she has only three or four before settling into a deep and, we hope, untroubled sleep.

Hope is the best we can do. Parenthood is largely a long slow realization of the fact that we cannot protect or defend or determine our children's lives, but this child has been a crash course in the concept, in the accelerated section.

Convulsions are what the American books call what she experiences, but here in India, where we live, they are called seizures. It is a more apt word, with its sinister overtones, that sense of being taken against one's will, dragged down and forced to undergo a mysterious and seemingly pointless process.

Every night, I sit on the edge of her bed and say her prayers for her (Moy Moy has severe mental handicaps and hardly speaks at all). If she is in the mood, she may say "Amen—I love you," but a smile of enchanting sweetness I can be sure of. I read my book as I wait for her to slide into sleep, aware even as I watch her drift off that in just minutes she will be jolted into some other realm of existence I can only imagine.

It always happens sooner than I expect. Some subtle change, some deeper stillness, makes me look up and the next second her whole body is stiff. Her head turns involuntarily to one side and jerks convulsively up and down. Her eyes are open, but she is clearly not seeing anything. Her arms spread wide apart, then come together on their own. I speak softly to her and keep my hands on her body throughout. She does not seem to realize I am there, but when she comes out of it, she is almost always calm, sometimes even smiling. Once, as the convulsive movement of her arms began to slow down, she turned it into clapping, almost as if to say "Don't worry, Mom—I actually meant to do this."

Minutes after the first one is over, the second begins. After the third or fourth, the interval between grows longer and I get up and go into the other room to sit at my desk. Every ten minutes or so, one of the other

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children will call “Mom, Moy’s having a seizure” and I run back in to keep a hand on her shoulder or around her waist.

Before I got to be such an old hand at this, I took the three children on an 18-hour train ride to Bombay to visit my husband’s relatives (he joined us a few days later). At night, with great difficulty, I got Moy Moy settled on the bottom level of the three tier berth. She hated the closed in feeling and resisted sleep for a very long time. No sooner did she relax when she started having a seizure. Everyone in the compartment watched, horrified, as I, close to tears (we still hadn’t even gotten a diagnosis), did my best to keep calm and get her through it. When it was over, I turned to help the other children into their berths only to be prodded by a passenger who indicated that it was starting again. In the end, the children organized themselves while I perched awkwardly on the edge of Moy Moy’s berth, stroking her back and studiously ignoring what now seemed like an absolute crowd of the nosiest people in the world. I could feel the questions they were dying to ask hovering in the air around us and the sense of dissatisfaction was strong as one by one they all finally gave up and stretched out on their own berths, switched off the little night lights and went to sleep. I went on perching for a bit longer until I was sure Moy Moy was really asleep, then I, too, crawled onto my berth (the lower one just across from hers) and dozed off.

It was a fitful sleep, however, broken every half hour or so by that pounding feeling of dread new mothers often experience (“I left the baby in the supermarket!”)—I kept waking up to be sure she was all right and still there. Seizure took on such a literal meaning I was sure I would wake up and find her gone.

In the event, I did. I woke at 4:30, for what must have been the ninth time, and her berth was empty. I leaped up, scattering sheets and pillow on the floor and dashed wildly into the corridor. It was empty. No Moy Moy. Before I had a chance to panic enough to wake the whole train, however, a man sitting four compartments down signaled me and pointed into the section across from him, which I could not see from where I was standing. I rushed down and there was Moy Moy, standing beside a man fast asleep, speaking an earnest and unintelligible baby talk into his dreams and perhaps making perfect sense to him in that strange world. I took her by the hand, practically trembling with relief and the startled feeling of being snatched too quickly from sleep, and led her back to our compartment where I tucked her in beside me on my berth and slept peacefully for the first time that night—horribly cramped and crowded, but sure at last that my baby was where she belonged, safe in my arms.

It struck me later that my relationship with this child is like the one St. Augustine speaks of with God: "Our hearts are restless till they rest in thee." But what rest! "Pick up your cross and follow me!", Jesus calls cheerfully—"Off we go!"

Since Moy Moy's handicaps have deepened in severity (she wasn't always like this—until the age of five, she was in the "mild to moderately disabled" category. Then an unrelated neurological disorder, perhaps an inborn error of metabolism, caused a rapid degeneration in her functioning to the point that she went from a mental age of three-and-a-half to four to her present eight to nine month level.), they have become the standard by which I measure the rest of my life. I started a school for children like her and I spend most of my waking hours working on it. I have to consciously restrain myself from talking about it, or her, constantly. If I let myself I would do nothing else.

I am, in a strange way, happier now than I have ever been in my life. It is a happiness laced, edged and knitted through with sorrow, however, and that, too, deeper than any I have ever known. I have, sure enough, found the purpose for my life that gives it meaning, excitement and a real joy, but at the same time there is an aching sense of loss for the life that might have been. I look back at myself seven years ago and marvel at the freedom I possessed then, the lightness of my existence. And yet, I believe I can honestly say I wouldn't change a thing.

There was a time when I actually spoke blithely of the experience of raising a child with disabilities, before having one myself, as if I knew even one small thing about it. In my anti-abortion writing and argument I often referred to the joy such children bring to the world and to the unique role they have to play amongst "normal" ones. I would make my token remark about how difficult their care would be for the parents and how important it was for the community to do its part and then sail on to my inevitable conclusion: that no handicap, regardless of its severity, could ever justify an abortion.

I still believe that. I just have a very hard time articulating it now. It's such a strange thing—here I am at last, putting my money where my mouth was, with every right in the world to speak out and no desire to do so. I have the perfect anti-abortion argument right here in my own family and I can no longer bring myself to use it.

It *is* tempting at times to think of Moy Moy this way—symbolically—to use her presence in our lives as an opportunity for spiritual growth, or at least eloquence, to turn her into a metaphor or a spin-off point for

interesting theories: anything, really, to make some sort of sense of the mystery that she is.

She, however, resists classification. It is difficult to go on for too long about how she teaches me the power of unconditional love (which she does) when the next moment she soils herself and then laughs uproariously as I clean her. It is difficult to sound convincing about how she teaches us the importance of living in the absolute present (which she does) when in fact she is the only one of our children for whom we have invested in the stock market and whose future we daily ponder over. She is too undeniably real and not a symbol of anything. She is who she is and we are compelled to accept it.

It is the act of accepting, I think, which transforms the experience of loving a child with severe handicaps from a tragedy to a glimpse of the eternal. In that view of time and life, where questions of utility and productivity no longer rule, we are free to see her as the unique creation she is and to love her simply for that. And by some odd logic, we begin to see ourselves that way, too. In the light of eternity, our accomplishments, our degrees, our importance, our bank accounts all take on a different—almost amusing—meaning and the question of who is really handicapped arises unbidden, startling in its accuracy.

Accepting Moy Moy starts over again almost every morning, but this little girl (with eyes that look straight into your soul) repays the effort every time. If I am fool enough not to *realize* it every time, that's my problem, not hers.

Why We Kill the Weak

J. Budziszewski

Historians will write that by the last decade of the twentieth century, great numbers of men and women in the most pampered society on the earth had come to think it normal and desirable that their sick, their weak, and their helpless should be killed. When they were a poor country, they had not so thought; now in the day of their power and prosperity, they changed their minds. Babies asleep in the dim of the womb were awakened by knife-edged cannulas that sucked and tore at their soft young limbs; white-haloed grandmothers with wandering minds were herded by white-smocked shepherds into the cold dark waters of death. Many physicians came to think of suicide as though it were a medicine.

How is it even possible to think such thoughts? How can so many of our neighbors have been persuaded of their truth? How can a mind entertain the goodness of evil for as much as a moment without curling up and returning to dust? The paradox is as sharp as a broken bone, for it is not as though the people of our place and time have ceased thinking of what is right and good. That is not even a possibility for human minds. No, our neighbors tell themselves that they are *doing* the right and good. Therein lies the mystery.

There is a rule for probing such mysteries. We may call it the Asymmetry Principle, for it holds that one can only understand the bad from the good, not the good from the bad. Do we want to know how it is possible to be foul? Then we have to know how it is possible to be fair. Have we need to fathom the spreading desire to kill all those who have the greatest claim on our protection? Then we must fathom the good impulses from whose pollution this bad one comes.

In Augustine's day, the Manichaeans proposed a different principle. In their view, evil did not require any special explanation because it was one of the primordial realities. There are good things like light, health, and virtue, and there are bad things like darkness, disease, and sin. Both have existed from the beginning; a good deity created all the former, and a bad deity created all the latter. That's all.

Although the Manichaean view seems simpler, it cannot be true. Everything bad is just a good thing spoiled. I can block the light in order to cast

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shadow pictures on the wall, but I cannot block the dark in order to cast bright ones. I can ruin a man's health to make him sick, but I cannot ruin his sickness to make him well. The veriest devil must possess the goods of existence, intelligence, power, and will; they become evil only through their disordered condition. Augustine taught us this.

What then are those goods whose pollution produces the wish to destroy the weak? Perhaps the most important are pity, prudence, amenity, honor, remorse, love, and the sense of justice. Let's consider how each in turn is spoiled.

Spoiled pity. In his ruminations on the original condition of mankind, Jean-Jacques Rousseau called pity an innate repugnance to see one's fellow suffer. Even animals have it, he said, for cattle low upon entering a slaughterhouse and a horse does not willingly pass near a corpse. The idea seems to be that the sight of pain makes me feel pain myself, and I don't like it. My pity is ultimately self-regarding.

This definition rather misses the point. True pity is a heartfelt sorrow for the suffering of another, seen or not, moving us to render what aid we can. True, there may be something self-regarding in pity—by rendering aid, I do alleviate the pain I feel as a witness—but my focus is on the pain of the other. By contrast, in Rousseauistic "pity" the self-regarding element has taken over. Yes, rendering aid to the other would alleviate my pain; but if there is an easier way to escape the terrible spectacle, then from a Rousseauistic point of view, so much the better. I can run away; I can turn my back; I can close my eyes. Perhaps that is why Rousseau left all his own children at orphanages.

But though Rousseau's definition fails dismally for true pity, for spoiled pity it works perfectly well. The purpose of pity is to prime the pump of loving kindness, but when we refuse to use it in that way the impulse is merely displaced. While in true pity we move closer to the sufferer, in degraded pity we move farther away. While in true pity we try to change the painful sight, in degraded pity we merely try to make it go away. And there are lots of ways to do that.

Then again maybe there aren't. In a society like ours, with no more frontier and hardly enough room to turn around, killing the sufferer may well be the cheapest and easiest way of making the painful sight go away. As someone said in the case of George Delury, imprisoned for poisoning and suffocating his sick wife, I may say I am putting her out of her misery, but I am really putting her out of mine.

Spoiled prudence. Some things and persons must be entrusted to my care, and others to yours. Wiser than Marx, even Plato proposed communism

only with tongue in cheek; he laughed about it and admitted that it would never work. Not caring even for the joke, Aristotle taught that when things are held in common they are not well cared for. We need homes, not warrens, families, not orphanages, and belongings, not tribal hordes. In the eyes of God my young children, my ancient parents, and my personal affairs are not really mine; I have merely been made a caretaker of them. But that standard is too high for the law, which must accommodate itself to the fact of sin—including the sin of busybodiness. It may be fashionable to say that it takes a whole village to raise a child—and it is certainly true that parents need to support each other—but a wiser proverb is that with the whole village *kibitzing* I cannot properly take care of anyone or anything.

Prudence, then, is good judgment and conscientious care for the things and the persons entrusted to me. We may call it the insight and impulse of responsible stewardship.

Perhaps it isn't hard to see how the legal standard is confused with the moral norm—how stewardship decays into ownership. I come to think that my life, my affairs, and my relatives really are mine, mine in the ultimate sense, and that I may do with them as I please. After this, just one little step takes me to the sheer urge to control. The urge is bad, but we can never understand it if we think of it as *simply* bad. Consider, for example, how hard it is to shame people who insist on control. They don't merely resist; they become indignant, morally indignant, as though someone were interfering with their virtue. Why is this? Because the bad impulse to be in control is parasitic on the good impulse to exercise responsible stewardship—an impulse which has its own proper place in the order of things and its own proper claim on the conscience.

Spoiled prudence, then, manifests itself in the notion that I have the *right* to protect my life from the distractions of your suffering and dependence, and the right to manipulate you in the manner most convenient to me. These notions make strange bedfellows: the modern feminist agrees with the ancient Roman father that children are merely an extension of one's body, and the Dutch agree with the Eskimos that the old have a duty to get out of the way. But we should not be surprised. If the potentiality for prudence is universal, then the potentiality for its corruption must be universal too.

Spoiled amenity. Amenity, or complaisance, is the impulse every person has to accommodate himself to all others. Like every moral impulse it carries sanctions: in this case, fear of rejection and desire to belong. But

as with every moral impulse, the sanctions are only training wheels, preparing us for obedience to a deeper moral principle written on the heart. A mature person accommodates himself to others not just from fear of rejection and the desire to belong, but from concern for their legitimate interests.

The problem, of course, is that in many of us the impulse never does mature. We continue to rely on the training wheels and never learn to ride. Unfortunately, this makes a difference. Mature amenity draws a boundary; precisely because I care about the legitimate interests of others, my willingness to accommodate has a limit. At just the point where going along would not be good for all, I call a halt. Stunted amenity cannot make such distinctions. It cannot stop accommodating; it doesn't know how. I give Grandma lethal drugs to accommodate my relatives; to accommodate me, Grandma asks for lethal drugs. A girl has an abortion to accommodate her boyfriend; to accommodate his girlfriend, the boy goes along. We know these things are wrong, but for fear of being on the outs with others we do them anyway. In the extreme case, we accommodate each other to death.

Of course people suffer remorse when they commit these terrible deeds. For present purposes, the more interesting fact is that they also tend to suffer remorse when they refuse to commit them. When they hold out, when they say no, when they resist the clamor of voices telling them what to do, they feel not only afraid, but *in the wrong*. This shows that, like prudence, the urge to accommodate is not *simply* self-regard even when it is spoiled and self-regarding. It draws strength from the very sense of obligation that it corrupts. Conscience always does the best it can; when driven from its proper course, it finds another course and flows on.

Spoiled honor. To honor someone is to show him the reverence due to him as a fellow image of God, distinct from myself, sent into the world for the Creator's pleasure, not my own. The impulse to honor others is the best vaccine against the urge to control them, but it suffers from corruptions of its own.

In one case within my own experience, a woman tried to honor her husband by sparing him what she thought would be a dreadful ordeal. "If I ever become a burden to you," she said, "I want you to pull the plug." Although this was not to his liking at all, he tried to honor her in turn by giving her his promise in return. Before considering the outcome, let's consider what was wrong with the deeds.

What spoiled the woman's attempt to honor her husband was that she did not treat him as a moral being. Had he become helpless she would have borne any burden to care for him; she demeaned him by thinking that

he needed to be spared bearing burdens to care for her. What she thought was honoring him violated the Golden Rule, for she would not allow him to do for her what *she* would have wanted to do, had she been in his place.

What spoiled the husband's attempt to honor his wife was that he made her an illicit promise. He forgot that it is impossible to reverence the image of God in another by complying with what soils that image. Had *he* expressed an immoral wish, he would have wanted her to challenge him; yet when she expressed an immoral wish, he would not challenge her. So he violated the Golden Rule too.

The outcome? She did, in time, become sick and dependent, and she wanted him, for his sake, to keep his promise. In an unseemly rush, not wanting to but believing he had to, he did. She died, he grieved most terribly—and he found himself unable to stop. The trauma of her death was overwhelmed by the trauma of his killing her. To the end of his own life, many years later, remorse made each day like the day that her heart had stopped. With the thought of sparing him a burden that he could have borne, she had thrust on him another burden that he could not bear. With the thought of complying with her wish, he had made that burden his own. Trapped by spoiled honor on every side, he did not even know how to repent.

Spoiled remorse. Guilt is an objective reality—the condition of being in violation of moral law. By contrast, remorse is a subjective reality—the *feeling* of being in violation of moral law. What is the purpose of the feeling? Obviously, to prod us into recognition of objective guilt so that we can repent and throw ourselves upon the mercy of God.

It may seem strange that remorse could ever get us *into* trouble, instead of out of it. On the contrary, nothing is more common. Like every moral impulse, remorse can be displaced. It can refuse the relief of repentance and seek alleviation in another way instead. In the short term, remorse can even be palliated by further wrongdoing. The first murder in history was undertaken from spoiled remorse. Cain's sacrifice had been unacceptable to God; he killed his righteous brother to get rid of the reminder of his shame.

In another article* I related several stories of women who had abortions because of remorse over previous abortions. There was the woman who was afraid God would "do something" to the new baby to punish her for killing the other, so she beat Him to the punch. And there was the woman who had her first abortion out of anger because her husband had been

* "What We Can't Not Know," *Human Life Review* 22:4 (Fall, 1996), pp. 85-94, at pp. 89-90.

unfaithful to her, and her second because “I wanted to be able to hate myself more for what I did to the first baby.” In much the same way that some people use one credit card to pay off another, she was trying to abate her present remorse by increasing her burden of future remorse.

We may be sure that spoiled remorse is just as great a motive for killing the sick and the old. For years, perhaps, I have neglected my aging father. Now, when he is weak and dependent, the burden of my conscience has become intolerable. I cannot bear the reproach of his watery eyes; I would rather endure the blows of his fists than the sight of his withered hands. To avoid him I visit him less and less. One day he requires hospitalization and cannot feed himself. He is not dying, he is not unconscious, he is not even in great discomfort; nevertheless I tell his caretakers to withdraw his food and water. It is easier to face them than to face him, for he is the sole surviving witness to the slights of his ungrateful son. Besides, I tell myself, I no longer deserve a father. When his body is buried, perhaps my guilt will be buried too.

Spoiled love. Love is a perfect determination of the will to further the true good of another person. As such, it can miss the mark in either of two different ways. If the will is unsteady, then we call the love weak; if the understanding is bent, then we call the love spoiled. The faults of weak love are faults of omission, in that I fail to care sufficiently for the one who needs my mercy. But the faults of spoiled love are faults of commission, in that I may actually do him harm.

Although the modes of spoiled love are infinite in number, it may suffice to mention two. In one mode, what stunts my charity is a failure to understand the involvement of each human being in all the others. Many of us have known parents who have abortions for the sake of a child already born. They honestly believe that Johnny is an island, entire to himself; that it will be better for him if Sally is cut in pieces before her birth, because with one less child their home will be quieter and their finances more secure. In this frame of mind, Grandma too seems a threat to the younger members of the family. Isn't she just a useless eater? Up there in her nursing home she merely consumes while giving nothing back. Of course I don't mind spending time and money on her *myself*—after all, she *is* my mother—but why must my *child* do with less?

It is difficult to explain the wrong of abortion to someone who thinks it is better for Johnny to have a trip to Disney World than a baby sister, difficult to explain the wrong of euthanasia to one who thinks he will be more blessed learning to take than to sacrifice for a lady who needs his mercy.

In the other mode of spoiled love, what stunts my charity is a failure to understand the good of affliction. "Truly . . . affliction is a treasure," says John Donne, "and scarce any man hath enough of it." Of course, no one should seek affliction or gratuitously impose it on another, but is there a soul alive who has not learned more from his hard times than his good? How dare we then imagine that our dear ones are like animals who, when they suffer, have nothing to learn from it, and are fit only to be "put out of their misery"? What arrogance is it that denies to the sick at the last that teacher to which each of us is most indebted?

But this is an even harder lesson than the last one. That for fallen natures, physical suffering may sometimes accomplish moral good is a fact of everyday experience, but for people who do not even believe in spanking it may be hard to teach.

The spoiled sense of justice. The sense of justice is the desire to see that each is given his due—that the good are rewarded and the bad are punished. It isn't hard to see how a spoiled sense of justice can make me feel justified in mistreating someone weak who I think has hurt me in the past.

Perhaps I nurse a grievance against my parents for wrongs done to me when they were large and strong and I was small and weak; now the tables are turned and I finally have the chance to pay them out. Perhaps they didn't really wrong me but I think they did; my generation has been more indulged, and consequently has a stronger sense of grievance, than any other in history. Of course resentment is an unpleasant feeling, but if I can convert it into moral indignation I feel much better.

Even more alarming is the tendency of the guilty conscience to call spoiled justice to its aid by *inventing* grievances. Cause and effect here trade places: We think of resentment coming first and mistreatment coming after, but it is often the other way around. People almost always resent the people they have treated worst, as a defense against the shame of having treated them so poorly in the first place. Unfortunately, such effects take on a life of their own and become real *causes*. Having invented a grievance to justify my neglect, I may now act in malice at the prompting of the grievance. I may resent my father for no reason other than I have mistreated him; nevertheless, having invented a fictitious reason for mistreating him, I now feel justified in wanting him to die.

Not that I am likely to be so honest with myself about my thoughts. I may not admit my resentment at all, because we do not call it "just" to kick a man when he is down. But my secret sense of grievance will always be a finger on the scale of my benevolence, biasing me toward what anyone but myself would recognize as spite.

There is a fallacy in our judgments about these things. It results from a distinction we ought not make. Some wrongdoing, we say, should be treated with lenity because it is committed with good motives. Other wrongdoing, we say, should be treated harshly because it is committed with bad ones. She killed her sick father out of desire for his inheritance, so she should be judged; he killed his sick mother out of sympathy for her pain, so he should be pardoned. She had an abortion because her exams were coming up, so she should be condemned; he supported the abortion out of respect for her decision, so he should be excused.

Distinguishing among motives is often no more than a way to let ourselves off the hook while keeping the others on it. After all, we know our own motives much better than we can ever know theirs; therefore we know the good in our motives much better than the good in theirs. We are always in a better position to plead extenuating circumstances in *our* case.

But that is not the main problem with pardoning wrongs that are done from good motives. The main problem is that *all* wrongs are done from good motives. As we said at the beginning, there is no such thing as pure or perfect evil; every bad thing is a good thing spoiled. Without good motives to corrupt, there could be no wrongdoing at all. Did George Delury kill his wife because he hated the sight of her suffering? Then the motive was spoiled pity. Did he do it to stay in control? Then it was spoiled prudence. To go along with her wishes? Spoiled amenity. To keep a promise? Spoiled honor. To bury his shame, to put her out of her misery, to pay her back for hurting him? Spoiled remorse, spoiled love, spoiled sense of justice. That the raw material of his intention was *good* was the condition of his having an intention at all. But that he *ruined* that good material through a free exercise of his will was what made the intention evil.

To understand all wrong is not to excuse all wrong; rather, to understand it is to know why it is wrong. Yet achieving such understanding is far from useless. From the throne of mercy there may yet be mercy for a merciless generation, but not before we know what we have done. We had best get started, for we have done a great deal.

APPENDIX A

[The following columns appeared in the New York Post, the first on September 6 and the second on September 14, 1997, and are reprinted here with permission. Mr. Kerrison is the premier columnist at the Post, but his work is not syndicated nationally.]

She's taken her place among God's greatest heroes

Ray Kerrison

At a pit stop in Charleston, S.C., a few years ago, Mother Teresa was asked at a press conference about the popular notion she was a saint.

"Please," she laughed. "Let me die first."

Yesterday, it happened. In the slum-ridden city of Calcutta, where she pursued her epic life of love and charity, Mother Teresa's great, strong, generous heart finally gave out.

Now the whole world can answer the question.

There, truly, was a saint, a woman of incomparable beauty and virtue, who served God by serving the poorest of his poor on earth.

The crippled and the blind, the starving and the deserted, the lame and the leprous—she embraced them all, fed them, nurtured them, begged for them, scrubbed them, loved them and buried them.

Nobody paid her a higher—or simpler—compliment than the Rev. Jesse Jackson. "She lived the gospel," he said. That covers everything.

Saint? I say, bank on it. The miracles of proof, demanded of all saints, will come swiftly and dramatically, and the Roman Catholic Church will canonize her in record time or close to it.

Mother Teresa was, by my biased lights, the woman of the 20th century, a towering figure of humility and holiness, devoid of cant and overflowing with genuine compassion. She did it not for human respect or personal aggrandizement, but out of love for God.

What never ceased to amaze me about Mother Teresa was her unwavering public stand against the degradations of modern culture while, at the same time, winning the hearts of everyone from kings and presidents to waifs and orphans.

They loved her in the gutters and they recognized her in the palace of Nobel Prizes. Catholic or Jew, Protestant or Moslem, Hindu or agnostic—all saw the goodness and spirituality shining out of her small, tough little body.

Well, not all. She had her critics, inside the church and out, but they were mercifully few.

They thought Mother Teresa would have done better to pitch her energies into causes like nuclear disarmament, defense spending, government poverty programs, male domination of the church, etc.

Instead, the nun who came out of what was Yugoslavia, stood against the tide.

In a world devoted to materialism, ambition and ostentation, she chose poverty, frugality and service.

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In a sex-soaked age, she opted for celibacy and chastity.

In the celebrity era of the rich and famous and powerful, she sought the outcast, the anonymous.

In the world of instant gratification, she practiced self-denial.

Millions may have loved Mother Teresa, but I'm not sure they all understood her.

It is eerie that her death should come in the midst of a great global outpouring of sorrow over the loss of Princess Diana.

Their worlds were polar opposites, their lives as different as night and day, yet they shared a common bond of sympathy for the dispossessed.

Mother Teresa once said: "The greatest disease in the world today is not leprosy or tuberculosis, but the feeling of being unwanted, uncared for, unloved."

Diana, in an interview, said the greatest problem in the world was being unloved.

Mother Teresa learned the lesson of the unloved in Calcutta's slums. Diana learned it through bitter personal experience in the privileged sanctuary of British royalty.

The differences between the two women are as sharp in death as in life. Diana will be mourned today, a tragic figure, taken too soon at 36 in the bloom of life.

Mother Teresa's passing at 87 will not plunge the world into deep sadness, grief and anger.

Rather, it will be more a celebration, the joyful recognition of a long life of hard work, hard discipline, great accomplishments, great sanctity, great sacrifice and overwhelming love.

Malcolm Muggeridge, the late British broadcaster whose TV documentary and book on Mother Teresa propelled her into the world spotlight, said of her:

"To choose, as Mother Teresa did, to live in the slums of Calcutta, amidst all the dirt and disease and misery, signified a spirit so indomitable, a faith so intractable, a love so abounding, that I felt abashed."

The whole world felt the same way about her.

Mother Teresa knew all about death. In her lifetime, she took in more than 100,000 broken human beings, unloved, unwanted. Many died in her tender arms.

She said: "Death is the most decisive moment in human life. It is like a coronation, to die in peace with God. I have never seen anyone die desperate or blaspheming. They all die serenely, almost with joy."

She told of one man she rescued from the streets and took to her home for dying destitutes.

"He said to me, 'I have lived like an animal in the streets, but I am going to die like an angel,'" said Mother Teresa.

Yesterday, the beloved Mother Teresa, after years of poor health, met her Maker, the one she served all her life.

We can only guess how that meeting went, but one thing is for sure—the choirs of angels would be in high voice to greet her for her "coronation."

Her image, message are preserved for posterity

Mother Teresa, the noblest of the noble, was laid to rest yesterday in a ceremony not seen since the beginning of time.

She became the first saint to have her funeral transmitted live to billions around the globe through the modern miracles of television and satellites.

She thus becomes the first saint ever to have her life, death and burial recorded for posterity on tape so that future generations may see her, hear her and venerate her in prayer as no other.

It is an historic first, a privilege accorded no other servant of God from Moses on.

That Mother Teresa will be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church in quick order is beyond debate.

Indeed, in the last moments of her funeral Mass in Calcutta, the Vatican secretary of state, Angelo Cardinal Sodano, all but canonized her on the spot by invoking her name as a heavenly intercessor for the faithful on Earth.

“Mother Teresa,” he said fervently, “pray for us.”

The 87-year-old nun’s farewell was a great spectacle of color, simplicity and solemnity. Most of all, it was a celebration of love by kings, queens, princes, prime ministers—and millions of poor for a woman of soaring virtue and holiness.

Her goodness transcended religions, national boundaries, languages, space and time.

Mother Teresa’s special magic was that she saw the face of God in every living person, whether it was a dying leper on the street, a dictator like Francois Duvalier, a princess like Diana, a pope like John Paul II or a mayor like Ed Koch.

In life and death, the world recognized her for what she was—the St. Francis of the 20th century.

So she was borne in an open casket through the streets of Calcutta on a gun carriage, surrounded by all the trappings of a state funeral.

It was a unique tribute from a nation whose population of 952 million is only 2 percent Christian. It was a great pageant for a woman whose only earthly possessions were two saris and a pair of sandals.

Saints are often depicted as holy misfits with bibles and halos. In fact, they are usually the most practical and down-to-earth of all people with a sense of humor and proportion.

Mother Teresa was a model. Tough, tiny and wiry, she rolled up her sleeves and went to work, not on some vague entity above, but on the needy immediately in front of her.

She recognized that the lonely and rejected were everywhere, as much in New York, in mansions and palaces, as on the streets of Calcutta. “The greatest poverty in the world is to be unloved,” she said.

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She told jokes on herself and her work. She liked to say that in her dreams she died and went to the gates of heaven, where St. Peter barred her entry.

“He said to me, ‘There are no slums in heaven. Go back.’

“So I told him, ‘Then I will fill heaven with people from the slums.’”

She did exactly that. Years ago, she counted up and found she and her sisters had taken in 42,000 outcasts from the streets. Of these 19,000 died. She said, “we gave everyone of them a ticket to St. Peter.”

She once cradled in her arms a man covered in mud and worms. She said, “He opened his eyes wide, gave me a beautiful smile and died. I said to Jesus, ‘I have worked for you for 60 years and I’m still struggling to go to heaven, but this man knew you for only five minutes and you took him to heaven.’”

It is experiences such as this that may have prompted Mother Teresa to observe, “If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.”

She might have been saintly, but she was also formidable. She never took no for an answer and so overwhelming was her presence that she could make cardinals jump through hoops.

But leave it to the Disney Corp. to inject a jarring note into Mother Teresa’s funeral.

On Disney-owned ABC, anchor Peter Jennings gave Mother Teresa’s screwball critic, Christopher Hitchens, a platform to vent his libels about her, first served up in a book.

Funny, I don’t recall Jennings and the network introducing a poisonous critic to shred Princess Diana’s character at her funeral. Why Mother Teresa?

Even Jennings, at the end, acknowledged he had gone too far.

He told Hitchens, “I appreciate hearing your point of view”—[I’ll bet he did]—“but I’m not sure this is the right occasion for us to continue having a debate about Mother Teresa. I may be wrong but that’s the decision for now.”

People like Jennings and Hitchens just don’t get it. Perfection is not found in any human being and nobody has the right to demand it, even of a saint.

Abraham was a murderer. David was an adulterer who plotted the death of his lover’s husband. Noah, after the deluge, went on a week-long drinking binge. St. Augustine was a philanderer who fathered an illegitimate child.

Hitchens, by his twisted lights, would dismiss them all as scoundrels, unworthy of human respect.

Dan Rather on CBS had far more insight. He noted that Mother Teresa was not a politician, a philosopher, a scientist or even a preacher.

“She gave her whole life to God and her whole self to others,” said Rather. “She is destined for sainthood and found glory tonight because of the example she set.

“Her message the ancient one, the one that has echoed through the ages—it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Mother Teresa’s influence in this weary world has only just begun. Soon she will be St. Teresa of Calcutta. Watch for the miracles. It won’t be long.

APPENDIX B

[The following syndicated column (issued September 8, 1997) first appeared as a Lifestyles feature in the Dallas Morning News, where Mr. Murchison is based. He is of course also a longtime contributing editor to this journal.]

Death of a Saint

World imperfectly understands the truly selfless

William Murchison

“Let us do something beautiful for God,” said Mother Teresa of Calcutta again and again. And so she did infinitely beautiful things again and again: a joyful, perpetual offering of body, spirit and worldly means for God’s glory and his people’s relief.

She argued gently with the spirit of the age and even with the age’s leaders: for life, against abortion, against pointless suffering. “Every child is God’s child,” she said.

To prove it, she roved the gruesome streets of Calcutta. Here an abandoned child, there a dying woman. Her Missionaries of Charity took them in and did what they could, which was as much as God required of them. The Missionaries swelled in number, and their areas of endeavor reached nearly 500 worldwide. Mother Teresa won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Are we to look, as she goes to rest, for the mountains of flowers, the armies of correspondents, the long funeral procession that figured, and may figure for a long time, in the world’s goodbye to Princess Diana? Not likely.

The worldwide wake for the radiant princess and the long-anticipated death of the wrinkled nun are separate events, fused chiefly by the coincidence of time. Searching comparisons between the two women would be pointless. They lived on different planes of existence, traveled on separate trajectories.

Another way of putting it would be this: The world understood Princess Diana better than it understood Mother Teresa. Why? Because the world only imperfectly understands saints—when it condescends to acknowledge their existence.

An English book still read and consulted after two centuries is Alban Butler’s *Lives of the Principal Saints*. “Deaths of the Principal Saints” could serve equally well as the title.

The saints always seem to be dying, suffering torments unimaginable to folk who feel discommoded when the air conditioning goes out. Lions, axes, saws, crucifixes. Luger pistols, the gas chamber—the means of dispatching the saints seem endless and probably are. Saints, for keeping the faith, are dispatched today—in the Age of MTV and the World Wide Web!—in lands like Uganda and the Sudan.

The point, with the saints, is not so much their physical dying. What they have let go of already—long before the gleaming of the executioner’s blade in

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the sunlight—is the life of appetite and ambition, power and perquisite. To do “something beautiful for God” is the whole and only wish of the saints.

Small wonder an age that barely understands God has trouble understanding the saints: messy, often bothersome people, uninterested in conventional rewards, never dependent on riches, never beaten down by poverty or suffering.

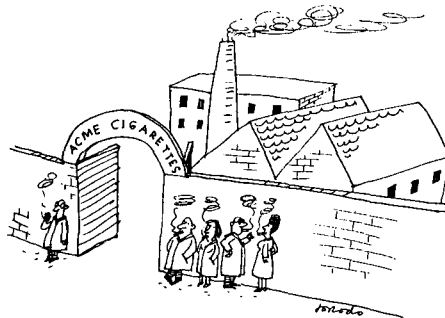
A writer in Calcutta, dealing with the Mother Teresa phenomenon, fulminates over the little nun’s “relentless ascent to sainthood.” “Relentless”—hmmm. All those children taken in off the streets, wounds bandaged, lives transfigured. A little more relentlessness, please!

Meanwhile, the quest for meaning goes on and on—the quest to reconcile joy and suffering, pain and achievement, long life and sudden death, a \$200,000 ring in the wreckage of a luxury automobile. The quest is to fit all these factors into some kind of rational framework. A princess, fairest of the fair, suffers, struggles, dies; millions mourn. No, no—not Diana, not “England’s Rose.” The blow that can fell one of fortune’s favorites can fall anywhere—on you, on me. And if so . . . ?

The saints catch our eye at such a moment. The saints know how to transcend and transfigure the pain of this mortal existence. How? By doing “something beautiful for God.”

The punishing secularity of the late 20th century—no age was ever so indifferent to God or gods—makes the Mother Teresa Solution difficult to receive.

“Something beautiful for God”? Why? What’s in it for us? “Only everything,” Mother Teresa might have responded—joy, fulfillment, even immortality amid death, sorrow and sacrifice.



THE SPECTATOR 15 March 1997

APPENDIX C

[The following article first appeared in the *Los Angeles Daily News* (August 22, 1997) and is reprinted here with the author's permission. Mr. Stetson is the director of The David Institute, a social-research group in Tustin (near Santa Ana, California), and editor of the anthology *The Silent Subject: Reflections on the Unborn in American Culture* (Praeger, 1996).]

Newborn killings symptomatic of other ill

Abortion rights mind-set casting its shadow on the treatment of babies

Brad Stetson

By any measure, this year has seen an exhibition of youthful maternal malfeasance. Two teen-agers in New Jersey secretly gave birth and threw their infants into trash cans; two in New York did the same; a USC student allegedly sent hers down her apartment building's trash chute and three other Southern California women tossed their newborn babies into garbage bags.

While furrow-browed psychologists and anguished social workers speak to us of "pregnancy denial" and issue vague and vapid calls for "education," an obvious and primary cultural impetus for this atrocity remains undiscussed: Pro-choice rhetoric has ignored the value of prenatal life by absolutely denying that women have any objective obligations toward the fetuses they carry.

The constant and prominent repetition of the mantra, "A woman can do what she wants with her own body," has firmly set within our social consciousness the devaluation—indeed, the denial—of human fetal life, which it plainly communicates. Thus, schooled in the moral relativism of their "right to choose," some pregnant young women wishing to evade motherhood choose to cross the increasingly porous boundary into infanticide.

With the abortion rights rhetoric of fetal dehumanization so intense and pervasive, why should it surprise us if immediately after her baby's birth an anxious young woman is unwilling to suddenly invest authentic humanity in this person who just moments before was—according to her social milieu—not a person at all, but only a legally disposable part of her body, akin to a bothersome lock of hair or unsightly mole?

It is a fact, that in our information and media-saturated country, the air we breathe is thick with ideas which inevitably affect our behavior to some degree. Indeed, it is a primary axiom of contemporary liberalism that social environment not only influences, but actually determines, individual human conduct.

Hence, to the liberal mind: poverty causes crime; patriarchy and sexism wound girls' self-esteem, causing them to underachieve and unnecessarily limit their own career options; and the American history of slavery and Jim Crow creates a residual racism that causes a measure of self-loathing and self-destructive

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behavior among some African-Americans.

But now, because pregnancy neglect and infanticide call into question the wisdom of modern liberalism's cherished abortion license, we are to believe that impressionable young women's treatment of their preborn and newborn babies is somehow completely immune from the impact of the ideas comprising our public discourse about maternal responsibility and prenatal life.

The connection between the dehumanization of preborn babies, which has been a staple of American abortion advocacy, and the literal trashing of unwanted newborns is clear and direct. But it cannot be openly recognized, because to suggest that the abortion license is tearing at the fine fabric of civil society is to wonder if perhaps the opening of the abortion floodgates was a mistake.

To court such ideas is to breach the sensitive lines of liberal orthodoxy, and to invite the intimidating scorn of the powerful abortion lobby, the feminist establishment and reporters who disagree. Most of us would rather spare ourselves the headache, and so we are content simply to remain silent about the social corrosiveness of abortion on demand, and instead express shock that a mother could treat her baby like garbage.

Soon, another baby will emerge from the womb only to be stuffed among the refuse of a society that has abandoned belief in her intrinsic value. What blind hubris and gall we have to abort 1.5 million preborn human beings each year and then take umbrage with our culture of brutality.



'They stunt your growth, you know.'

THE SPECTATOR 3 December 1994

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[The following article first appeared on the Editorials & Opinions page of the *Detroit News* (August 24, 1997) and is reprinted here with the author's permission (© 1997, *The Detroit News*). Mr. Smith, an attorney, is the author of *Forced Exit: The Slippery Slope from Assisted Suicide to Legalized Murder* (Times Books/Random House).]

Kevorkian proves his contempt of disabled

Wesley J. Smith

With the death of Karen Shoffstall, 34, Jack Kevorkian has once again expanded the envelope of those he is willing to help kill. Shoffstall wasn't so much in despair about her current condition, as have been the many disabled persons whose lives Kevorkian has helped end previously. Rather, Shoffstall's primary fear seems to have concerned future debilitation.

Unfortunately, in Kevorkian she found someone willing to reinforce her deepest terror. Never mind that multiple sclerosis is not a terminal condition. Never mind that it is unpredictable and that spontaneous remissions are common. Never mind that a frequent symptom of MS is depression. And never mind that many suicidal people change their minds or that people who become disabled later usually adjust to their condition and lead full, rich lives. By agreeing to help kill her, Kevorkian's own bigotry against disabled people led him to presume her life was not worth continuing. Perhaps that is why her parents want Kevorkian charged with murder.

It is no secret that Kevorkian disdains the disabled. He has often stated that paraplegics and quadriplegics are "pathological" if they do not want to die. Indeed, he considers the suicides of disabled people as being good for the general community, writing in an Aug. 17, 1990, court statement that such deaths "can only enhance the preservation of public health and welfare."

Such anti-disabled attitudes are common in the so-called "right-to-die" movement. Assisted-suicide advocates usually pretend for tactical and political reasons that they only want to legalize assisted suicide for the "terminally ill" when "nothing else can be done to alleviate suffering" (a false premise to be sure). But their silence in the face of the Shoffstall outrage and their failure to strongly oppose Kevorkian's participation in the self-destruction of disabled people speaks louder than their words. As noted disability rights activist Paul Longmore states, "The reason people in the assisted suicide movement have not (widely) condemned Kevorkian is because the whole movement is riddled with deep prejudice against the disabled."

Longmore's opinion finds affirmation in the tragic New York case of Myrna Lebov. Lebov, like Karen Shoffstall, was disabled by MS but not bedridden. Indeed, the week before she died, she swam 28 laps with the help of her physical therapist.

Lebov had a very big problem besides MS: her husband, George Delury. He

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so thoroughly loathed his wife's disability that he urged her repeatedly to commit suicide because, as he told her, she was "sucking the life" from him "like a vampire." After all, as he wrote in his diary, he had "work to do, people to see, places to travel," which he couldn't do as long as Lebov burdened him with her existence.

When in 1995, Lebov finally succumbed to Delury's pressure and agreed to kill herself, he mixed a poisonous brew for her to drink from drugs she had been prescribed. When the poison merely put her to sleep, Delury smothered her with a plastic bag. As one police official later put it, Delury put Lebov out of his misery.

Notwithstanding the above, Delury was immediately embraced by the assisted-suicide movement. Kevorkian's minister of propaganda, Geoffrey Fieger, suggested on national television that he would gladly get Delury off. The New York Hemlock Society created a legal defense fund. The publisher who brought Derek Humphry to national attention by distributing his how-to-commit-suicide guide, *Final Exit*, agreed to publish Delury's book, which he wrote while he served four months in jail as part of a plea bargain. He remains a popular speaker at euthanasia movement gatherings.

This is all reminiscent of a very popular movie that was released a while ago. The plot involves a married couple, both doctors. The wife, disabled by multiple sclerosis, perceives her life as useless, and she becomes terribly worried that she is a burden. She wants to end her suffering and free her husband to make a new life for himself while he is still young. So, she begs him to kill her as an act of love. After intense soul searching and anguish, he agrees and with tears in his eyes, he lethally injects his wife as a friend plays a soulful piano concerto in the next room.

There follows a dramatic courtroom scene in which the doctor is tried before a jury of his peers and exonerated. One sympathetic juror explains that euthanasia for the disabled is acceptable so long as "the patient wants it."

No, this isn't a made-for-TV movie based on a true story. It is the infamous "I Accuse" (Ich Klage an), a propaganda film produced in Germany in 1941 to promote the idea that disabled people have "lives unworthy of life."

That a movie that has been widely condemned for its pernicious bigotry so presciently mimics current headlines, should give us all great pause.

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[The following essay first appeared in the July 28, 1997 issue of *Citizen*, a monthly journal published by *Focus on the Family*, a national pro-family group headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Mrs. Mathewes-Green is a former vice president of *Feminists for Life of America*, and a prolific writer on social and political issues for a variety of U.S. and foreign publications. The essay is reprinted here with her permission (© 1997 *Focus on the Family*. All rights reserved; international copyright secured).]

Abortion As Self-Defense: The Latest Spin

Frederica Mathewes-Green

Imagine you are being held prisoner. Your captor, however, is not content with simply intruding on your liberty. Instead, without permission or consent, he actually invades your body.

For months on end, he wreaks havoc with your circulation and respiration, saps your strength, causes nausea, vomiting and internal swelling. And all the while, you are helpless to resist. Or so it seems.

Actually, you have the power to defend yourself, to repel this intruder with deadly force. But how?

Simple—get an abortion.

So goes the thinking of Eileen McDonagh, author of the new book *Breaking the Abortion Deadlock: From Choice to Consent* (Oxford University Press, 1996). For McDonagh, a Northeastern University political-science professor and a staunch abortion advocate, abortion is a matter of self-defense, a means by which a pregnant woman may expel the “agent of coercion” known as a fetus.

Not only does a woman have this right of self-defense, McDonagh writes, but the government has a responsibility to free her from this invasion. Abortion must not only be legal; it must be fully funded by the state, for rich and poor women alike.

Let’s pause a moment till your head stops spinning.

How Did We Get Here?

If they remembered nothing else he said that day, Tony Podesta wanted his audience to walk away with two words echoing in their heads—two carefully chosen words:

“Who decides?”

The year was 1989, and abortion advocates had gathered at the National Abortion Rights Action League’s (NARAL) annual convention to hear Podesta deliver a message titled “Framing and Selling the Pro-Choice Message.”

“‘Who decides?’ is the message of NARAL” declared the political consultant. “‘Who decides?’ is the biggest, broadest message to reach the largest number of people. It is the single best majoritarian answer we have when we go into this argument with the other side.”

Podesta explained that, though other abortion-rights messages had garnered

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slight success (“They’re taking away our rights one by one,” “Women will die in back alleys”), “Who decides?” remained the big winner. “The repetition of this message is the best way to reinforce our position,” he said.

Podesta noted that after promoting “Who decides?” for awhile, abortion supporters began to ask, “What’s the new message?” His answer was that no new message was needed.

“Stick with what is tried and true and works,” he urged.

Podesta was correct; the “choice” argument in favor of abortion has been an effective muddler, difficult for pro-lifers to refute concisely, confusing undecided listeners by changing the subject. Rather than examining the moral meaning of abortion, “Who decides?” encouraged baffled and battered observers of the abortion debate to wash their hands and walk away.

Convention attendees therefore were encouraged to avoid discussion of abortion procedures or the fetus. (Pollster Harrison Hickman conceded that avoiding the latter topic was becoming difficult: “Nothing has been as damaging to our cause as the advances in technology which have allowed pictures of the developing fetus,” he said, “because people now talk about that fetus in much different terms than they did 15 years ago. They talk about it as a human being, which is not something I have an easy answer how to cure.”)

The rhetoric of “choice” has been a proven winner for the abortion-rights movement. So why are some—like McDonagh—now reconsidering it?

Unhealthy Choices

The answer lies in the intrinsically flimsy nature of the “choice” argument. It papers over deeply troubling moral questions (“Is this a human life we’re taking?” “If so, how can it be right?”), and those questions must bubble to the surface sooner or later. The assertion, “It’s a woman’s choice,” is easily challenged by the simple question: “Why?”

Why would the mere act of choosing something make it an acceptable thing to do? Is everything a woman chooses permissible—drunk driving, drug dealing, child abuse? What about the things a man chooses, including rape? Why isn’t abortion an act of violence? In court, doesn’t “deciding” to do violence simply mean it was premeditated?

Pro-choicers cannot answer these questions; they can only restate their premise more adamantly. An “Interfaith Service” from the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights and Catholics for a Free Choice baldly states, “Let us go forth . . . to tell women that all of their choices, including their choice for abortion, are holy and healthy.”

All my choices are holy and healthy? Really?

Reaction One: It’s Not A Baby!

Defending “choice” tends to force its partisans to take one of two paths. They must either 1) denigrate the fetus more loudly, denying its right to live; or 2)

recognize its value, then frame abortion as a regrettable event.

Those who take the first path develop a peevish and callous tone, bad for the compassionate image the movement would prefer to display. Ex-Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders chided that pro-lifers should “Get over their love affair with the fetus.” National Organization for Women (NOW) President Patricia Ireland likewise sniffed, “There’s no way you can tell me a blob of cells is a baby.”

And if it’s not a baby, why not kill it any way you can? Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., defended partial-birth abortion with blunt words: “What moral distinction is there between whether the fetus is extracted and then killed, or killed and then extracted? There is no moral distinction.”

James Watson, the Nobel prize winner who discovered DNA, shocked even pro-abortion advocates with his assertion that women should feel free to abort if genetic testing indicated that a child would be homosexual. After all, “We already accept that most couples don’t want a Down [syndrome] child,” Watson said. “You would have to be crazy to say you wanted one, because that child has no future.”

It gets uglier. The SisterSerpents feminist art collective in Chicago vented their contempt for the unborn by plastering Chicago subway stops with posters showing a fetus, overlaid with derisive slogans: “Have a fetus cook for you. Have a fetus clean your house. Try to get a fetus to work for minimum wage.”

And at a 1985 abortion rights rally in Spain, a speaker triumphantly exhibited fresh fetal remains to a crowd of 3,000, while the hall rocked with cheers.

Reaction Two: I’m Really Sorry!

The alternative is to take seriously the value of the fetus, have an abortion anyway, then offer redemptive sorrow. A leading theorist on this track is Naomi Wolf, who in her landmark 1995 essay in *The New Republic*, warned of the damage done by clumsy promotion of “choice.”

“We stand in jeopardy of losing what can only be called our souls,” she wrote. “We risk becoming precisely what our critics charge us with being: callous, selfish and casually destructive men and women who share a cheapened view of human life.”

(Predictably, Wolf has been thoroughly castigated by many pro-choice allies, some of whom claim, inaccurately, that she is now pro-life.)

Wolf proposed that abortion instead be viewed as “a necessary evil,” and be dealt with in “the context of a paradigm of sin and redemption.” The evil that abortion entails can be remedied by acts of “atonement”—the woman could “work to provide contraception, or jobs, or other choices to young girls . . . give money to programs that provide prenatal care to poor women,” and so forth.

Leaving aside the non-Christian understanding of atonement, this is clearly a giant step toward honesty. The flaw remains, however, that anything—adultery, perjury, shoplifting—could be excused by this formula (i.e., I subjectively deem a questionable deed to be a “necessary evil” in my situation, I promise I’ll feel

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sorry afterwards and I'll do something to make up for it).

In a healthy functioning conscience, however, the reverse is true: Feeling sorry you did something is usually a sign that it was the wrong thing to do—not a payment that makes it right. As C.S. Lewis said, “A long face is not a moral disinfectant.”

While Wolf is at least grappling with the objective—and, she would insist, necessary—evil of abortion, others have approached this path more focused on the woman's feelings. They recognize the pain of abortion, and wish to assure the woman that she's doing the right thing, while admiring her noble pain.

For example, The Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual has devised a liturgy to affirm the decision to have an abortion. It includes this prayer:

Praised be you, Mother Goddess and Father God, that you have given your people the power of choice. We are saddened that the life circumstances of [mother's name] are such that she has had to choose to terminate her pregnancy. Such a choice is never simple. It is filled with pain and hurt, with anger and questions, but also with integrity and strength.

The woman may then make a symbolic gesture, for example, “burning a rose.”

Soul-searching and honoring the life of the unborn, then, are far from sure to result in pro-life results; they can be mere acts of conscience-salving.

A New Approach

Into this simmering stew of fetus-defiers and abortion-regretters was tossed McDonagh's book—which challenges both approaches in startling new terms.

Breaking the Abortion Deadlock displays on its cover a scale holding in perfect balance piles of pro-life and pro-choice political buttons. McDonagh includes in the premise of her argument several points usually associated with the pro-life side of the fence.

For example, in the very first chapter she asserts that “Something is killed in an abortion, and at the very least, that ‘something’ has the potential to become a human being.” She sees danger in abortion-rights arguments based on “the dehumanization of the fetus” because they can result in the “psychic numbing” seen in survivors of war.

McDonagh describes psychic numbing as “a pathological condition in which people become unable to relate to others or even to events happening around them. This malady is caused not by people killing others so much as by their dehumanization of those they kill. This process of dehumanization, not the conflict or killing per se, is what destroys people's ethical and empathic sensibilities.”

But what of the other course—valuing the fetus, but preferring your own life and regretfully saying goodbye? McDonagh accurately perceives that this approach tacitly judges fetal life less valuable, and so is still dehumanizing.

“As some would argue, you cannot kill a person, albeit an unborn one, simply

to go to law school or get a better job,” she writes. “As pro-life advocates point out, people are never justified in making a private choice about how to live their own lives if that choice inadvertently kills another person.”

For these people, laws permitting abortion are akin to laws permitting slavery. “We view those who broke the law by helping slaves escape, sheltering them, and refusing to return slaves to their masters as being courageous and morally sound. Opponents to abortion feel the same way.”

For pro-lifers, McDonagh recognizes, laws permitting abortion are superseded by “a higher law that recognizes the inherent rights of all people, born or unborn, however old, handicapped, helpless, or defenseless. For them, arguments that the fetus has not yet developed sufficiently to be covered by legal and constitutional guarantees do nothing more than ‘cheapen life.’ They see the fetus as just as deserving of legal protection as any born person.”

McDonagh grants these pro-life premises, then turns them around to advocate abortion in a way that startles friends and foes alike. Yes, we may view the fetus as human life—and so we must also hold it accountable for what it does, as we would any other human being. What it does is invade a woman’s body, cause massive changes, and enslave her.

We would not permit any born person to do this—to hold a woman captive, reroute her circulatory system, live off her respiratory system, enlarge her uterus by hundreds of times and so forth. Why should we allow an unborn child to take similar liberties? And why shouldn’t we use lethal force to stop it?

Blame the Baby

Yes, for McDonagh, the fetus is the villain of the piece. She builds her argument laboriously and with wearying repetition: Sex doesn’t make a woman pregnant, the fetus makes a woman pregnant.

Sex is but a mere precondition (in legal terms, one of several “factual causes”), while the “legal cause” is that a fertilized ovum journeyed into her uterus and burrowed into her uterine lining.

McDonagh draws an analogy to a jogger: Someone who goes running through Central Park at midnight has put herself in a position where she may well be mugged—a “factual cause”—but the mugging itself is caused by the criminal who attacks her. Her action did not cause the mugging, yet the state has a responsibility to free her from her attacker, and to use tax funds to do so.

The question for McDonagh is not whether the woman should be able to “choose” abortion; she views that argument as a weak reed, ethically and logically. Rather, a woman should be free to “consent” to pregnancy, or to withhold that consent. This is the meaning of the book’s subtitle; McDonagh advocates shifting abortion-rights arguments “from choice to consent.”

As bizarre as this reasoning is, it is not offered in the sharp tones of a bitter, family-hating mind. (McDonagh is a wife and mom of two sons.) Rather the argument is couched entirely in legal terms, cool and bland; it plods along,

repeating itself doggedly as if to wear the reader down.

McDonagh could have made her point in a book half this length or less. Though there appears to be no personal grudge here, the book reads like the product of a mind that has just been marinating in a law library a little longer than is healthy.

She writes: *From a review of state statutes and the "Model Penal Code," we can discern three types or dimensions of injury that justify the use of deadly force in self-defense: absolute threats to one's life; quantitative threats of large amounts of physical injury to one's body; and qualitative threats to one's liberty and dignity, such as entailed in rape, kidnapping, or slavery.*

While many pro-lifers acknowledge that abortion may be justified when a pregnancy threatens a woman's life, under that law the same rule of self-defense applies to lesser injuries. Even a normal pregnancy entails "quantitative" intrusion, in the way that it alters and distorts a woman's body.

Though this change is usually temporary, McDonagh maintains that we would not allow any other human being to cause such changes, not even for nine months. The fetus, she says, imposes "qualitative" intrusion as well, in that it "wholly controls her body, her freedom of movement, and her reproductive services. . . . The fetus has intruded on her liberty in a way similar to that of a kidnapper or slave master."

It doesn't matter that the fetus will die if the woman repels its attack; deadly force in self-defense is permitted in the face of such potential injury. It doesn't matter that the fetus is unaware of what it is doing; a mentally incompetent person attempting such an enslavement could likewise be justly fought off. It doesn't matter that the fetus is innocent. . . .

Well, maybe it isn't so innocent.

Unlike a helpless newborn baby, McDonagh explains, a fetus "directly intrudes on and takes the bodies and liberties of others to meet its physical needs. . . . The survival of preborn human life depends on its brute force capability to take from others what it needs."

It is "a powerful intruder upon a woman's body and liberty which requires the use of deadly force to stop by removing it. The scope and power of what the fetus does to a woman when it makes her pregnant, in fact, ranks as one of the most invasive possible physical intrusions upon a person's body."

So a fetus is not a "blob of tissue." Instead, it's a criminal.

A Tragic Clash

McDonagh's book has been well-received by several leading abortion advocates—among them Patricia Ireland of NOW and Eleanor Smeal of the Feminist Majority Foundation—who believe it contains fresh and powerful ammunition in arguing for government funding of abortion.

Still, not every abortion supporter embraces "consent" theory. It grinds against the grain of common sense, defies human experience and sparkles with cruelty—

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all the while plodding forward with stubborn and redundant logic.

McDonagh would do well to listen to Harvard Law professor Lawrence Tribe, whom she quotes frequently and admiringly. Despite his reputation as a pro-abortion strategist, Tribe once offered an opinion that many pro-lifers would share:

“Making women and the unborn into combatants . . . promises no common ground. It will only perpetuate the tragic clash of absolutes.”



'Charlie, it's over.'

THE SPECTATOR 20 January 1996

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[The following review of five books on "death and dying" first appeared in National Review magazine (July 14, 1997) and is reprinted here with permission (© 1997, National Review, Inc.). For more on Professor Budziszewski, see his article beginning on page 67 in this issue; publishing details on the books reviewed available on request.]

Playing God

J. Budziszewski

Is anyone so shut off from the world that he still does not know about the war? To make clear what I mean, here is an illustration. Not long ago on a medical-ethics panel, I spoke against playing God. My counterpart, a hospital chaplain, declared: "Of course it's okay to play God; at the hospital we do it all the time." He was too genteel to use the word, but everyone knew that when he spoke of playing God he meant killing.

The current stage of the conflict features two main views. In the traditional view, intentionally killing an innocent human being is always wrong. Such killing includes both active euthanasia and acting as an accessory to suicide. However, allowing to die is sometimes permitted. This means that a particular treatment may be withheld or withdrawn if the patient is dying, his death is imminent, the treatment is extraordinary, and his death is not the goal.

A canard of the radicals is that traditionalists are "simplistic." On the contrary: although the traditional criteria are clear, they are far from simple. For example, extraordinary treatments are defined as those which impose excessive burdens on the patient or fail to offer reasonable hope of benefit, and all traditionalists recognize that judgment is needed to know when that line has been crossed. The real simplifiers are the radicals, who deny the moral distinction between allowing death and causing it, arguing that if one can ever withhold even the most heroic treatment, then one can also kill.

Then who dies? Here the radicals split, but none of their criteria bears scrutiny. *Is the patient suffering?* Even though not all doctors have adequate training in palliative care, today almost all physical pain can be rendered bearable. For the rare pain that resists amelioration the patient can ask to be sedated. *Is he dying?* The irrational thought behind this criterion seems to be that if we cannot guarantee the patient a length of life we think sufficient, he shall not have any at all. *Has his life lost its worth?* That which is in the image of God does not lose worth because it can no longer play the piano or use the toilet without assistance. *Does he want to die?* It is not quite merciful to offer the patient death as a reward for internalizing the embarrassment, contempt, and disgust of those around him; some of us would consider it a nasty trick. *Would his death be in the best interests of all concerned?* This is a dishonest way of asking whether he has become a nuisance. If ever we arrive at killing people just because they are in the way, we will have lost everything.

A glimpse of what losing everything might mean may be found in the Dutch best-seller *Dancing with Mr. D*, a rambling, disjointed journal of a physician's nursing-home practice. In the Netherlands, euthanasia is not precisely legal, but it is officially tolerated in an ever-expanding set of circumstances. Early in the narrative, author Bert Keizer is called to the bedside of a Mrs. Malfijt, who is choking on her food. There is no use trying to clear the blockage, he says, and so, rather than help in any way, he fills her veins with morphine. This he calls letting her decide her own course without being harassed from either shore. After 15 minutes he calls her son to tell him she is dead.

At the end of that passage I came to a full stop, then backed up. Had I just read what I thought I had? Yes. How could it be explained? It can't; in Dr. Keizer's universe, where God is dead and life is meaningless, categories like "cruel," "mad," and "normal" can no longer be distinguished. The author gives overdoses of morphine to every patient in sight, yet grows furious with their relatives for thinking that euthanasia is easy to arrange. Love for his patients? He declares to a colleague that he has none, but calls it good for the profession to heave a sigh from time to time and say that he does. On this page he mocks his country's official guidelines, which the ignorant in our country cite as proof that euthanasia can be kept within bounds. On another page he violates his private guidelines, never to kill just for the comfort of the spectators and never to do it in a hurry. Over here he explains the importance of rituals and says there should be one for euthanasia. Over there he mocks the mourners at funerals by answering their questions with gibberish. He admonishes one patient for loudly asking about euthanasia in the hearing of others. Yet having been offered some of another patient's shirts, he rummages among them in the very faces of the dead man's wardmates. He harangues a dying former hippie for not having aborted her only child, and he badgers a nurse for refusing on grounds of religious faith to administer a deliberate overdose of morphine to a woman with a broken hip. Because he considers human beings feces, one can hardly be surprised that he colors all their works with excrement, as when he compares an expiring woman's effort not to retch with the strain of holding in stool. But her death was a good one, he says, because she struggled at the exit.

Now that the book has been translated, it will win a following here too among the sort of people who think Kurt Cobain was a great poet. But perhaps I overreact. Dr. Keizer is but a drop in the sea of Dutch medicine. How typical could he be? The defenders of Dutch euthanasia hold that the stories of a social experiment gone berserk have been exaggerated, and that in any case the Dutch medical and legal systems are so different from our own that we have no reason to expect the legalization of euthanasia to have the same results here as it has had there.

These claims are put to the test in the compelling study *Seduced by Death*, by psychiatrist Herbert Hendin. Though the executive director of an organization devoted to the prevention of suicide, Dr. Hendin is not a traditionalist. When he arrived in the Netherlands he had not made up his mind whether euthanasia and

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assisted suicide should be permitted by law, and he is still uncertain about the ethics of treatment for people in coma and dementia. Perhaps for this reason, Dutch doctors and euthanasia advocates were willing to speak more frankly with him than they might have been with someone seeking weapons to use against them. In the process they seem to have revealed more than they may have intended, and the longer the author studied the "Dutch Cure" the more horrifying he found it.

The ambivalent will appreciate the book's sober demonstration that euthanasia and assisted suicide in the Netherlands have resulted in thousands of unjustifiable deaths even by the standards and statistics accepted by advocates of those practices. For instance, most proponents expected the change to increase the ability of patients to make their own decisions. "In practice," finds Hendin, "it is still the doctor who decides whether to perform euthanasia. He can suggest it, not give patients obvious alternatives, ignore patients' ambivalence, and even put to death patients who have not requested it. Euthanasia enhances the power and control of doctors, not patients." Though still outside the official guidelines, involuntary euthanasia has become so common in the Netherlands that many Dutch now carry cards to signify that they do *not* want to be put to death without their knowledge and consent.

Hendin is especially penetrating in his analysis of the interplay of motives among those who seek suicide, assist in it, and press for its acceptance. One obvious motive is the desire to reduce anxiety about death. Unfortunately, the new mores themselves become the main source of anxiety, and so assisted suicide is "the cure that causes another form of the disease." A more surprising motive is the need for connection. Many of those who have assisted a suicide call it the most meaningful thing they have ever done; it gives them a sense of intimacy with another person that they could not otherwise have achieved. Most engrossing is the sheer need for absolution. Accessories to suicide often assuage their uneasiness or sense of guilt by writing about the act, justifying it, and recruiting others to its practice. Of course all these motives grease the slippery slope. Euthanasia breeds euthanasia; as Hendin shows, even some of those who have participated in it describe it as a contagious disease.

Other strengths of the book are its fine discussions of whom the Dutch euthanasia guidelines really protect, why they cannot contain the practice, how euthanasia promotes the atrophy of palliative care, why the United States and the Netherlands are the only two Western industrial nations to have strong euthanasia movements, and why the relaxation of anti-euthanasia laws might cause even greater horrors in our country, with its large underclass, than it has done in the Netherlands.

I have only two criticisms. Despite Hendin's clear and explicit recognition that "autonomy" can be another name for "narcissism," he seems, in otherwise helpful remarks on advance medical directives, to forget his own critique. Despite his equally clear recognition that right and wrong are not determined by

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social consensus, in the discussion of coma and dementia he seems adrift, in the end having no more to say than that somehow society must reach consensus.

Honorable mention is due *Forced Exit*, by Wesley J. Smith, a wide-ranging book on the state of the euthanasia debate in the United States. In comparison with the Hendin book, its advantages are a more thorough account of domestic euthanasia politics, a more acute perception of how people who change their mind about dying can be trapped by their own advance directives, and a more firm defense of the worth of people with diminished mental capacities. Its most persistent weakness is a tendency to propose ever more judicially enforceable rights and entitlements, and to disregard the law of unanticipated consequences, especially as applied to medical economics.

A graver flaw is that at times the author seems disingenuous—for example, when he tries to distinguish the arguments for euthanasia and abortion. He contends that sick people are indisputably human while unborn people are not. But abortion proponents lost the “human life” battle years ago; does anyone imagine that a dog is growing in there? As Mr. Smith must know, in its current phase the war over life and death concerns not humanity but “personhood,” and the biographical criteria used by euthanasia supporters to deny personhood to the sick are precisely those used by abortion supporters to deny it to the unborn. I sympathize with his desire to pick up allies wherever he can find them, but he will not succeed through special pleading.

Part of the problem with *Forced Exit* is its insistence that euthanasia is “not a religious issue, it is a vital public-policy issue.” Of course, like every “vital issue,” it is both. This is not to say that atheists cannot possibly find a reason to oppose euthanasia—plainly, some do. However, it is naïve to expect politics and world-view to be unrelated. Given the evasiveness of most public-policy writing on the matter of faith and ultimate ends, one wishes for a book that would treat them more adequately. Unfortunately, *Denial of the Soul*, by psychologist and New Age theologian M. Scott Peck, is not it. Written with his trademark modesty—“By 1985 I had become quite sophisticated on the subject of spirituality”—the book is a muddle from start to finish. Even its terminology is a mess, for the author inexplicably reserves the label “euthanasia” for suicide. Then again, Peck has made rather a specialty of sonorous obfuscation. He is one of those people who think a person’s “stage of religious development” can be discussed apart from his actual religion. Unfortunately, such an approach makes sense only on the assumption that at bottom all religions are getting at the same thing—that they differ in rites and forms, but are the same in what they teach. Chesterton’s comment about this perennial fallacy is best and plainest: “It is false; it is the opposite of the fact. The religions of the earth do not differ greatly in rites and forms; they do greatly differ in what they teach.”

At last we come to *But What if She Wants to Die?* by George Delury. Myrna Lebov, the author’s wife, suffered for years from multiple sclerosis. After pressuring her for many months to take her life, one day Delury gave her a lethal

APPENDIX F

dose of drugs, waited a few hours, and went to sleep. When he awoke she was still alive, and so he suffocated her with a plastic bag. Though there seems to be no good evidence that she had consented, the authorities decided to regard the affair as an assisted suicide, and upon conviction the author spent six months in prison. This book is his effort at self-extenuation.

A law is written on the heart. We can't *not know* that killing is wrong; we can only hold the knowledge down. The chief value of this dreary book is the light it sheds on how the holding down is done—how the struggling conscience is suppressed. We know all about excuses, of course. For Delury, however, mere excuses are not enough; he freely admits to being haunted for months by a guilt so strong that it was “almost physical.” His solution? To acknowledge the agony but deny its nature. As he finally explains to himself, his anguish is not the “moral” guilt of a human being who knows he has done wrong, but the “dissonance” of a primate over the violation of an instinctual block. And the proof? Precisely that the feeling is so powerful, so immediate, so close to home. That shows, you see, that it isn't rational.

Of course. We should have seen it ourselves.



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