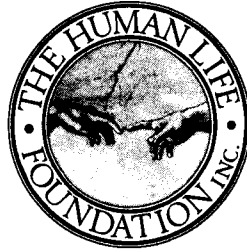


the HUMAN LIFE REVIEW



SUMMER 1999

Featured in this issue:

William Murchison on "Semanticide"

David Oderberg on . . . The *Anti* Anti-abortion Crowd

Mary Meehan on Lessons from History

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn R.I.P.

Faith Abbott McFadden • William F. Buckley Jr.

Erik v. Kuehnelt-Leddihn on . . . Europe without Vitality

David Quinn on Ireland's New Intolerance

Chilton Williamson Jr. on . . . The Coming Inhumanity

Rita Marker & Kathi Hamlon on . . . Prisoner #284797

Also in this issue:

Clarke D. Forsythe • Paul Greenberg • Wesley J. Smith • Chris Weinkopf
William F. Buckley Jr. • Ramesh Ponnuru • Michael Uhlmann • John Kass

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE . . .

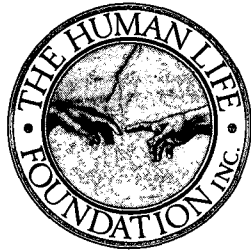
. . . Dr. Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, who died on May 26 in Austria, contributed a dozen articles to this *Review* between 1977 and 1992, each reflecting an extraordinary accumulation of knowledge as well as a gracious penchant for sharing it. For many years, it was Dr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn's custom to give an annual U.S. lecture tour, during which time he always managed to drop by the office here. I was introduced to him in 1995, an elegant man whose old-world demeanor might have made me feel like a baby-boomer in a china shop were it not that he was so kind. Last year, he arrived here a few weeks after our late editor Jim McFadden's death (October 17) and visited with senior editor Faith Abbott McFadden. We had only just received a letter from Father Richard John Neuhaus announcing Dr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn's plans for a lecture tour this fall when the sad news of his death reached us.

Faith Abbott's "About Erik" (page 35) will give readers some sense of Dr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn's unique contribution to the *Human Life Review*; Mr. William F. Buckley's RIP, written for *National Review* (page 37), furnishes details of his life and his place in the conservative movement—we thank *NR* for permission to reprint it. "Europe without Vitality" (page 39), which we include here as a tribute to our late friend and contributor, first appeared in our Winter 1992 issue. It is we think a fine example of Dr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn's talent for staying ahead of the intelligentsia curve—only recently has the spectre of a rapidly "de-populating" Europe begun to get the kind of serious attention he was giving it nearly a decade ago.

We'd also like to thank the *Wall Street Journal* for allowing us to reprint articles by Ramesh Ponnuru (page 91) and Wesley Smith (page 93). Likewise the *Chicago Tribune*, in which the two columns by John Kass (page 83) first ran. Mr. Kass, when asked, was quick to say that no one could take the late Mike Royko's place at the *Tribune*; he simply writes in the same space on Page 3 as did the famed columnist. Having reprinted many of Mr. Royko's columns over the years, we're happy to see the "space" is still occupied by someone whose work we think it important to run in the *Review*.

Finally, thanks again to our friends at *Crisis* magazine (1-800-852-9962 to order) for permission to reprint Michael M. Uhlmann's piece on Australian philosopher Peter Singer (page 93). Professor Singer's recent arrival at Princeton University has caused much consternation in these pages (Fall 1998) and elsewhere, and even occasioned a provocative Profile titled "The Dangerous Philosopher" in the September 6 issue of *The New Yorker*—yes, *The New Yorker*!

ANNE CONLON
MANAGING EDITOR



the HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

Summer 1999

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INTRODUCTION

“Inevitably, the titanic struggle over abortion affects the way Americans talk about human life . . . we have witnessed over the past decade or so what could be called ‘semanticide’—the murder of meaning itself.” So writes Senior Editor William Murchison who, in our lead article, illuminates a source of great frustration for those who would protect the unborn: “a whole new vocabulary masks the deadly operations of the abortion clinic.” Murchison recalls George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: “Orwell’s lesson is clear: Language shapes thinking, thinking shapes action.” There is a full glossary of new terms (which Murchison neatly summarizes) chosen to make the unthinkable acceptable, which have had the effect of increasing the active killing of innocent human beings.

One cannot underestimate the power of words, and as Murchison points out, the pro-abortion forces latched on to the word “right” early on, a brilliant linguistic acquisition; they then snagged “choice.” They can thus claim not to be “pro-abortion,” but to be “pro-choice” (“the same thing you exercised in a shoe store . . .”) and we “pro-lifers” (who used to be, a better term, “anti-abortion”) are now called “anti-choice,” as if we were a bunch of totalitarian kill-joys. However much the language has changed, though, the traditional meanings—of life and death, mother and child, and God—remain the same, Murchison writes, so the realities must be “walled off” by the new language, and proponents of abortion and euthanasia have been progressively engaged in murdering the meaning of what they are promoting.

This reminded me of a story. A few years ago, Managing Editor Anne Conlon and I went down to Washington, D.C. to interview Naomi Wolf, who had recently written a piece for *The New Republic*, “Our Bodies, Our Souls” (see *HLR* Winter, Summer 1996), in which she expressed some moral reservations about abortion. As we began the interview, I asked a question which had to do with her own criticism of what I called the “pro-abortion lobby.” She had a visceral reaction. Whoops, I thought, I don’t want to get off on the wrong foot, so I tried to explain the question. She bristled: “I understand your question. I take issue with your phrasing: I don’t think anyone I know or work with or stand with legislatively is pro-abortion—no one likes it. No one celebrates it.” She went on to say that she was “pro-abortion rights, I’m for abortion rights to a certain point in the development of the fetus.” As the interview went on, however, it became clear that although she acknowledged abortion was a “moral transgression” and the fetus not insignificant, she would not agree to the desirability of *any* restrictions on the procedure—not even for late-term abortions. If she had been more honest in *her* language, I suspect she would have said she was *pro* the right to feel bad about abortion while keeping

it as available as possible across the board—a position many would share.

I wish I could have read our next article, by Professor David Oderberg, before we “debated” with Wolf. It is, in his own words, a “kind of primer for the anti-abortion debater,” specifically for arguing with those people who, like Ms. Wolf, say they are “opposed to abortion but nevertheless think it should remain legal.” They use arguments like “I am personally opposed but would not impose my opinion on other people,” to which Oderberg rightly asks if this would make any sense were the word abortion replaced with “rape,” or “burning down the churches of blacks.” One cannot be “tolerant” of serious moral wrong unless one lives in a “semanticsided” world.

Oderberg is a professor of philosophy, and he has written previously in the *Review* (Fall 1998) about the current philosophical preoccupation with meta-ethics. The academic world is enamored of “linguistic analysis”—parsing what the word “good” means in *this* context, in *this* situation, rather than asking “is this action good or bad.” And yet, says Oderberg, human beings are “built for truth,” not *a* truth, but the unchangeable truth. “It is not, as most modern philosophers have it, the mere search itself, the mere asking of questions and toying with possible answers that give us what our nature craves.” In clarifying the terms of the debate, we can hope to help people recognize the truth, especially about questions of life and death. This is an article to read, re-read and pass along—we can’t allow Orwellian distortions to rule the debate?

Nor should we forget that our struggle is not entirely without precedent. In an enormously informative and useful essay on the abolitionist movement, “Lessons from History,” Mary Meehan demonstrates how “anti-abortionists can learn a great deal by studying both the successes and the failures of abolitionists.” To begin with, when we feel lonely or beleaguered in the fight, we need to keep in mind that we are in “good historical company”: the earliest anti-slavery protests date back to at least 1688, the first national slavery organization was started in 1794, and the abolitionists had to struggle on until 1865 and the Civil War before the emancipation of the slaves.

That their struggle ended in a horribly bloody war is the cautionary tale the abolitionists offer us. However, there is much to learn from their strategies and successes: their “brilliant organization” and their peaceful attempts at conversion, as they worked with individual slave-holders. They, like us, tended to “preach to the choir”—a weakness of pro-lifers which Meehan takes up, exhorting us to appeal to groups too often neglected by pro-lifers (but not at all by the pro-abortion lobby)—liberals, the Jewish and African-American communities—“the last-named neglect is especially ironic because the same kind of racial bigotry that sustained slavery also targets the black community for abortion.”

The centerpiece of this issue is a special section commemorating our long-time friend and contributor, Dr. Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, who died on May 26. Faith Abbott McFadden introduces him to those who are relatively new to the *Review*

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(page 35), so I won't do that here. William F. Buckley Jr.'s obituary from *National Review* captures Erik's amazing personality well; it begins on page 37.

In Erik's honor, we reprint "Europe Without Vitality," the last article he wrote for the *Review*. Published in 1992, it's even more relevant today, as it concerns Europe's falling birth rates: why is it that Europeans are having fewer and fewer children and what might the consequences be? Along the way, as always, Erik has many fascinating (often entertaining—see his footnotes) comments to make. He also has some wonderful words about why, ideally, people have children: "But to will a child one must have esteem for oneself as well as for one's partner, a certain pride and affection for oneself which is anyway a necessity for a healthy psyche. A self-hating, despondent, pessimistic melancholic might be ready for sexual intercourse, but not procreation." For all the surface cheer of the West's consumption-driven, instant gratification-obsessed culture, perhaps "self-hating" and "despondent" are more apt descriptions. And not wanting children might therefore be interpreted as a sign of the culture's very low "self-esteem."

Our next article focuses on Ireland, a country in which abortion is not legal—yet. In many ways, though, Ireland is catching up to the Continent in its transformation to a liberal, consumerist culture complete with a media hostile to traditional values. David Quinn, a *Review* contributor and editor of the *The Irish Catholic*, reports for us on a recent major media-flap precipitated by some controversial remarks made by Desmond Connell, the Archbishop of Dublin. In a speech on the subject of *Humanae Vitae*, Dr. Connell questioned the attitude of parents towards "wanted," or *planned* children. Although Quinn writes that the Archbishop's choice of words made even him wince, the uproar that followed the speech—about the Archbishop's "insensitivity"—had the effect of totally obscuring the *truth* in what he had said, as well as the rest of a very good speech. This was fine with the media, who are always ready to pounce on the Church. But the truth is, as Quinn says, "the contraceptive culture has radically altered human relations and our attitude towards human life." We ought to at least reflect on the dangers about which Dr. Connell warns—Quinn quotes extensively from the speech so you can judge the Archbishop's words yourself. Maybe you'll agree that they add a new shade of meaning to the term "product of conception"?

Treating humans like *products* is also the theme of "The Coming Inhumanity" by Chilton Williamson, Jr. who, though not writing about "life issues" *per se*, does touch on a basic life issue of concern: how humans in modern society treat one another. Williamson starts by recounting a story that shocked him when he heard it, but which represents, sadly, a growing trend: it involves the sudden and impersonal firing of a long-time employee, in this case a newspaper columnist. Williamson uses the story as the impetus for a profound discussion of modern society, which is characterized by "runaway advances in technology, the rule of 'efficiency' in service to the 'bottom line' . . . The concern with 'information' rather than with truth." It's the utilitarian ethic which has no time for human values, and it is more and

more evident in the workplace as well as in national debates over abortion, euthanasia, and health care.

We shift gears in our final article for an update on the macabre figure of Dr. Jack Kevorkian, now *Prisoner #284797*. The authors, Rita Marker and Kathy Hamlon, both of the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, examine in detail Jack Kevorkian's compulsion to force his own fate: his arranging of the videotaped death of Thomas Youk, and his subsequent challenge to the authorities: "I want to be prosecuted for euthanasia." Well, he was prosecuted for murder instead. And convicted.

Marker and Hamlon give us a fascinating account of the trial, in which Kevorkian, in an act of *hubris* that cost him dearly, insisted on acting as his own lawyer. They include shocking information not widely reported by the mainstream media about a possible attempt by Mr. Youk to utter words—his last as it turned out—which were ignored by "Dr. Death." And the authors reprint for us Judge Jessica Cooper's sentencing remarks, which include these: "You had the audacity to go on national television, show the world what you did, and dare the legal system to stop you.

Well, sir, consider yourself stopped." *Amen*.

* * * * *

Our *Appendices* section begins with an article by Clarke D. Forsythe which is a good companion piece to both Murchison and Oderberg: a look at four myths that work together to portray and perpetuate abortion as a "necessary evil." *Appendix B*, by columnist Paul Greenberg, is, in turn, a good end-note to Mary Meehan's article: Greenberg also compares right-to-lifers to the abolitionists. In "Why Right-to-Lifers Won't Just Shut Up," he says it's because, like the abolitionists, we know that "no cause is forever lost" and if "the taking of innocent human life without restriction or scruple or qualm—if all that is not wrong . . . then nothing is."

Appendix C includes two columns by the *Chicago Tribune's* John Kass about recent battles over the use of embryonic and fetal stem cells for research purposes. As Kass writes: "Fifty years ago, the Nuremberg war crimes trials led the world to promise never to use human life in scientific experiments without consent." This type of government-approved research is just a small part of the overall experimenting that is done *every day*, using the bodies of aborted babies; in the process, warns Kass, we are losing ourselves and our humanity. Meanwhile, as Chris Weinkopf reports in *Appendix D*, there seems to be more concern in the public at large for the fate of "sea turtles, large-mouth bass, and bottlenose dolphins" (all featured on specialty license plates in Florida), than for *babies*: last year a bill authorizing use of a license plate depicting a child's drawing of a boy and girl with the words "Choose Life" was protested by the ACLU, NOW, and state Democrats as being *dangerous*, then vetoed by former Governor Lawton Chiles. The bill was re-introduced this year, as Weinkopf explains, and on June 8 Republican Governor Jeb Bush signed it into law, as he had promised he would. Money raised from the

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sale of the plate, which will cost \$20, will benefit organizations that support pregnant women seeking to put their babies up for adoption.

There is a new bill up for debate this fall in New Jersey, as William F. Buckley Jr. tells us in *Appendix E*. The Post-viability Abortion Ban Bill, introduced by State Sen. Joseph Kyrillos, has its share of pro-life critics, but it's backed by some powerful moral leaders (including Buckley, Father Richard John Neuhaus, and Professor Mary Ann Glendon) who—Buckley says—believe that in the fight against legalized abortion “incremental progress is the reasonable way to go.”

National Review senior editor Ramesh Ponnuru reports next (*Appendix F*) on another abortion story making news this summer: an academic study which claims to have found a link between high abortion rates and *falling* crime rates! We'll let Ramesh steer you through that one. As he says, with dark wit, if it's true “It turns out the death penalty stops crime after all”—by killing off potential criminals.

In *Appendix G* we briefly revisit the subject of the notorious Peter Singer, who is by now well-ensconced in his teaching position at Princeton University. That new job is the topic of a recent column in *Crisis* magazine by Michael M. Uhlmann, who writes that Peter Singer's basic thesis is “traditional morality is so much delusional hogwash”—a fitting term since in Singer's view animals ought to have even more rights (e.g. a right to life) than humans. Uhlmann is hoping Princeton's students will give Singer some strong opposition.

We wrap up with a recent *Wall Street Journal* column (*Appendix H*) by our good friend and tireless advocate for life, Wesley Smith. In it he identifies the new categories for suicide: rational and irrational. According to many “experts,” only the most impulsive suicide is now considered irrational: someone who wants to die because he finds his quality of life unacceptable is considering a “rational” suicide and shouldn't be dissuaded. This is yet a new battlefield for us, where suicide is called by death-guru Derek Humphry the “ultimate civil right.” It would certainly be the *final* one.

We hope you find this issue as absorbing as we do. Some of the material *is* grim, but, as Paul Greenberg reminds us, ours is *not* a lost cause. And, as is our tradition, we have added some cartoons—most by the inimitable Nick Downes—to lighten the travail of serious reading.

MARIA McFADDEN
EDITOR

“Semanticide”⁹⁹

William Murchison

When, not many years after *Roe v. Wade*, the physically handicapped became the “differently abled,” and Indians turned mysteriously into “Native Americans” or “indigenous peoples,” critics of abortion might have sensed what trouble they were *really* in.

Some did, no doubt; but then it was late in the day. The weapon of language had obviously fallen into hands primed to use it against no-longer-fashionable understandings. Americans had begun to talk in new ways about old realities. They might not understand every implication of those new ways. However . . . “native Americans,” hmmm. Indians had been born here; that made them “native,” so . . .

And in due course the priority of “Native American” culture over the imposed culture of the white settlers became an accepted, if unpondered, fact.

No more “Indians” around here. Dumb name anyway, conferred by an Italian who didn’t know where he was. (Not that there’s anything wrong with Italians!) “Native American” confers a certain grandeur, a distinct priority over latecomers: Englishmen, Spaniards, yes, and Italians. Got here first? Means you’ve got some basic rights: which you may have anyway, as a plain old American citizen, but “nativity,” if nothing else, enhances stature.

So language—the conveyor belt of meaning—operates: sliding along from Person A to Person B a word or a phrase. Oh (says Person B), *that’s* what all this means. Do tell. On to Person C, the word retaining its coloration, consensus growing about what we mean when we say something. From Person C to Person D, and on and on. Orthodoxy takes shape: Never mind what *you* mean; here is what *we* mean. The most everyday words—war, peace, love, hate, happy, sad, rich, poor—take their meaning from usage.

There is not the slightest reason to censure a process as natural as digestion. Talking, writing, cooking—this is how we live. A given society shapes language the same way it influences the content of menus. In wrong, or merely misguided, hands, naturally, the power to shape becomes the power to distort—and thus to lie and cheat and deceive and defraud, yes, and even kill.

George Orwell’s stress on the distortive possibilities available in language remains fresh because of his descriptive and prophetic powers. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* sears the recollection, notwithstanding that when the title-year

William Murchison, our senior editor, is a nationally-syndicated columnist at the *Dallas Morning News* and a popular speaker on a wide range of current religious and cultural issues. His latest book is *There’s More to Life than Politics*, out last fall from Spence Publishing Company (Dallas).

in question actually got here, the distorters—the Soviets—were stumbling toward ruin. Orwell's lesson is clear: Language shapes thinking; thinking shapes action. When language means other than it *must*, for a particular possibility to reach fruition, somebody is going to propose a new way of talking, and of understanding.

Inevitably, the titanic struggle over abortion affects the way Americans talk about human life. From the moment *Roe v. Wade* was handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court, the combatants in this life-or-death contest have wrestled for mastery of the English language. Early innings went to supporters of the decision. From Justice Harry Blackmun's language, they derived the gleaming and invaluable word "right." A "right" is something subtly different from a "decision." You have to "decide," of course, to exercise a right; but once you do, no one is supposed to call your hand, to suggest you've done something bad or unfortunate. It was your *right*, right?

Opponents of *Roe v. Wade* recovered sufficiently in due course to advertise that they were defending nothing less than the "right to life." Not just one shimmering word here: two, rather; both of them dear to American hearts. "Life" led the list of "unalienable" rights that Americans, in 1776, supposed they were entrenching against King George's opposition. Those who fought against the "right to life" were the "pro-abortion" faction—or in the great Jim McFadden's cogent reductions, the "pro-aborts."

However, the pro-aborts were having none of this. They weren't for abortion; they were for *choice*—a thing wholly different, might it please the court of public opinion; a thing deeply American, embedded in this country's institutions.

Wait. The choice of *death*? That choice was embedded in our institutions? Shhhh, shhhhh, returned the pro-aborts. Choice. That was all we were talking about—the same thing you exercised in a shoe store. Whereby, in American political discourse, unborn children came to share equal status with alligator shoes. The feat was more prophetic than it may have seemed, given the commercial possibilities (medical research, etc.) endemic today in "fetuses."

All this was just before political correctness: the attempt which began in the '80s, and continues, to structure and impose an orthodoxy for talking about racial minorities, women, homosexuals, and other imputedly oppressed classes. "Homosexuals," I said. No more: it's "gays." The style-panjandrum say so, no less decisively than when they first cast "Indians" into outer darkness. The conveyor belt of meaning moves faster and faster and faster.

Political correctness is less visible as an issue in 1999 than it was a few years ago, when its exponents, mainly on college campuses, were Native-Americanizing and people-of-colorizing the landscape. The new invisibility results partly because of all the victories won by the politically correct. What

they wanted, they pretty much got, linguistically speaking. It's for them now to enjoy.

A whole new vocabulary masks the deadly operations of the abortion clinic. In the context of abortion we have witnessed over the past decade or so what could be called "semanticide"—the murder of meaning itself. (Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., spoke of "verbicide"—word murder.) In the verbicided—or semanticided—society, traditional meanings lose their edge, if not their very existence. The new meanings . . . but wait a moment. There are no new *meanings* present in the abortion context, just the old familiar ones: life, love, death, breath, man, woman . . . and God. That means the new language has a vital function, provided the "right" of abortion is to endure.

The new language must wall off the old realities insofar as possible from public view. Or, say that we catch momentary sight of them, like some crazy aunt peeking out from behind her attic curtains. There must in that event be soothing words, exculpatory phrases, suggesting, yes, never mind how things look, it's really fine. Really, it is!

Such a plot seems to suggest the presence of a criminal mastermind—ring leader in the murder of meaning. There would be no use looking for him, or, likelier—given the feminist antecedents of abortion—her. The murder of meaning, in terms of abortion and, more recently, of euthanasia, has been the death of a thousand cuts, most inflicted slyly, lightly, with emphasis on concealment. A word here, a phrase there: so the process goes.

The process seems the easier, and the more natural, in view of the reluctance modern folk bring to discussions of death. Evelyn Waugh, in *The Loved One*, had great sport with the modern (it was the later 1940s then) disinclination to look death in the eye, calling it by its right name.

As lifespans lengthen and exercise rooms fill—and, more to the point, perhaps, as the religious view of life and death diminishes—so moderns wrap the whole business in linguistic gauze, viewing it as a thing too unpleasant to talk about with any clarity.

People don't "die;" they "pass away" or "succumb." To judge from the obituary pages, a lot of succumbing goes on every day. Still, we don't like it. (We also discover, from family-submitted obituaries, that in the normal course of things, when someone does succumb, he heads straight for heaven, to be reunited with deceased loved ones.)

I have no desire to mock. The most awful reality in life is the leaving of it. The awfulness of it all does cultivate in everyone an appreciation of euphemism—of "good speech" that softens the reality, makes it easier to swallow. We are made for euphemism, it would seem; or, if not, where is the historical precedent suggesting otherwise?

The most natural thing in the world, perhaps, is to smooth down the hard-edged reality of abortion, using language. Say it's not so, Dr. Joe! Say we're not doing what we're doing!

OK—we're not. *They* say we're killing? Of course not. We're exercising a constitutional right, a right inhering in all free-born women. ("Free-born," hmmm: potential misunderstanding there—distinguishes "born" from "unborn;" implies more than maybe we want to imply.) Yes, a right inhering in . . . free women. (How's that?) Nor are we "killing." The Constitution, as any fool knows, doesn't hold with murder. What we are doing is evacuating an unwanted product of conception. There—you see? No use getting weepy and guilty about the exercise of this valued and long-prayed-for constitutional right. Be proud! Be assertive! Be—yes, be American!

Would Orwell, who died (that word again!) in 1950, have felt the earth tremble as he read such lines? One can certainly say he would not have read with any great astonishment. He had seen it all—before it was there to be seen.

In his famous 1946 essay, "Politics and the English Language," Orwell observed that "Political language—and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists—is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind." The language of the abortion controversy is painfully political; this, because the Supreme Court dealt politically with the issue in removing it from the purview of elected state legislatures. Necessarily political efforts to reverse that outcome have met with political stalemate.

Orwell, in the same essay, noted with satisfaction the possibility of a course-correction. One could "change one's own habits," he wrote, from time to time sending "some worn-out and useless phrase . . . into the dustbin where it belongs." Whether one could be persuaded to do so remained the open question Orwell neglected, for one reason or another, to address.

There is another question, in the context of abortion: What habits of speech need reversing? What worn-out and useless phrases should we get rid of? What are we saying when we talk about abortion, sometimes without knowing what we say?

Herewith an abortion glossary for the Semanticide Era—however long it may afflict us. Without actually committing the glossary to paper, I have compiled it over the years, adding, subtracting, modifying as occasion seemed to demand. I make bold now to share it.

The euthanasia movement, a direct outgrowth of the abortion movement, has suggested a whole new class of entries. As abortion has familiarized us with the unspoken right to kill, so it has encouraged us to expand the range of potential victims: not just the unborn but also the worn-out. Dr. Kevorkian

has played a role here, as has his former lawyer, Geoffrey Fieger.

Language, including abortion-language, is a living thing. Which is more than can be said for the “products of conception” (see below) whose viability *Roe v. Wade* renders forecloseable, indeed foreclose-worthy.

GLOSSARY

abortion: a. constitutional right, under the penumbra and responsive to the emanations, of the right to privacy, as spelled out in *Roe v. Wade* and inhering in female citizens of the United States, to elect the termination of a pregnancy prior to natural term. b. (obsolete) Medical destruction, inside the mother’s womb, of a child yet unborn, possessed of soul and human properties.

abortionist: (obsolete) pejorative term used to describe health providers assisting women in exercising anticipated right to terminate a pregnancy. (See “health provider.”)

anti-choice: useful name for right-wing fanatics seeking to deprive American women of right to choose termination of a pregnancy. Often associated with narrow fundamentalist churches; also with Roman Catholics in sympathy with outlook and purposes of Vatican. (See “choice.”)

abortion mill: (obsolete) medical office where dirty, unsafe abortions were performed; pejorative term used before restoration of right to choose termination of a pregnancy, 1973, in *Roe v. Wade*.

baby: name for former occupant of womb. Not to be used during occupant’s stay in womb.

Bible: book formerly deemed authoritative by Christians and Jews; used to disparage exercise of right to choose termination of pregnancy. Passages affirming “right to life” widely regarded as strained in meaning and application. Widely discredited for failure to demonstrate understanding of quest for justice and equality.

Blackmun, Harry. Associate Justice, U.S. Supreme Court, 1970-93. Author of *Roe v. Wade*. Hero of struggle for right to choose the termination of a pregnancy. (See “choice.”)

clinic: (see “abortion mill”). Medical office where clean, safe, loving abortions are performed under direction of trained and compassionate health providers. Sites often become focal points for mob action by fundamentalist opponents of choice.

compassion: supreme virtue of late 20th century. Generally connotes acceptance of right to terminate pregnancy.

death with dignity: outcome desired by patients of Dr. Jack Kevorkian (q.v.).

embryo: golliwog-like organism in early stages of development, how early depending on stage at which abortion is performed. Preferred for reference to womb-occupants unless advanced age of same makes “fetus” (q.v.) more appropriate.

fetus: (see also “product of conception”). Alternative name for embryo. Technical name applied to womb-occupant where embryo may be deemed inappropriate, generally because of advanced age.

fundamentalist: member of narrow religious sect seeking to impose on American women anti-modern view of family, parenthood, and submission to Bible (q.v.) and its standards. Can refer to Roman Catholics as well as evangelicals. Adherents often take part in demonstrations intended to deprive women of constitutional right to termination of pregnancy.

health provider: doctor sensitive to constitutional rights of women, as established under *Roe v. Wade*. Terminates pregnancies on request, with few if any questions asked. Disclaims knowledge of Hippocratic Oath or at least of those sections frowning on abortion. Often risks life to bring health and hope. Is frequent target for redneck fundamentalist gunmen with grudge against women and/or misplaced patriarchal feelings of protection toward them.

Kevorkian, Jack. Medical pioneer noted for compassion to incurably ill and despondent. Victim of patriarchalist justice system. Imprisoned (1998) for efforts to defend right of choice in extension or non-extension of life.

product of conception: term for fetus, especially in articles written for the *New York Times* Op-Ed page and similar venues.

right to die: American constitutional right, traceable to Magna Carta and Declaration of Independence, though not officially affirmed by U.S. Supreme Court. Strenuously affirmed by compassionate citizens.

termination: outcome of procedure accomplished in clinic (q.v.) by health provider (q.v.) despite opposition of fundamentalists (q.v.).

women: class historically discriminated against by males through assertion of brute strength and cruelty; caused, against their will, to carry embryos to term, prior to intervention of Harry Blackmun (q.v.) and U.S. Supreme Court.

* * *

My glossary expands yearly, monthly, daily, as semanticide takes its toll on American society: intellectually, emotionally, physically. The linguistic politics of abortion roars on, to every appearance inexhaustible.

As if in anticipation of it all, Dr. Johnson once delivered a succulent piece of counsel: “Clear your mind of cant.” But so many—by this stage in our development—can’t.

Talking Back to the *Anti* Anti-abortion Crowd

David S. Oderberg

As a philosopher, I imagine I have a bias towards characterizing problems as intellectual wherever possible. “If only people *understood the issues*, then there wouldn’t be any argument.” Or, “If only people would think *logically*, their disagreements would vanish.” Let’s get back to first principles, the philosopher tends to think; let’s *reason it out*, and after one of us inevitably sees where he has gone wrong—with his facts or his logic—he will breathe a sigh of relief and extend the hand of friendship, and we can all live in peace and harmony.

It does not take a long look around us to see how mistaken such an assumption is. Disagreement is, in our pluralistic society, more widespread than ever, and we hardly ever resolve our disputes in the cool light of logical reflection. Nor are all problems intellectual ones. Many, perhaps most, are *moral* problems, problems of the will, involving an inability to make one’s will respond to what the intellect tells it *must* be believed or *must* be done. The mystery of iniquity guarantees that our darkened wills and intellects will never, in this mortal life, unite themselves wholly and unconditionally to the truth, as that truth often is inconvenient, painful, or upsetting.

Still, one lives in hope. I for one believe that many of the dominant moral disputes of our time have a large intellectual component to them. Abortion is one of those disputes. Now I do not for one minute think that if all pro-abortionists woke up tomorrow *agreeing* with their opponents on all the facts, all the principles, and all the logic, abortion would disappear overnight. The practice would be reduced to some degree, but it would continue nonetheless. It would continue because so many people *want* it to continue, whatever the truth of the matter. As Winston Churchill once remarked, everyone, at some time or another in his life, stumbles across the truth; but the vast majority of people pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and keep on walking as though nothing had happened.

The intellectual side of the abortion debate is given a particular twist by several arguments often put by people who say they are opposed to abortion but nevertheless think it should remain legal. One can think of them as “anti-

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anti-abortion” arguments, by analogy with the position of those people labelled as anti-anti-communists during the Cold War. They thought that even if one were opposed to communism, one shouldn’t criticize it publicly, or call for restrictions on its propagation, or demand its prohibition. In fact the anti-anti-communists were nearly always themselves pro-communists whose mission was to *neutralize* effective policy-making against the spread of communist ideas. Going back to abortion, the people who use the arguments I have in mind may think they do actually have philosophical force; like the anti-anti-communists, though, I suspect that what most of them really want is to stifle policy initiatives against abortion.

On the other hand, those who are opposed to abortion and want it to be made illegal are themselves not always sure that the arguments I am about to discuss *don’t* have some force. More often, however, their gut instinct tells them the arguments are *not* valid, but they are not certain how to refute them. The fact is, the arguments I am about to refer to are *not* valid, can *easily* be refuted, and have no part in any rational debate on the subject. I offer the following discussion as a kind of primer for the anti-abortion debater who needs some assistance in handling them. (The wording of my discussion alternates—without confusion, I hope—between talking to you the reader as a pro-life debater and treating you for the purpose of argument as an imaginary anti-anti-abortionist.)

a) “I personally disapprove of abortion but would not impose my opinion on other people.”

The first argument is in fact not strictly about legality, but about the nature of moral debate itself. The idea the speaker has in mind is that on some moral issues people do not have the right to impose their opinions on others. By taking such a position, the anti-anti-abortionist seeks to *neutralize* public debate.

The central assertion—“I personally disapprove but would not impose my view on others”—is heard again and again, especially from the mealy mouths of liberal politicians for whom it has become almost a mantra. It seems to give the speaker the best of both worlds, combining evidence of a sense of right and wrong with an admirable tolerance for other people’s divergent views on such a sensitive and controversial subject. Is it, then, a view one can legitimately hold?

It is essential first to distinguish this view from the *legitimate* idea that a person might not be *sure* whether a certain action is right or wrong and so might not be convinced that other people should have any particular position on the matter. For instance, you might not be sure whether you have an

obligation to pay a certain tax—say, because it may go to an unjust cause. In such a state of uncertainty you would be rash to prescribe that others should think payment was or was not a duty. But in the abortion case what I have in mind is the person who is personally sure abortion is wrong (or at least *says* he is sure) but insists his view should not be imposed on others. What should we think of this stance?

Consider the formulation (a) above with the word “abortion” replaced by the word “rape”: “I personally disapprove of rape but would not impose my opinion on other people.” Or “burning down the churches of blacks”: “I personally disapprove of burning down the churches of blacks but would not impose my opinion on other people.” It does not have the same sort of ring to it, does it? This is because we have become so conditioned to accepting that as far as abortion goes it is perfectly respectable to have such a view, that we can no longer see how ridiculous it really is, *on the assumption that abortion is wrong, and seriously wrong at that*. One can of course see why, socially speaking, such a view is common—nearly everyone agrees that rape and burning down the churches of blacks are serious wrongs, but abortion is still, at least in some countries, so controversial that to have a more “dogmatic” view of the matter (as pro-abortionists see it) is positively to invite conflict.

The function of morality, however, is not simply to preserve social harmony. We should all get along as much as possible, but not if it means sacrificing either rationality or our commitment to fundamental principles of right and wrong. As far as an obvious wrong like rape is concerned, how many people would fail to speak up against it if they were confronted by someone who maintained that it was permissible, maybe even *necessary* in some circumstances? How many people would not risk an argument, would not risk losing a friendship even, by speaking out against rape? If so for rape, or for burning down the churches of blacks, why not for abortion?

As far as rationality goes, the question here is what you mean by “impose.” There is nothing irrational about having a strong view on a moral matter and yet refusing to browbeat others into agreement, or to threaten them with ostracism or some other unpleasant consequence, if they do not agree with you. Indeed, that sort of behavior is nearly always wrong itself. Far less, then, should anyone try to *coerce* another into agreeing with him. People are free to have their own private beliefs, at least in the sense that they have a right not to be coerced into believing something, and in all except grave circumstances should be free from any sort of interference whatsoever. This does not, however, mean people have a *right to believe whatever they like*, because freedom in the sense of a right to non-interference is not the same as

freedom in the sense of a right to act, whether the act is mental or physical.

For instance, I have the “right to believe” that the moon is made of cheese and that $2+2=5$ *in the sense* that no one can legitimately coerce me into believing otherwise; but I have no right *as such* to believe these absurdities. I have no right as such to believe *anything* false, even if I have a right to non-interference with my belief. This follows from the very concept of a right, that it is a kind of *protection* conferred by morality itself on a person’s pursuit of the good. (Whether the state backs up that moral protection with *legal* protection is another matter.) Now truth is a good, falsehood is not; therefore there can be no genuine right to pursue falsehood, hence no right to believe what is false. In fact we need to be more precise: I might believe what is false *thinking it is true*, and so I would still be pursuing the good of truth. But then I would not believe a falsehood *qua falsehood*, but *qua purported truth*, and I would change my belief when shown that it was false.

Once I am shown the reasons why a certain belief of mine is false, I have no right to continue believing it; furthermore, if I have any substantial *doubt* whether it is true, I must immediately *suspend* belief and make inquiry until I get to the truth. Perhaps there are few people who believe what is false in the face of flagrant evidence to the contrary—though the number is, I would suggest, much larger than you think—but there are many who persist in believing what they know is at least doubtful, and long after they have been put on inquiry. To say they have a right to go on believing what they have more than fleeting doubts about is to fly in the face of the fundamental point that the right to believe something is meaningful only in the context of the good of truth.

To put this somewhat abstract point in more concrete terms, one of the fundamental facts about human beings is that we are *built for truth*. One of the basic goods that fulfills our nature is the pursuit of truth, which involves the search for understanding, knowledge, insight, meaning. What satisfies us is the quest for, and ultimate acquisition of, a grasp of *the way the world is*. It is not, as most modern philosophers have it, the mere search itself, the mere asking of questions and toying with possible answers that gives us what our nature craves. What we long for is the *truth*, the *solution* of a problem, be it the trivial question of whether it is cold outside or the serious question of whether God exists. Hence the act of belief is not a simple exercise of the mind for the sake of it, but an act whose performance is proper when it is directed at truth. It is *true* belief which is good for us, not any old belief whether true or false. And a right is what morality provides to protect us in doing what is good for us: we have a right to be healthy, but not a right to abuse our bodies; a right to make friends, not a right to shun humanity (even

the desert hermits didn't do that!); a right to work, not a right to waste our lives in idleness. Hence the right to believe only makes sense on the understanding that what it protects is that which is good for us, namely *true* belief. But none of this implies a right to *force* others to believe what is true, since it is equally part of human nature to be *free* to choose between right and wrong, truth and falsehood.

So if "impose" means "coerce," it is quite rational to disapprove of something whilst acknowledging the right of others to peaceful disagreement. But if by "impose" you mean "persuade or try to convince," then it would be a sacrifice of rationality both to disapprove of something and to think it was wrong to try to persuade others that they too should disapprove. "I would not impose my opinions on others" sometimes means no more than, "For the sake of peace and quiet I would not ever try to argue with someone about it," but far too often what people mean is that arguing and trying to convince are in themselves wrong, some kind of "imposition on the sincerely held values of others." Again, I ask: Would you say the same about, say, theft or child abuse? Would you say: "I disapprove of child abuse but I would never try to convince someone else to abandon his sincerely held belief that it was all right"? Would you try to convince a notorious paedophile who waxed lyrical about how much fun he had abusing young boys and girls? If so, why would you limit the application of your persuasive powers to people who were openly engaged in the practice you disapproved of? Isn't it the case that the mere having of a belief that child abuse is legitimate creates a moral climate in which it is more likely to be accepted and acted upon than if everyone disapproved of it and voiced disapproval strongly when necessary? If so, why is abortion any different?

b) "It is not the business of the law to interfere with such a difficult decision."

Should people be free to make mistakes? When the abortion issue leapt to the forefront of public policy debate in the 1960s and '70s many politicians, in America for instance, were still opposed to it on moral grounds. In order to square their ethical views with what they believed—rightly or wrongly—was a massive swing of public opinion in favor of legalization, they devised (with a little help from "policy advisers") a formula they thought would satisfy everyone. Abortion was wrong, they said, but the state should not interfere. This was the formula adopted by would-be congressmen and presidents who still at least publicly maintained that they personally disapproved of abortion—and it has been used by politicians ever since. (Pick your favorite example.) The position is based in part on the view we

have just examined about the “imposition” of one’s ethical opinions on others, but also on a view of the role of the state and of the law.

Now, on the assumption—undoubtedly true—that for many people the decision to abort a child is enormously difficult, fraught with psychological and emotional turmoil, did the politicians have a point? Consider the civil rights movement in America that was also at the centre of social activism and policy debate *at the very same time* abortion was. What should we have thought of a politician who said: “The granting of civil rights to black people is a decision fraught with difficulties. So many people oppose it, and for them it would be psychologically tumultuous to have to come to terms with the civil equality of black people. To grant civil rights would be to throw many communities into turmoil. It would have ramifications we can only begin to grasp. As a policy-maker, I cannot see how the function of the state should be to interfere with privileges so many white people have enjoyed for so long. Whatever I personally think about civil rights for blacks—and I do believe they should have them—I have a duty to the whole community, and so I will not use the legislature to interfere in such a controversial and difficult area.”

Is this a position you would feel comfortable with? What if the politician had been speaking in the nineteenth century about slavery? Liberating slaves was every bit as controversial then as abortion is now and yet we do not, looking back, have much regard for politicians who thought the state had no right to outlaw what so many people thought was a fundamental right of slave ownership. Even if every single slave owner had had enough of a conscience for his ownership of slaves to weigh heavily on it every day of his life, would that have been enough of a reason for the state not to act? If not, why is abortion different?

To say that the state has no right to stop seriously immoral actions, however controversial they may be and however difficult it may be for people to refrain from doing them, is tantamount to saying that the state really is not the guardian of the common good. It is to say the state does not have the function of protecting fundamental rights, such as the right to life. Certain theorists, namely libertarians, do indeed believe the state has very little to do with public morality at all. Although there are various degrees of libertarianism, all its adherents believe the state has a minimal role in securing the common good, and that people have the inalienable right to commit a wide range of immoral actions, to make their own “moral mistakes” and to take the consequences. Such a position is pernicious and absurd, and does not stand up to a moment’s scrutiny. Should the state outlaw theft? arson? assault?

rape? slavery? child abuse? cruelty to animals? incest? counterfeiting? perjury? subornation of perjury? obstruction of justice? corruption in public office? drug-dealing? If abortion *really does* involve the taking of innocent human life, how is it any different?

c) *“We can’t return to the days of backstreet abortions.”*

One of the most common objections to the prohibition of abortion is the claim that it would place women back in the position of having to undergo highly dangerous “backstreet” abortions. It would place them in the hands of people who were semi-trained or maybe had no training at all in terminating a pregnancy. They might not have any medical qualification. And the fact is that in every society in which abortion is illegal women die from backstreet abortions, or suffer physical harm such as infection, haemorrhaging, and infertility. (The numbers in the USA have been, however, grossly exaggerated; and all these harms can be suffered as a result of legal abortions as well.)

Is this a reason, then, for taking abortion away from the backstreet and into professionally run clinics regulated by the state? Many people think so, but it is hard to see why. What would you think of a politician who said the following: “I am disturbed by the number of backstreet contract killings being carried out by members of the Mafia and other gangland organizations. These murders are often bloody and excruciating. Some victims survive and are maimed for life. Unscrupulous operators, often untrained or at best semi-trained in the art of killing, receive thousands of dollars for their acts. A whole black market in contract killing has arisen. I propose to solve the problem by taking contract killing out of the backstreet and putting it into the hands of the state. I will lobby for the introduction of state-run contract killing centres furnished with expert killers and the latest high-tech equipment. Every January, leaders of the major gangland organizations will be able to nominate up to three opponents they would like eliminated. A specially trained police force will then round up the nominated victims and take them to a state-run centre, where they will be painlessly killed, and with a minimum of fuss, by one of our experts. All nominations will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis. The state will charge the person making the nomination a set fee determined by an appointed regulator. There will no longer be any need for backstreet contract killings.”

Has the politician convinced you of the need to eliminate backstreet gangland murders by taking them into the hands of the state? Or do you still think contract killing should be illegal and that the state should make every effort to stamp out such activities? The “backstreet” objection can, in fact, be used as a purported argument for the legalization and state regulation of a

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vast number of acts that are now illegal and considered immoral (say, drug dealing or child abuse). If the objection does not work in the case of contract killing, for example, how could it work in the case of abortion? Why is abortion any different?

I hope this examination of some popular arguments will be useful to you in your debates with anti-anti-abortionists and open pro-abortionists. Perhaps I have spent many pages stating the obvious. If so, you are already well equipped to deal with the sort of specious reasoning poured out on campuses, from platforms, and in studios across the nation. It is important for all people who have the invidious task of debating serious moral issues in this profoundly irrational age never to dodge the duty of thinking and speaking logically, rationally, and in full preparedness for the fallacies that spew forth from those with less concern for the truth than for expedience. Never underestimate the lengths people will go to for the purpose of perverting the minds of others against what is true and right. Sandstorms of twisted logic, blatant irrationality, the utterance of every conceivable sort of falsehood—this is the stuff of the expert debater who cares nothing for the truth. The extent to which such tactics can work their magic should never be downplayed. Polemics and rhetoric do indeed have their place. But without reasoning, even the crooked reasoning of the wrongheaded, they are blunt instruments that rarely achieve their purpose. It is the reasoning at the heart of the issue which you must always be prepared to confront.



"I SOLEMNLY SWEAR TO TELL THE TRUTH AS I DEFINE IT."

Lessons from History

Mary Meehan

John Greenleaf Whittier, the Quaker poet, was also a shrewd political organizer. While working for the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1837, he spent much time on anti-slavery petitions to Congress. "How are you getting on in regard to petitions?" Whittier wrote a fellow abolitionist. "*Are they in circulation*—or are they lying in the drawers, or wearing out in the pockets, of the persons who have them!" Referring to William Lloyd Garrison's newspaper, he suggested, "Thunder at them through the *Liberator* and scare them into the work."¹

Instructions for petition-gatherers combined political thoroughness with literary grace: "Let petitions be circulated wherever signers can be got. . . . Follow the farmer to his field, the wood-chopper to the forest. Hail the shop-keeper behind his counter; call the clerk from his desk; stop the waggoner with his team; forget not the matron, ask for her daughter."²

Today's right-to-life movement has no poet laureate; but it does resemble the abolitionist movement in many ways, including attention to political detail. Like the abolitionists, most right-to-lifers have deep religious convictions. Also like the abolitionists, they face a deeply-entrenched evil, one with strong support in the political and financial establishments. John Cardinal O'Connor recently said that pro-lifers have "the loneliness of the long-distance runner."³ They are in good historical company. Protest against slavery in the United States dates back at least to 1688. Quakers were active against it in the early 1700s, and the first national anti-slavery organization was started in 1794. Yet abolitionists had to struggle on until 1865, when the Civil War and the Thirteenth Amendment finally abolished slavery.

Whittier and many other activists of the last anti-slavery phase lived to see slavery abolished, although not in the way they had hoped. Their victory was marred in three major respects: 1) Abolition was achieved by a horrific war, not by the peaceful means that the Quakers and so many other abolitionists advocated and practiced; 2) the ex-slaves did not win either political or economic equality in the South; 3) Northern racism, a sometime target of abolitionists, remained strong after emancipation. Some of this *might* have been avoided with a different and more comprehensive strategy. I stress the "might" because the pro-slavery forces were extremely powerful, often violent, and fiercely resistant to change. In any case, right-to-lifers can learn a

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great deal by studying both the successes and the failures of abolitionists.

Starting on a positive note, they might consider the brilliant organizing that abolitionists did in the 1830s. Theodore Dwight Weld, formerly a Protestant seminarian, organized an effort to “abolitionize” Ohio in 1834-36. The Rev. Lyman Beecher, himself a famous preacher, described Weld as “logic on fire. . . . As eloquent as an angel and powerful as thunder!” Weld trained other young men; he and they spoke all over Ohio, did tremendous educational work, and helped organize local anti-slavery societies. In doing all of this they had to face down mobs many times. According to Weld biographer Benjamin Thomas, they “came to consider a riot as part of their introduction.”⁴

So effective was Weld that the American Anti-Slavery Society chose him to recruit and train “The Seventy,” a group of abolitionist lecturers to be sent all over the North. They were patterned after the seventy disciples of the New Testament, though they did not actually reach quite that number in the field. Most were Protestant ministers or seminarians. The Seventy did for other states what Weld and his first colleagues had done for Ohio: they “abolitionized” entire states in one of the most successful organizing campaigns in American history.

Today, despite decades of educational work and protest, there are still states where the anti-abortion movement is weak, especially in the Northeast and on the West Coast. If the right-to-lifers were to organize a group like The Seventy, how would they go about it? Given increases in land area and population since the 1830s, one might imagine seventy lecturers/organizers for California alone and proportionally smaller numbers for other states that need thoroughgoing campaigns. Instead of being run from a national headquarters, though, such campaigns probably should be organized from within each state, taking account of its history and power structure and media markets. Where the anti-slavery agents had to rely on their voices and their pens alone, today’s activists could use everything from public meetings to radio and television talk shows to the Internet. Recruits for such work might include young people who would need stipends to live on, as well as retirees who could donate their time. Besides educating the public, they could recruit new volunteers, channeling them into existing groups or urging them to form new ones.

The “Seventy” campaign, successful as it was, suffered from one major defect. It was aimed almost entirely at the North, rather than at the South and the border states where most slaves actually lived and suffered. (There were still some slaves in the North in the 1830s, but relatively few, since most

Northern states had required emancipation.) Where early anti-slavery workers had made a great effort to convert individual Southern slaveholders, the later abolitionists essentially loaded the North like a great rhetorical cannon and fired it at the South.

Southerners knew that many Yankee sea captains had grown wealthy on the slave trade; that slavery had once flourished in Northern states; and that the New England textile industry depended on slave-grown cotton. No one should have been surprised to find that they resented Northern preaching on slavery. They *needed* preaching, but it would have been more effective had it come from Southerners. Had the American Anti-Slavery Society and the *Liberator* placed their headquarters in Baltimore or Washington—rather than in New York and Boston, respectively—and had they recruited more Southerners for their work, the North-South division might not have become so deep and rancorous.

Some brave anti-slavery Southerners tried to organize in the South; but they found the work very lonely, slow, discouraging, and sometimes dangerous. Some moved to the North or West because they found it painful to see the cruelties of slavery or did not want their children to be corrupted by it. Perhaps, if more Southerners, working together and supporting one another, had made the effort, they could have made advances at least in the border states and the Upper South. Some evangelical missionaries did make progress in Kentucky and North Carolina until they were driven out after John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry.

Right-to-lifers, like the abolitionists, are tempted to preach to the choir instead of going out and making new converts. Where the abolitionists neglected Virginia and Arkansas, abortion opponents today often neglect liberals, radicals, Democrats, feminists, the Jewish community, and the African-American community. The last-named neglect is especially ironic because the same kind of racial bigotry that sustained slavery also targets the black community for abortion.

Right-to-life liberals and radicals are in lonely territory, and they are presented with agonizing choices in politics. To vote for candidates who are anti-abortion and anti-euthanasia, they often must accept ones who are pro-war and pro-death-penalty. One radical said years ago that most candidates looked like "a cross between Francis of Assisi and Attila the Hun."⁵ It has not helped matters that right-to-life groups have shown little interest in organizing within the Democratic Party or among groups on the left.

There are a few exceptions: a coalition called the Seamless Garment Network; the small but feisty Feminists for Life; and the even smaller Pro-Life

Alliance of Gays and Lesbians (PLAGAL). These are the equivalents of abolitionists who tried to organize in the South. They do not receive much help from the mainstream anti-abortion movement, and PLAGAL, in particular, encounters some hostility. Perhaps many pro-lifers assume that PLAGAL is proselytizing for a "gay-rights" agenda; but its literature does not indicate this at all. Feminists for Life activists, for their part, must grow tired of hearing endless attacks on feminism from people who refuse to acknowledge that there are many varieties of feminism, including the pro-life variety.

Conservatives need not agree with these groups on anything except abortion and euthanasia. But conservatives should honor the courage of those who waded into difficult battles on the left—and should welcome their presence at right-to-life demonstrations, marches, and conventions.

While support for legal abortion is widespread in the Jewish community, some of the most articulate and effective *opponents* of abortion are Jewish, including Prof. Hadley Arkes, writer Chana bat-Shalom, columnist Mona Charen, Rabbi Marc Gellman, Sandi Merle, founder of STOP (Standing Together to Oppose Partial-birth Abortion), Doris Gordon of Libertarians for Life, editor and columnist Paul Greenberg, writer Nat Hentoff, Rabbi Yehuda Levin, Rabbi David Novak, author and television personality Benjamin Stein, and attorney Victor Rosenblum. There might be many more if the pro-life movement did not so often appear to be a Christian crusade. Certain gestures of sensitivity and courtesy would, I suspect, be much appreciated: use of the Psalms rather than specifically Christian prayers at interfaith pro-life meetings; sensitivity to Saturday as the Jewish Sabbath when planning events; perhaps use of the traditional Jewish toast, *L'chaim* ("To life"), for closing banquets of pro-life conventions.

Although many black Americans oppose abortion, the black political leadership generally supports it. There are many reasons for this, including Democratic Party politics and Margaret Sanger's targeting of black leadership for her "Negro Project" (which Planned Parenthood has continued in a general way, although not under the same name).

How can abortion foes reach out to the African-American community? The Rev. Ronald O. Ross, Jr., who used to do outreach work for the American Life League, made helpful suggestions in a League publication. Stressing the importance of meetings such as the annual conference of the Congressional Black Caucus, Ross noted: "I have been attending the CBC conference for two years and have yet to see or talk with a white pro-lifer who was there just to make contacts in the African-American community." But Planned Parenthood, he reported, was out in force.

Ross suggested that outreach workers from pro-life groups should “attend a minority church at least once a month” and go to special events such as “anti-drug rallies, pastors’ appreciations, and protest marches.” He also proposed the study of black history. Reading about the abolitionist movement is very much to the point here, because studying the history of an oppressed group at their time of greatest suffering tends to produce deep understanding and sympathy.

Ross remarked that many white pro-lifers “are afraid to go to black churches or into inner-city neighborhoods,” but noted that many blacks have similar fears about entering all-white communities because of “police brutality and harassment.” He suggested that Christ’s closest disciples, “all but one of whom were killed, would much rather have worked the nicer neighborhoods where there was no danger, but that’s just not the way new recruits are won.”⁶

Many activists also neglect the chance to try to persuade abortion-clinic staff to quit their work. Such activists may organize anti-abortion demonstrations and marches and the lobbying of a distant Congress, yet never think of talking quietly with staff members at the local abortion clinic. Yet accounts by former clinic staff indicate that many experience terrible anguish about their work and are open to conversations with their critics.

Here again, the anti-slavery experience is instructive. Before the North-South split became so deep, some abolitionists were able to persuade individual slaveholders to free their slaves. Quakers worked first on their co-religionists, many of whom owned slaves before the Revolution. Eventually the Friends excluded from their community those who refused to free their slaves.

In an early instance of “speaking truth to power,” they also started urging non-Quaker slaveholders to free their slaves. Others, including Methodist leaders in the late 1700s, urged the same; and the ideology of the American Revolution, with its stress on human rights, pushed some slaveholders in the right direction.

Robert Carter III of Virginia was one of the South’s largest slaveholders in 1791, when he decided to free his 500 slaves—some immediately and others over a period of twenty-one years. He had become “convinced that to retain them in slavery is contrary to the true principles of religion and justice.” Some of the ex-slaves became his tenants; others worked as field hands for the tenants.⁷

Robert Pleasants, a Virginia Quaker who had freed his own slaves, wrote letters to state leaders urging them to free theirs. Patrick Henry responded to Pleasants with embarrassment and honesty: “Would anyone believe I am a

master of slaves of my own purchase! I am drawn along by the general inconvenience of living here without them. I will not, I cannot justify it.”⁸

Pleasants also wrote to George Washington, who apparently did not respond. But Bishop Francis Asbury and another key Methodist leader approached Washington with an anti-slavery appeal; so did his good friend the Marquis de Lafayette, who had fought under him in the Revolution. According to biographer James Thomas Flexner, Washington developed a strong reluctance to buy or sell slaves, partly because he did not want to break up families. His last will provided that his slaves be freed after his death and his wife’s, and that those who were old and frail be “comfortably clothed and fed by my heirs.” He directed that ex-slave children who needed aid be supported until they could be bound out as apprentices.⁹

Edward Coles, son of a wealthy Virginia family, inherited twenty slaves. In 1819, he took his slaves, except for two elderly women who wanted to stay in Virginia, on a trip to Illinois. As they boated down the Ohio River on a “lovely April day,” Coles told the slaves that he was setting them free and giving 160 acres of Illinois land to each family head. At first stunned by the news of their freedom, the slaves then laughed and wept and “implored the blessings of God on me,” Coles recalled years later. As governor of Illinois in the 1820s, he led a successful effort to prevent legalization of slavery there. He had served as private secretary to President James Madison and tried to persuade his former employer to free his slaves through his will. While Madison leaned toward that path, he ultimately failed to follow it.¹⁰

Had most of the large slaveholders followed the lead of Carter, Pleasants, Washington, or Coles, slavery might have been abolished without a civil war—and with a much better outcome for the ex-slaves.

Some Southerners did follow Pleasants and Coles into activism. Kentuckian James Birney freed his slaves in 1834 and became a major anti-slavery activist, eventually running twice as the Liberty Party presidential candidate. Angelina and Sarah Grimké, daughters of a prominent slaveholding family in Charleston, S.C., converted to the Quaker faith and moved to the North, where they lectured against slavery. Angelina was a powerful speaker who drew huge crowds to her lectures, and both sisters were effective writers.

How do today’s activists compare? A few abortion foes have been skillful in making conversions among abortion-clinic staff and in encouraging those, like Dr. Bernard Nathanson, who more or less converted themselves. There is now a fairly long list of ex-clinic staff who are on the pro-life side. Dr. Nathanson, with his books and videos, has had an impact somewhat like that of James Birney and the Grimké sisters in the slavery era.

Norma McCorvey, the lead plaintiff in *Roe v. Wade*, who later worked in abortion clinics, also made an impact with her conversion to Christianity and to the pro-life side. Her 1995 conversion followed long talks with the Rev. Flip Benham, leader of Operation Rescue National, who befriended her while organizing against the clinic where she then worked. McCorvey gave her former clinic colleagues something to ponder when she recalled looking at empty swings in a playground and thinking that “the playgrounds are empty because there’s no children, because they’ve all been aborted.”¹¹

Joseph Scheidler of the Pro-Life Action League has done yeoman’s work in publicizing the stories of ex-clinic staff through conferences and a series of audio and video tapes. Other groups, too, have used the testimony of ex-clinic workers to great advantage from time to time; but more could be done through literature, advertising, and—especially—floor speeches in Congress and in the state legislatures. Many Americans ignore the words of people who have *always* opposed abortion. But when Dr. Anthony Levatino says that he stopped doing abortions after he “began to feel like a paid assassin,” and Dr. Beverly McMillan says that “I got to where I just couldn’t look at the little bodies any more,” people do pay attention.¹²

It is difficult to convert clinic staff, though, when some abortion foes are trying to shoot them. Efforts to convince the violence-prone that their actions are both wrong and counterproductive have had little success so far. This is partly because many critics of the snipers use pacifist arguments that they themselves do not accept in other areas. Advocates of violence against abortionists see the inconsistency; they think such non-pacifists do not really, for all their rhetoric, view unborn children as equal to the rest of us. In the tradition of the Old West, one proves sincerity and commitment by using a gun.

In most stages of the anti-slavery movement, a peaceful approach prevailed. The Quakers never thought it a good idea, before the various conversions, to shoot George Washington or bomb the many plantations of Robert Carter III or kidnap James Birney and the Grimké sisters. William Lloyd Garrison, of Baptist background, was a committed “non-resistant” or pacifist; so were many of his colleagues and followers. Weld and Birney and the brothers Lewis and Arthur Tappan, the evangelical philanthropists who funded much anti-slavery work, strongly favored nonviolence.

In the 1850s, some abolitionist leaders became convinced that slavery could be ended only with bloodshed, though others stood firm in nonviolence, at least until the Civil War actually began. In a meeting where Frederick Douglass was backsliding from his previous nonviolent position, Sojourner Truth reproved him with a blunt question: “Is God gone?”¹³

A leading anti-slavery donor, Gerrit Smith of New York, supported John Brown's raiders in the fight over "Bleeding Kansas." Peaceful voting there was supposed to decide whether the state would allow slavery, but both sides engaged in guerrilla warfare. Smith and several other abolitionist leaders, members of the "Secret Six," also supported Brown's raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry in 1859. When Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, most abolitionists supported his war as one to end slavery. But some, while hoping the Union would win, could not in conscience take part in the war. A few brave souls, such as Elihu Burritt, Beriah Green and Parker Pillsbury, even spoke out against it.

It is worthwhile to think for a moment about what violence meant for the abolition cause and for the slaves it championed. John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, besides deepening the North-South split and increasing pressures for war, made much trouble for brave anti-slavery missionaries whom Lewis Tappan and friends were funding in the Upper South. The Rev. John Fee and other ministers who had established interracial, anti-slavery churches and schools in Kentucky, were driven out of that state. Ministers who did similar work elsewhere were also driven out.¹⁴

The Civil War killed over 600,000 soldiers through wounds or disease—the greatest number of American soldiers killed in any war. The war left the South in ruins, and the freed slaves in dire poverty. While no longer under the overseer's lash, the ex-slaves enjoyed only a brief period of political rights and were soon subjected to "black codes," segregation and renewed violence. Writer Moncure Conway, thinking of fellow abolitionists who had died fighting on the Union side, believed they might have asked, "Was it well then to shed our blood in order that the Negro might be freely lynched?"¹⁵

Could major leaders of the right-to-life movement eventually support violence, as so many abolitionist leaders finally did? It seems unlikely, although some leaders of the once-powerful rescue movement believe that the use of violence can be defended on ethical and theological grounds. Even so, they do not necessarily support violence, often citing prudential objections.

But Marylander John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe, a pioneer of the early clinic sit-ins and a strong opponent of violence, believes that prudence is *part of* morality—not an afterthought. And in a 1997 interview, he suggested that some rescue people had misinterpreted the federal government's crackdown on their movement. Noting that "a nonviolent movement becomes serious when it's getting hammered," Cavanaugh-O'Keefe added that "it was certainly foreseeable that something like that was gonna happen. And it's a

tremendous step forward. It means that you've caught the attention of the other side and they see you as very serious folk."

The Rev. Michael Bray of Bowie, Md., who defends men who have killed abortionists, has claimed that he does not *advocate* such killing: he says he is "pro-choice" about it—a stance many people find too clever by half. But Bray did remark, in a 1997 interview, that if someone wants to say that violence "is bad strategy; I don't go with this, and I think this is a bad technique," then "that'd be fine. . . . I could swallow that."

Bray wants to consider "the principle of godly force" first and then talk about what he calls strategy or technique, but what Cavanaugh-O'Keefe, I believe rightly, considers part of the ethical question.¹⁶ In any case, one might say that the prudential arguments against violence are so strong that there is no need even to reach the broader question.

Men of violence fantasize that if they can kill enough abortionists, the rest will quit and young medical students will decide that there are safer ways to make lots of money. They seem to forget that the other side has the power of the federal government and the national media behind it. We see federal marshals protecting abortionists; a Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) law that bars even peaceful sit-ins; slain abortion doctors presented to the public as heroic martyrs; a proposal by President Clinton to subsidize clinic security costs; a siege mentality on the part of clinic staff, making it harder for "sidewalk counselors" to reach inbound abortion clients; and a perceived need of pro-life groups to keep dis-associating themselves from snipers and bombers.

"Now the preamble to every law or injunction aimed at us, the argument of every prosecutor in every abortion-protestor case," said Denver pro-life activist Terry Sullivan in 1994, "invokes the shootings and the arsons to justify anything they want to do to us." By giving national media interviews the previous year to defend the killing of abortionist David Gunn, he said, Michael Bray and others undid in two weeks' time the nonviolent reputation "that brave and dedicated people established with 20 years of patiently suffering attacks and long days in jail."

Sullivan noted that Michael Griffin, who killed Gunn, had thereby "stopped murders that the state would do nothing to stop" and had done so at great cost to himself, yet he disagreed with Griffin's means. (John Greenleaf Whittier said of John Brown: "We feel deeply . . . for the noble-hearted, self-sacrificing old man. But as friends of peace, as well as believers in the Sermon on the Mount, we dare not lend *any* countenance to such attempts as that at Harpers Ferry.") Sullivan added: "To reject the way Griffin did it, we must have some counter fact. We must present the evidence that we are as

passionate about stopping abortion as he was. Because otherwise, for all our talk and busy work, we are his moral inferiors.”¹⁷

It seems to me that those who suffer most from thinking about the victims of abortion—and there are many who suffer deeply—absolutely need the assurance of alternatives and rescue efforts. They must know that there is some hope for *today's* likely victims, not just for the ones ten years down the road. When all is said and done, such hope is probably the best antidote to violence.

The abolitionists found such hope in three ways: helping slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad; the open rescue of runaway slaves who were captured in the North under the Fugitive Slave Act in the 1850s, and efforts to help ex-slaves acquire an education and make a living. The first two efforts were the exciting, romantic ones, especially the Underground Railroad. The “railroad” saved many individuals and families from slavery. Most of its work was nonviolent, although one of its famous conductors, Harriet Tubman, carried a gun as she escorted slaves from Maryland to freedom. More representative, though, were the people who hid fugitives in their homes or barns and passed them on to the next stop on the “railroad” to Northern cities or to Canada.

Free black communities did a great deal to help themselves and those still in slavery. Many free blacks in the cities, North and South, sheltered runaways for years in their communities. Many ex-slaves scrimped and saved until they could buy the freedom of their spouses and children. Self-help groups in the black community aided the poor and sponsored lectures and libraries and schools. But blacks were not alone in this aspect of the abolition effort. Through a black-led campaign, the Garrisonians were able to desegregate the Boston public schools. The Quakers also established schools for black children, and the Tappanites sponsored interracial institutions, including Oberlin College, which became a powerhouse of abolition.

The pro-life movement, with its extensive system of crisis-pregnancy centers around the country, seems to be doing at least as well as the abolitionists in offering practical aid—in this case, to women and their unborn children. This is the quiet work of the movement, but also the “can-do” work: counseling scared teenagers and worried older women, making peace between pregnant teens and their parents, finding “shepherding homes” where needed, collecting maternity clothes and formula and baby toys for women who cannot afford them, offering congratulations and support when the baby is born.

Many women are sent to crisis-pregnancy centers by sidewalk counselors, the volunteers who try to intercept women on their way into abortion

clinics and persuade them not to have the abortion. This is difficult and discouraging work, but the occasional rewards are great. Many sidewalk counselors have photos of babies they have saved, as well as thanks from mothers who are happy that they took the time to listen.

Sit-ins, or rescues, at clinics are rare now. Federal penalties—long prison terms and severe fines—played a major role in squelching them. So did a lengthy internal debate on the issue of violence, which at times seemed to be a substitute for planning sit-ins and confronting the Feds. But some activists hope for a revival of rescues, at least on the local level.

Msgr. Philip Reilly, a Catholic priest in Brooklyn, N.Y., has devised a different form of witness that appears to be extremely effective. He believes that it actually produces more turnarounds than the old rescues did. His large groups (often hundreds of people at one event) start with Mass and then pray as they walk to an abortion clinic nearby. There they pray the rosary and sing hymns while sidewalk counselors talk to women going toward the clinic. There is no problem with the police, because Msgr. Reilly has a parade permit, and *his group arrives at the clinic with police escort*. Other activists have used the Reilly method successfully in many parts of this country and also abroad. Many bishops, and several cardinals, have led the peaceful vigils.¹⁸ While Reilly's events feature the Mass and the rosary, his basic approach could be adapted to a Protestant or interfaith witness, or even a secular one.

Pro-lifers who worry about support for abortion within the churches might find consolation in knowing that abolitionists faced a similar problem. So divisive was the slavery struggle that it ultimately split Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians into Northern and Southern groups.

Generally speaking, the churches as regional or national *institutions* failed badly during the anti-slavery struggle—supporting slavery, tolerating it, opposing it in word but not in deed, or splitting hopelessly on the issue. Many individual church members and ministers, though, were courageous and tireless in their work for abolition, which was a profoundly religious cause. Evangelicals (especially Presbyterians and Congregationalists) were the backbone of the movement in many areas. The evangelical Tappan brothers provided much money for the cause, while Weld, Garrison and other evangelicals agitated and organized.

The institutional failures of the churches were a major frustration for all of the activists and also for writer Harriet Beecher Stowe. In *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the non-fiction defense of her famous novel, Stowe dealt with criticisms that the abolition movement was strident and fanatic. "If the Church of Christ had begun it *right*," she said, "these so-called fanatics would

not have begun it *wrong*.”¹⁹ Lewis Tappan kept pressing church institutions he funded to be active against slavery. Meeting with little success in that effort, he and some colleagues established the anti-slavery American Missionary Association. William Lloyd Garrison became openly anticlerical. Some radical abolitionists attended services in Northern churches and, without invitation, stood up and spoke against slavery; angry churchgoers often ejected them. “Come-Outers” left, and urged others to leave, churches that refused to oppose slavery. Leaving such churches undoubtedly brought peace to the Come-Outers; unfortunately, though, it also brought peace to churches that needed to be confronted on the issue.

Quakers, early and late, were effective and heroic abolitionists, active in every area from writing to politics to the Underground Railroad. Their *institutional* record was not perfect, however. Some Quaker meetinghouses in the North, like many mainstream churches, had separate “Negro pews” or benches; and some meetings discouraged cooperation with non-Quaker abolitionists because they worried about stridency and confrontation. But the Friends’ overall record in the antislavery movement was so splendid that no other denomination could touch it.

The Friends’ tightening of discipline against slaveholding could be copied by today’s pro-life churches, especially with respect to doctors who do abortions and public officials who promote abortion through legislation and funding. Many church people fear that any discipline applied to politicians will be interpreted as a violation of church-state separation. Yet it could be explained, instead, as simply requiring them to make a choice between their devotion to their faith and their devotion to abortion (or to their careers). They are free to go; perhaps they should be obliged to go if they cannot accept their churches’ teaching on this life-or-death issue.

There are also methods of discipline less drastic than excommunication that still send a clear message. Some Catholic bishops, for example, have decided that abortion-supporting Catholic politicians may not speak in Church buildings, may not be honored by Church groups, and may not be lectors or Eucharistic ministers. Bishops seem more careful about being photographed with such politicians than they used to be, lest the photos wind up in campaign brochures.

On the positive side, many churches promote, both in word and deed, the traditional view of children as a gift from God. Some do excellent educational work and also mobilize volunteers for pro-life efforts—just as many abolitionists organized through their churches. Congregations involved in the Gabriel Project post outside their churches large signs promising

“immediate and practical help” to pregnant women who need it. Some churches run huge baby showers for crisis-pregnancy centers or for specific women in need.

Yet many other local churches, even some belonging to national denominations that are strongly pro-life, do little or nothing to protect the unborn. Jean Garton of Lutherans for Life once recalled how she spoke to a church women’s group about abortion and appealed for their help in working against it. The group’s president responded that “we don’t get involved in anything controversial.” Then, Garton recalled:

I sat down, and they went into the business meeting. And the main topic of business was the purchase of a new coffee pot. And you never heard such controversy in your life, between the drippers and the perkers. And I sat there thinking: “The women of God, arguing over a coffee pot!”²⁰

As today’s activists struggle to move their churches and their country beyond coffee-pot disputes, they can take comfort and inspiration from abolitionists who faced the same problems. The anti-slavery activists were a talented group, and brave and persevering as well. Several suffered greatly, or even lost their lives, from physical attacks or ill treatment in prison. Some lived in poverty and wore themselves out in the struggle. Many had little hope of seeing the promised land themselves. Still they kept on. Maria Waring, an Irishwoman who saw some of them in action in 1840, said it well: “Long life to these American abolitionists. They are a glorious crew.”²¹

Notes

1. John Greenleaf Whittier to Amos Augustus Phelps, [June, 1837], in John B. Pickard, ed., *The Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), vol. I, p. 239.
2. Quoted in Merton L. Dillon, *The Abolitionists* (De Kalb, Ill., 1974), p. 102.
3. Cardinal John O’Connor, address at conference in Washington, D.C., March 3, 1999.
4. Benjamin P. Thomas, *Theodore Weld* (New York, 1973, reprint), pp. 101-103.
5. Juli Loesch, “Politics Is War,” *Erie Christian Witness*, July-Aug., 1979, p. 3.
6. Rev. Ronald O. Ross, “Racial Unity for Life,” *ALL About Issues*, Jan.-Feb., 1992, pp. 12-13.
7. Louis Morton, *Robert Carter of Nomini Hall* (Williamsburg, Va., 1941), pp. 251-269; and Ken Ringle, “The Day Slavery Bowed to Conscience,” *Washington Post*, July 21, 1991, pp. F-1 & F-4.
8. Patrick Henry to Robert Pleasants, Jan. 18, 1773, in George F. Willison, *Patrick Henry and His World* (Garden City, N.Y., 1969), pp. 485-486.
9. Robert Pleasants to George Washington, Dec. 11, 1785, in Roger Bruns, ed., *Am I Not a Man and a Brother* (New York, 1977), pp. 508-509; and James Thomas Flexner, *George Washington: An Guish and Farewell (1793-1799)*, pp. 112-125 & 432-448.
10. Ralph L. Ketcham, “The Dictates of Conscience: Edward Coles and Slavery,” *Virginia Quarterly Review*, vol. 36, no. 1 (Winter, 1960), pp. 46-62; and Ralph Ketcham, *James Madison* (New York, 1971), pp. 623-630.
11. *Washington Post*, Aug. 11, 1995, p. F-5.
12. *Ibid.*, April 1, 1988, p. A-21.
13. Carleton Mabee and Susan Mabee Newhouse, *Sojourner Truth* (New York, 1993), p. 85.

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14. Carleton Mabee, *Black Freedom: The Nonviolent Abolitionists from 1830 through the Civil War* ([New York], 1970), pp. 234-242. Mabee offers a wealth of information about abolitionists' views on violence; antislavery tactics (including sit-ins and boycotts); and conflicts over slavery within the churches.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 372.
16. Telephone interview with John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe, Jan. 31, 1997; Michael Bray, *A Time to Kill: A Study Concerning the Use of Force and Abortion* (Portland, Ore., 1994), pp. 174 & 172; and telephone interview with Michael Bray, Jan. 30, 1997.
17. Terry Sullivan to John Witte, June 5, 1994, p. 2; Terry Sullivan, "John Brown's Shadow" (Denver, n.d.), p. 4; and John Greenleaf Whittier to Lydia Maria Child, Oct. 21, 1859, in Pickard, *op. cit.* (n. 1), vol. II, pp. 435-436.
18. Telephone interview with Msgr. Philip Reilly, Jan. 18, 1999.
19. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* (New York, 1968, reprint), p. 436.
20. Jean Garton, on panel at National Right to Life Convention, Arlington, Va., June 12, 1992.
21. Clare Taylor, *British and American Abolitionists* (Edinburgh, 1974), p. 97.

In addition to the books cited above, I have found the following especially helpful: Whitman Bennett, *Whittier: Bard of Freedom* (Port Washington, N.Y., 1941); Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York, 1974); Dwight Lowell Dumond, *Antislavery* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1961); Louis Filler, *The Crusade Against Slavery* (New York, 1960); Betty Fladeland, *James Gillespie Birney* (New York, 1955); Aileen S. Krador, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism* (New York, 1969); Katharine du pre Lumpkin, *The Emancipation of Angelina Grimké* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1974); Henry Mayer, *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York, 1998); Benjamin Quarles, *Black Abolitionists* (New York, 1969); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War Against Slavery* (New York, 1971, reprint); and Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North* (Chicago, 1967).



"A MOSH PIT! IT MUST HAVE BEEN A VERY STRONG QUARTER FOR TECHNOSERVICES INC."

About Erik

Faith Abbott McFadden

¹ But the “camel” which cannot get through the eye of the needle is probably a “string.” Due to the itacism in the time of Christ the words *kamelos* (camel) and *kamilos* (string) were pronounced in exactly the same way. (Itacism implies the pronunciation of *e, i, y, oi*, with the *i* sound as in “bit.”)

Those of our readers who are relatively new may think this an unusual sort of footnote: you who have been with us since the '70s may well be able to identify the author whose footnotes were almost as long (and as interesting) as the *articles* by Dr. Erik Ritter von Kuehnelt-Leddihn. I have in front of me Erik's *Curriculum Vitae and Lecture Topics*, which is also almost essay-length and would be even longer had he brought it up to date: he will not do that now, since he died on May 26th, in his 90th year. We thought it fitting to reprint one of the many articles he wrote for this *Review*; this one struck us as having as much relevance now as it had in 1982.

My husband, Jim McFadden—editor of this journal until his death last October—wrote, in his Introduction to one of Erik's articles, that “. . . there is really no way of describing the breadth and width of his eclecticism.” Just as there is really no way to adequately describe Erik himself, though William F. Buckley Jr., in the obituary he wrote for *National Review* (also reprinted here) comes as close as anyone can to capture the essence of the whole man. Bill Buckley has called Erik “the most fascinating man” he ever knew; my husband considered him “our resident expert on knowledge itself.”

Erik's footnotes were not restricted to “Cfs” or “Ibids” or bibliographical references: they were more like digressions or “asides,” but always to the point. We who often wined and dined with Erik when he was in town were familiar with his verbal footnotes: he would be relating some fascinating bit of history or culture and would stop mid-sentence with “Oh, and by the way, it's a *very curious* thing that . . .” and proceed to regale us with anecdotes about this or that monarch or the personal foibles of famous writers, politicians, artists.

Erik's CV has long lists of countries he has visited and lived in (nearly all, *and* all of the States); all the books he's written, periodicals he's written for; and he states that he speaks eight languages “more or less fluently” and has a reading knowledge of eleven others “necessary for my research.” He also

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knew accents *within* accents: he had an ear for dialects. One evening at a French restaurant he asked our hostess where she came from: she told him, and Erik said “Ah no, . . . I believe you *actually* come from . . .” and mentioned a small locale our hostess probably thought no one had ever heard of. She nearly dropped the tray.

Journalist, historian, professor, theologian, novelist, columnist—but Erik was above all a Christian gentleman. Erik’s good friend Monsignor Eugene V. Clark, pastor of St. Agnes Church in Manhattan, said in the Memorial Mass homily that “We—so many of us—heard him as the great social, political, cultural and moral commentator of our age and many other ages. He testified as other scholars have, that when the religion of a people dies, its culture is moribund But, of course, a gentleman of Central European Catholic culture can, by grace and resolution, be his own island of sanity, intellect, courtesy and love of neighbor *in nomine Domini*. Desiring to share those joys of life, he approached heaven sweetly informing his friends that the Lord was calling him—as earlier he shared his personal faith with audiences.”

I had written to Erik’s widow, and received in June a black-bordered envelope from Lans, Tyrol, with her reply inside. Mrs. Kuehnelt-Leddihn wrote that Erik’s funeral was, according to his specific wish, “a feast of joy, all in white with 4 priest-friends concelebrating He was prepared and although the operation (abdominal aneurism) was successful, his heart evidently gave up. I am now left with the final work on his latest book, making a register and proofreading—605 pages! And ‘only’ the encyclopedias to consult with great loss of time instead of simply asking him. But he is very close in this and in every other way.”

Here is the final paragraph of Erik’s CV: “for those who are interested, here are a few personal details: I am married to Countess Christiane Goëss (Ph.D.), we have three children and seven grandchildren and live in a mountain village near the capital of the Austrian Tyrol. Recently I became special adviser of BROCKHAUS, Germany’s leading encyclopedia. My hobbies are photography, hitchhiking, music, bridge, stamp collecting, the writing of satirical essays and, since 1960, painting. I had my first exhibition in 1971 and, to be quite frank, I enjoy much more wielding the brush than the pen.”

We saw what Erik could do when wielding his brush: he had many of his paintings reproduced as post cards, which he loved sending, with scribbled messages, to his friends. The paintings themselves, in brilliant colors, were messages *in* themselves. But Erik’s pen was mightier than his brush; his words will not fade, and we are most grateful to share some of them with you. At the end of his homily, Msgr. Clark said “He died a very bright servant of the Lord. May we all die so.”

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, R.I.P.

William F. Buckley Jr.

In April, his letter told that he would be leaving his home in Austria for four days. A conference in Montreal would be discussing the monarchy, and Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn would certainly not miss that. “But in May I must be operated on for my aneurysm—being born in 1909 this is a very *dangerous* operation. (I am spiritually ready to meet the Lord; on the other hand I am at the top of my productivity.) Pray for me. Yours ever, Erik. P.S. Thank you for your friendship!”

Some months before *National Review*'s first issue was published I met with Max Eastman. He asked if I had read *Liberty or Equality?* by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn. As it happened, I had just then read it. “Amazing!” Eastman, the learned essayist, critic, and philosopher, remarked, “Reading it is like going to college and graduate school, all over again.” I agreed and signed Mr. Leddihn on for a weekly column. My affinity for the mind of K-L was long-lived. His column on European political, moral, and philosophical affairs appeared in *National Review* for 35 years. John O’Sullivan discontinued it—K-L was a special taste, baroque, discursive, history-besotted.

His mind was more fully stocked than that of anyone I have ever known. Not merely in the \$64,000 Question sense, the wandering scholar who can tell you the dates of the Second Peloponnesian War. K-L would tell you why those years particularly *mattered!*, and by the time the salad was served, he’d have got around to analyzing the impact of the war on the thinking of Aquinas *after* he had assimilated Aristotle.

There was never (that I know of) a mind better fixed on the reticulations that, if diligently pursued, would take you from Mother Teresa to Sister Boom Boom. He knew everything and wanted to tell you everything he knew; and this was sometimes a social problem in an evening with Erik. The wry poet Roy Campbell told me that when Erik stayed with him and his wife in their apartment in London, “we took him in shifts.”

There was the temptation to think him an exhibitionist, but that was short-lived. The exhibitionist cares only to display his knowledge. Erik sought to put his knowledge to the service of a set of ideas which centered on the reasons for human liberty. He now and again took obvious delight in a historical or linguistic *bon mot* (he spoke with a German accent; and was at home in seven languages) but only because he knew the company would

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share his delight. He was never showing off. He simply felt a compulsion to tell every-body everything. In his personal life he was avidly frugal. "Why do you travel Third Class?" I asked him when he arrived for a visit on the local. "Because there is no Fourth Class," he explained. The check for an appearance before the Harvard Foreign Relations Society caught up with him. It was for twenty-five dollars. He replied, "If the check you sent me is intended as a gratuity for my speech, it is too little. If it is intended as a tip, I don't take tips."

In the early Eighties I wrote a novel about Berlin. K-L liked the novel and sent along a pleasant single-spaced four-page letter wherein he engagingly pointed out seventy or eighty errors, traceable to historical solecisms, proper names improperly attributed to characters from that particular region of Germany, misleading street addresses . . . I was both appalled (at the accumulation) and amused (by the arcana he had collected). I wrote asking permission to publish his letter in "Notes & Asides," my little corner of *National Review*. He wrote back instantly.

Under no circumstances was I to do any such thing!—the letter had been only for my own instruction. A year later I undertook to show the letter to a friend as a roguish display of K-L's voluminous knowledge, but I couldn't find it. Would he be so good as to send me a copy? I wrote him. He hadn't kept one. That letter was a mere doodle for Erik, and he doodled all the time, with his exuberant erudition.

The last letter, late in May, was pure Erik. "Dear Bill: I am still alive and thank you ever so much for your letter! [When writing in English he used exclamation points and italics and capital letters profusely.] We'll meet in heaven." Then, after that sublime thought, on to the business of the world. "The articles in *National Review* on Kosovo very interesting—but NO relation to the *Balkan mind*. The thing was botched from the beginning onward. *Everything* was wrongly handled. In my FALSCHGESTELLTE WEIGHEN (1985) I foresaw the Kosovo trouble. Remember what Russell Kirk wrote in ENEMIES OF THE PERMANENT THINGS, page 391. Very interesting the booklist [the 100 best non-fiction books of the century] in the NR of May 3rd. That my own books are omitted is what I expected. But some second rate books are listed. Many good Austrians but nearly no Germans and very few Russians, Italians, Spaniards. Missing: SPENGLER, BERDYAYEV, UNAMUNO, MOSCA, PARETO, KEYSERLING, CHR. DAWSON, E.I. WATKIN (more brilliant than Dawson), SANTAYANA, SOROKIN, RUSTOW, ROEPKE. So I am in good company."

That is certainly so, if indeed he is now in Heaven, which none of us who knew him would ever doubt.

Europe without Vitality

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn

The menaced continent is Europe and the name of the menace is “underpopulation.” Reading this might surprise some people who know that the density of population is greater in Europe than in any other region on this globe, but under- and overpopulation are very relative terms. The grim fact Europeans have to face is the weak population increase in some countries, the stagnation in others and the marked decrease in a great many. Europe’s share in the world’s population is falling ceaselessly.

The main reason for this state of affairs is, broadly speaking, “practical materialism” in all its aspects. And the birthrate is declining not only because the means to prevent conception have been perfected and abortion—i.e., the murder of the growing child prior to birth—has been legalized in nearly all countries, but because people are less desirous to have children, or a sufficient number of children, since they tend to restrict one’s freedom and to interfere with one’s comforts, and they demand sacrifices in time and money—both precious in a competitive society.

A normal human being, male or female, has a normal and healthy desire for perpetuation in union with another beloved being.¹ Hippolyte Taine called procreation “the only remedy against death.”² To this must be added the urge for more objects of love, combined with the joy in raising (nurturing, educating, loving) small but growing human beings. Man has been created in the image of God and thus he is also potentially a creator, not only as *homo faber*, as cultivator, as artist, but also as creator of other human beings. As a result of parental procreation and education, children become truly “embodiments” of marital love. And, besides all this, children generally spread joy.

Yet the attitude that will prepare, encourage and animate people to have, to *create* children is a certain pride in themselves. Animals have sexual drives subject to certain automatic rules. With humans the situation is entirely different. They have a free will and can decide if and when to procreate. And they can also thwart the live result of cohabitation.³ But to *will* a child one must have esteem for oneself as well as for one’s partner, a certain pride and affection for oneself which is anyhow necessary for a healthy psyche. (The Command says: Love thy neighbor *as thyself!*) A self-hating, despondent,

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn contributed several articles to this *Review* between 1977 and 1992. The one which we reprint here first appeared in *HLR*’s Winter 1992 issue.

pessimistic melancholic might be ready for sexual intercourse but not for procreation. Looking at our modern culture and our increasingly urbanized civilization, one must admit that it is collectivistic rather than personalistic.⁴

Modernity means uniformity, living in crowds, buying identical products of industrial origin,⁵ all generating a feeling of being mere numbers, numbered in every so many ways. In democratic elections numbers alone count.⁶ The fact that every human being is *truly unique* is obscured and obfuscated by all forms of modern life. The Middle Ages were different in this respect. There was serfdom in some regions (by no means everywhere), but the material fate of the serf was not worse than that of a middle-class European.

The serf was *glabae adstructus*, tied to the soil, he had to work one or two days a week for his overlord and was restricted in his movements.⁷ (Travelling having been extremely onerous, nobody travelled for pleasure.) Modern man, if he does not own his home, works for his landlord at least one or two days a week and again as much for a mythological figure called (in America) "Uncle Sam." The serf could lead a life in dignity; he was by no means a slave whose family could be sold away from him. If he found his living conditions too hard, he could run away and, after living in a city for one year and one day, he acquired "freedom"⁸ and became a "citizen."

Needless to say, for the raising of large families, agrarian regions were at all times more propitious than cities, small towns more so than big.⁹ Certainly a major reason for the population decline is the exodus from rural areas. (In the Austrian Tyrol only 11% of the population is still purely agrarian, whereas the agrarian output is twice or thrice the pre-war quantity.) The farmers always used to be the main source of a healthy population increase. Pride not only in oneself, but also in one's family and ancestors, is an incitement for procreation.

Tacitus said that it is vile to ignore one's ancestors¹⁰ and Burke wrote that he who has no respect for his forebears will not endeavor to have progeny. (Of Hitler it was said in Germany that, like a mule, he had neither pride of ancestry nor hope of progeny.) Hence the nobility in Europe was traditionally prolific and not to want many children was considered rather low-class.¹¹ Royal families, especially the Catholic ones, often had a very large number; the late Empress Zita of Austria (and Queen of Hungary) had 15 brothers and sisters, half-brothers and half-sisters; the Empress Maria Theresa had 16 children and, at the same time, handled vigorously and effectively the administration and the defense of Europe's heartlands. Admittedly, she had domestic help, but she also conducted assiduously an enormous correspondence with her children and others. If one had told her that "only illiterates

have litters" she would have been highly amused.

The end of so many monarchies put an end to "nobility," which was a powerful element of social mobility and social "rise." The modern social structure is determined by *money*, and children are becoming more and more expensive, partly because they are spoiled. But here is the point: it used to be *honor* rather than money people sought; they contemplated enterprises that brought them distinctions, decorations, prizes and civic titles,¹² or titles of nobility which, on the Continent, were almost always hereditary. The purpose of bestowing nobility was twofold: to reward persons in a non-material way and to create an elite with a tendency to intermarry. Thus a constant influx of new blood into the nobility took place on the Continent (and also in Britain).¹³ Quite naturally, these people, proud of their name and its new "embellishment" wanted to hand it on—a more secure bequest than even a lot of money. The notion that nobility automatically means money is completely erroneous. But here I have to admit that among the European nobility, too, the number of progeny today is decreasing.¹⁴

The Jewish birthrate was also high, at least as long as Jews stuck to their faith. Since they were the Chosen People (as all Christians will admit), to bring forth new life meant to enlarge God's Own People.

The situation changes when, instead of honor,¹⁵ wealth becomes decisive and with it—even worse!—the *display* of wealth. For a long time Europeans used to smile at the American tendency "to keep up with the Joneses." The efforts to outshine one's acquaintances, friends and neighbors have now spread in Europe, especially in northern Europe, for many reasons, including the disappearance of monarchies which could give titles and honors to their subjects, the tendency of the remaining monarchies to discontinue this custom¹⁶ and of course the general increase of wealth. West of the former Iron Curtain, Europe is well to do, and it will not take many years until Europe will be rich up to the former Soviet border.

The first step in this direction was, needless to say, the loss of the colonies, which cost enormous sums.¹⁷ Now that they are free and detached from their motherlands, these former colonies form the big slum called the Third World.

In the effort to keep with the Joneses, children are a big handicap. It belongs to the nature of man (and woman) to want to compete to excel. The (un-Biblical) belief in human equality always remains a mere ideological lip service. Yet, while competition as such is legitimate, the mere desire for economic superiority (as against excellence, the old measure) is not. Hence the number of children must be kept low. And with but a minimum, or a complete lack of children, the family vanishes. A childless couple easily

degenerates into mere dual egotism. In the old order children, contrary to nowadays, were an economic asset, an old-age insurance. The French Canadians used to say *un enfant vaut mille piastres*—a child is worth a thousand dollars.

Today the state has taken the place of the children, social security takes care of our old age. With the maturity of the children, the family falls apart, the older generation is sent to the tombs for the living, the homes for “senior citizens,”¹⁸ although the possibility that the state might go bankrupt does not seem to enter anybody’s mind. Viewed from a frog’s perspective, this system solves the problem; from a bird’s-eye view it does not, because it does not answer the question what happens if the age pyramid is reversed and the old ones, the retired ones, totally outnumber the younger working ones.

Will they then be enslaved to the “seniors” or will they be induced to follow Dr. Francis B. Crick’s advice to exterminate these “useless mouths”?¹⁹

With the dwindling number of children the Provider State (wrongly called the Welfare State) assumes the role of the family father, the classic provider. However, we must beware identifying the Provider State with socialism. The truth is that all Socialist or Communist States (the dividing line is very thin!) are automatically Provider States. But a free market economy is possible within a Provider State, the classic example being Sweden, where the means of production are overwhelmingly in private hands. (If this were not so, Sweden would have been bankrupt long ago.) The Provider State tends automatically to become totalitarian and to take upon itself the sheltering of the family—and this is one of its chief demoralizing aspects. Children are no longer an old-age insurance and, when grown up, no longer need the support of parents or siblings.

In other words, children become superfluous and—due to the dwindling of religious influence—marriage, the family’s focal point, loses its hallowed character as well as its societal importance and, consequently, its attraction. (Marriage has been a sacred rite almost everywhere, not only in Christianity.) The single woman has not the same motives for having progeny as the married one, whether or not the state comes to her aid (materially, not morally). Nevertheless, what we see in Europe should make us apprehensive for the future: in spite of the widespread knowledge concerning the methods of artificial contraception and the legalization of abortion, the number of illegitimate births is rising steadily. In Sweden and Denmark they amount to nearly half the total number of births. (In Norway and Finland the situation is only somewhat better.) It is not unreasonable to see this evolution in the light of dwindling religious convictions.²⁰

Interesting is the case of Germany, because there the birthrate is truly catastrophic. Like France, the country can continue only with the help of

foreign immigrants, mostly from southern and eastern Europe, but also more and more from Asia and North Africa. For religious and cultural rather than for racial reasons, the latter cannot be integrated. Spaniards, Italians and Croats intermarry; Moslems do not, even if they are blond and blue-eyed.

To what extent “practical materialism” is responsible for this state of affairs is demonstrated by the fact that, in spite of abortion on demand²¹ in the former East German republic and its vastly inferior living standards, the birthrate in West Germany was even lower. There the native population actually decreased. Western Germany has gone utterly Epicurean²² (just look at the omnipresent sex-shops).²³ And the differing birthrates in the two Germanies existed (and probably still exist) in spite of the fact that East Germany had a Communist government quite effective in its anti-religious propaganda.

In last year’s free elections one eighth of the population voted the Communist ticket, which is really amazing.²⁴ The hungry East Germans produced relatively more children than the opulent West Germans. (According to a curious theory, hungry people are more fertile than well-fed ones).²⁵

Unfortunately we do not have fertility data for the various denominations because the very complex questionnaires of the last German census have still not been evaluated and published. In the old days Catholics certainly had the higher birthrates.

Today the situation is more complex because many people, especially in the liberated East, have no longer any denominational ties. In Switzerland in 1930, for instance, only one percent of the population was “non-denominational”; in reunited Germany there are probably 25 percent, a good deal more than in West Germany before 1989.²⁶ Today the German population is, as we said, recessive and can be replenished only by immigration of partly-unassimilable elements which foster the rise of a new wave of racism.²⁷

Americans are used to an influx of immigrants, but the only comparable European country is France which, as a colonial power, had very little racial prejudice (contrary to Great Britain, where the psychological problem is grave in this respect). Yet even in France, with its pitiful birthrate, immigration has gone beyond limits and, as a psychological reaction, we see the rise of Le Pen’s nationalist party. The immigration is largely North African and here we must bear in mind that the French have been expelled completely from the Maghreb. In addition, one should not forget that Europe has a good number of unemployed, but that the South European immigration had a very different character; many “Latins” were merely guest workers who, having worked hard and earned a lot of money, went back home.

In the Baltic countries the very low birthrate of Estonia and Latvia has resulted in a considerable Russian immigration into this predominantly Lutheran area. The Latvians would be in an even worse situation if their Catholic eastern part had not kept his ethnic group on a somewhat steady level.²⁹ The case of Catholic Lithuania is far better because there the percentage of Lithuanians is still 85 percent. The Russian birthrate has gone way down (it used to be one of the highest in Europe) due to several factors: 1) the decline of religious convictions due to atheistic propaganda, persecution of the faithful³⁰ and the impossibility of giving or receiving religious instruction; 2) the hopeless housing situation, with families often crowded into one room; 3) the hard work brutally imposed on women;³¹ 4) the food situation; 5) the easy, legalized opportunities for abortion; 6) the government's indifference regarding the family, supplemented by easy divorce; and 7) the lack of hope for a better future. A nation without concrete hopes will have no interest in procreation, will show no interest in procreation, will show no *vitality*, taking this word in its full sense.

Of course, natality for the ex-Soviet Union as a whole is not so bad because nearly one third of its population is Islamic and among these Asians the birthrate is still substantial. The non-Moslem birthrate was still high in the years between the two World Wars, in spite of great material hardships. An economic improvement set in up to 1958 when war damages were overcome and the Soviet economy reached its modest peak. After this, in the seventies and eighties it declined again, as did hope for a better future and with it the birthrate.³²

As for Europe, the birthrate in the countries belonging to the Reformation faiths is low, but in the Catholic ones it is nothing to boast of either. Really shocking is the Italian situation; the birthrate went down at the same rate as living standards rose. With the exception of the deep South, Italy is today a wealthy (and expensive) country. The Italians have become intoxicated with their material success; their GNP is today as high as that of Britain, if not higher. The family is, by large, still intact, but the average number of children per family is down to 1.3. (To maintain the level of a population an average of more than two or nearly three children per family is necessary.) For Italy this is more ruinous than for other countries because of the enormous number of genuine family enterprises.

Typical is the small business where dad, sometimes even granddad, works with brothers, sons, daughters, nephews, nieces, cousins and even in-laws—all, needless to say, part of a semi-underground economy chiselling on taxes but thriving. If, however, the progeny dwindles, that system will disappear.

The laws of the Church? The Italian has always been an anarchist at heart. Laws mean very little to him, his life is ruled by likes and dislikes, love and hatred, sympathy and antipathy, certainly not “by prescription.” I would venture to say that the Italian situation highlights the growing plight of Europe—a serious plight indeed.

One must view the problem of declining birthrates and consequent underpopulation in a comprehensive way, adding up all pertinent factors. What we perceive is a cultural crisis as severe as the one following the fall of the Roman Empire, when steps were taken already under Augustus toward bolstering the birthrate.³³ A sort of Provider State made its appearance, feeding the masses and humoring them with *panem at circenses*—bread and games—in our day sports and television. Rationally, we have to ask what makes people *want* to have children. It is, as we have said first of all lust for life, *la joie de vivre*, pride and trust in oneself, the joy in creating a living proof of one’s marital affection, in forming a family.³⁴ It is a basic optimism which is related to the Christian virtue of hope,³⁵ trust in Divine Providence rather than in the Provider State, obeying the Divine command to multiply,³⁶ the vocation to be educator and transmitter of valuable traditions,³⁷ a bit of patriotism and perhaps the thought that one’s old age need not be lonely and materially hard.

But nearly all these values and aspects of human existence are threatened by the very spirit of the Present Age and the “progressive” and “up-to-date” modern barbarism which engulfs Europe. However, there have been several watersheds between civilization and barbarism in modern history. The first of these was the French Revolution, inspired partly by the Marquis de Sade. The last one is marked by the legalization of murder of the unborn, which is depopulating Europe. We are entering an age of relatively well-fed masses. Modern man does not like ties—no family, no children—but he is in the clutches of mass emotions.

It is an iron law that nature abhors a vacuum. A depopulated Continent will attract masses from elsewhere who believe that a plentiful table is awaiting them in Europe. Such an invasion can ruin the industrial nations. Already immigrants from Asia, and Africa are knocking at our doors. Austria is facing a minor invasion of Tamils from eastern Ceylon who have paid “draggers” 2000 dollars apiece. Italy is being swamped by Tunisians, Moroccans and Pakistanis. Vietnamese slave workers, brought in by the former Communist government, are stranded in eastern Germany. And if a major catastrophe takes place in the USSR, millions will migrate westward, expecting open arms or at least employment, which they are unlikely to find.

The end of the Roman Empire comes to mind: East Goths, Visigoths,

Langobards and Vandals swarmed all over the map. And it took the West some 800 years to again reach the level of the collapsed Roman civilization. Christianity triumphed too late. The flood happened before a moral reconstruction could take place.

NOTES

1. (Lord) Bertrand Russell wrote in his memoirs: "At that time my dominant passion was desire for children, and I could not even see a child playing in the street without an almost unbearable pain." Cf. *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell 1872-1914* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.: 1967) p. 319.
2. Hence also the not-infrequent parental hope that a child will succeed where the parent failed. The family is certainly less "finite" on earth than the individual whose soul, however, unlike the family, is immortal.
3. The negative attitude of various Christian faiths toward artificial contraception is due to the very realistic fear that grave menaces against all mankind are lurking in the biological domain of science. Genuine sex-enmity is pagan and, as a mostly Gnostic influence, made itself felt in early Christianity.
4. Maritain erroneously thought that *persona* is derived from *per se*, whereas it comes from the Etruscan *phersú*, the mask worn by an actor, signifying his *role* which, in our lives, is unique and untransferable.
5. Compare the role of a (still existing) bootmaker to that of a factory hand; to produce what amounts to a work of art for a specific customer gives not only satisfaction, it creates a link between two persons and cannot be compared to the inferior and repetitious activity of a worker on the assembly line. The bootmaker, moreover, introduced his son or sons to his art, as did the tailor, the carriage maker, and so forth. The "arts and crafts" always instilled great pride.
6. If I represent the American electorate as a black line as long as the Empire State Building in New York is high, one vote amounts graphically to 4 microns. (A micron is the hundredth part of a millimeter.) In other words, modern man as a mere "individual" is a microbe, an arithmetic, not an algebraic unit. An "individual" is the last, not divisible part of a whole. Hence modern man, aware of his smallness and impotence, desperately tries to *organize*. He feels that he can act only in *numbers*, the bigger the better. A creative person (whether shoemaker or painter) is truly "by himself."
7. The *serf* was in no way a *slave*. For example, Russian serfs either worked for their lord or paid him money—something like one dollar a year for every male member of the family. Serfdom was introduced by the monarchy to levy taxes, half the amount to be delivered to the government. Thus the landowners became tax collectors. But there were doctors and lawyers in the cities who were legally serfs but did not dream of changing their status which would have made them subject to regular income tax.
8. Cf. The old German adage "*Stadtluft macht frei*" (city air brings freedom).
9. In Europe there is now a definite trend away from the big cities. When I was born, Vienna had 2.2 million inhabitants, today—over a larger area!—it has 1.4 million. The provincial capitals, on the other hand, Linz, Klagenfurt, Innsbruck, Bregenz, Salzburg, have tripled, Graz only doubled.
10. *Turpe est de proaevo nescire*.
11. In *Noblesse Oblige*, edited by Nancy Mitford (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1939) p. 64, we hear that "birth control is flagrantly middle class."
12. The very rich who made large contributions to charities and/or cultural enterprises could reasonably hope to be rewarded with a modest title, but titles could not be bought from a monarch. Civic titles, (like *Geheimrat*, privy councillor, or *Kommerzialrat*, commercial councillor) were not inheritable.
13. In Britain the system of titles is quite different. The full title is inherited only by the oldest son or nearest male relative and the family name is usually quite another. One might be a plain

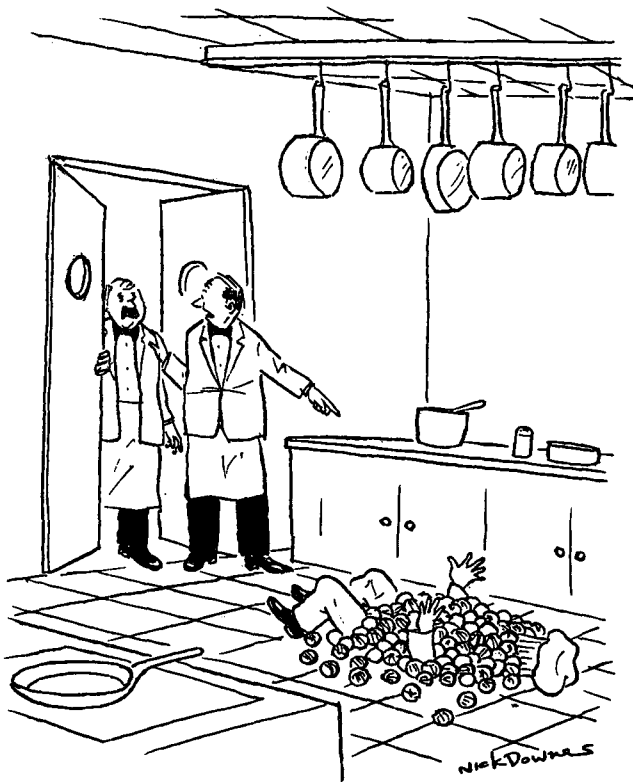
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- “Mister” and yet belong to the aristocracy. In Britain titles and family names are still advantageous for a career, not so on the Continent (except in the diplomacy) where in most ways it is now a considerable handicap. Envy is the great European vice!
14. Still, when my brother-in-law arranged a festive family gathering of all descendants of his (and my wife's) grandparents, 186 of the 217 invited came. One of my maternal great grandfathers, a wealthy bourgeois and for many years the mayor of Brünn, the capital of Moravia, had 24 children by two wives. (My grandmother was the 23rd; she had only 5 children.)
 15. Honor, like loyalty is a feudal virtue, an ideal that waned in this century. Any election campaign attempts to destroy old loyalties. Modern politics rest on efforts to “persuade,” to be popular rather than reasonable or honorable.
 16. With very few exceptions, titles now given in Britain are not inheritable; the Scandinavian monarchies have not given titles in the last 50 years or more. But without the influx of fresh blood, nobilities run the danger of becoming castes. A titled or untitled nobility without the monarchical corrective tends to be caste-minded and republican in spirit. The typical aristocratic state in Europe was the Republic of Venice, the *Christianissima Republica*.
 17. Of the German colonies before 1918 only little Togo was in the black, the Belgian Congo only between 1940 and 1954 (because it exported Uranium); the English used to say that they could afford to lose India, but never Argentina. British and other European investments in the colonies amounted to no more than 12 percent of the total. In 1852 Disraeli spoke about “these miserable colonies” and Richard Cobden exclaimed: “Where is the enemy who would do us the favor and steal from us our overseas possession?” Even such a primitive economist as Karl Marx was convinced that India constituted merely a continuous economic-financial drag for Britain.
 18. “Seniors” are part of progressive “newspeak,” as are the terms “underprivileged” or “developing nations.” Plain speech seems to be “undemocratic.”
 19. Useless mouths, *bouches inutiles*—is an expression from the French Revolution. The Nobel Prize winner Dr. Francis B. Crick was not only the pioneer for abortion in Britain, he also advocated “euthanasia” for all upon reaching their 80th year.
 20. One estimate is that in Stockholm half of one percent of the population goes to church on Sundays. Cf. Also Roland Huntford, *The New Totalitarians* (London: Allan Lane, 1971), which gives a good picture of the Swedish Provider State and its moral effects.
 21. In “West Germany” abortion is legalized but very strongly restricted. Since reunion, the Left protest vociferously that the “achievements” for women in the former East Germany are thereby in danger of being annulled.
 22. Professor Gottfried Dietze (John Hopkins) has pointed out in his *Der Hitler Komplex* (Vienna: Karolinger 1990) that, as a reaction against the totalitarian National Socialist rule, all restrictions on libertine attitudes are now branded as “authoritarian” or “fascist.”
 23. I saw on Austrian television a picture of the Hungarian-Soviet border with an advertisement for a sex shop. This is the way western civilization presents itself to those who cross the former Iron Curtain. The Hungarian authorities make every effort to copy naively the “democratic” institutions, laws and customs of the decaying West.
 24. As typical North Europeans and unlike the Italians, Spaniards or Russians, the North Germans easily believe what they are told in school, by government propaganda, by the mass media. “He lies like print” is a South German-Austrian phrase. Between 1933 and 1989 the northeastern Germans were under the domination first of National and then of International Socialism and thus properly collectivized.
 25. The reasoning goes that hungry people are “naturally” more fertile than well-fed ones because among the former infant mortality is higher. A similar theory claims that in war time more boys than girls are born to make up for losses at the front. However, I find neither argument nor the data very conclusive.
 26. In the 1980 the Federal Republic, “West Germany” had more Catholics than Lutherans. Today the Evangelical periodical *Erneuerung und Abwehr* (December 1990, p.27) gives the latest data for reunited Germany as 38 percent Evangelicals, 35 percent Catholics and 28 percent non-Christians, most of the latter in the East.
 27. The father of “scientific” racism in Germany” was Ernst Haeckel, a disciple of Darwin. Religious anti-Judaism had died out in the early 19th century; racist “Anti-semitism” arose independently two generations later.
 28. The Spaniards were highly valued as intelligent and ambitious workers. I know of German manufacturers who fired German workers and employed Spaniards. But the Spaniards nearly all

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went back. Spain, too has now a thriving economy—and a lowered birthrate.

29. See also the statistical map in the official Latvian publication *Ceturta Tautas Skauti v. sana Latvija*, Riga 1934, p. 17
30. It was actually a *crime* to teach religion to anybody below the age of 18, and in Archbishop-Metropolit Nikodim the Soviets found a man who approved of this, saying that the church too does not want to do violence to the conscience of children. (Nikodim dropped dead while visiting the Vatican in 1978!)
31. Alexander Solzhenitsyn in his famous Letter to the Leaders of the Soviet Union mentions three times the extraordinary plight of Soviet women. I too have heard people boast that women in the USSR enjoyed perfect equality—because they are permitted to work in the mines. Another child is frequently a real blow for a Soviet family.
32. In 1963 I encountered in the USSR even anti-Communists who nourished the faint hope for material improvement and greater liberties. The latter came true, not so the former. Marx never understood economics, nor did Lenin. Thus hopelessness set in and also a wave of resistance.
33. Cf. John T. Noonan Jr. *Contraception* (New York & Toronto: Mentor Omega books, 1967, p. 37).
34. According to an Austrian poll, personal happiness is considered by 91% to be found primarily in family life, thus topping the list; at the bottom was leisure, with 34%.
35. Faith and charity are frequently cited as theological virtues, hope very rarely. A true believer cannot really be a pessimist. And a pessimist does not want to procreate. Yet, Social Security and the Provider State are opposed to the genuine “human condition”—90 years ago Charles Péguy could write very correctly: “The fathers of families, these great adventurers of our times!” Cf. his *Pensées* (Paris: Gallimard, 1934) p. 47.
36. Voluntary celibacy is only legitimate as a sacrifice for God and as such the New Testament rates it higher than marriage.
37. “Modern man” has no tradition to hand on. He is bored by the past and terrified of the future. None of the utopian novels written in our time are hopeful.



“HE’S BEEN SMOTHERED IN ONIONS!”

Ireland's New Intolerance

David Quinn

Last March the archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Desmond Connell, delivered a speech on the subject of *Humanae Vitae* to a small pro-life society at the national seminary, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. It brought an avalanche of criticism crashing down on his head.

Every major newspaper in the country attacked him for what he said. Columnists dipped their pens in vitriol before writing withering criticisms of him. Feminist leaders and politicians queued up to attack him on radio or television. Readers sent in letters by the bagful to their newspaper of choice. Talk-shows overflowed with criticism. One commentator even suggested that it was not beyond the bounds of possibility that the archbishop be prosecuted for incitement to hatred.

What did he say that caused such outrage? The offending remarks appear on page five of his fourteen-page speech. Dr. Connell was outlining some of the problems which may result from the act of family planning. To make sense of the reaction it would be well to quote this passage in full:

We all know what is meant by the unwanted child, but we do not perhaps sufficiently appreciate what is meant by the child that is wanted. The wanted child is the child that is planned; the child produced by the decision of the parents begins to look more and more like a technological product. This is clear in the case of *in vitro* fertilization, surrogate motherhood, genetic engineering, cloning; but it may not be altogether absent in the practice of family planning.

A profound alteration in the relationship between parent and child may result when the child is no longer welcomed as a gift but produced as it were to order. Parental attitudes would thereby be affected, creating a sense of consumer ownership as well as a new anxiety to win and retain the child's affection. The child no longer belongs to the family in a personal sense if it is radically a product rather than a person. So much of parental ambition has been invested in the one or two children that a properly personal relationship becomes problematic.

This attitude of parents conveys itself unconsciously to the child, who experiences resentment against a parentage based on power and may produce the kind of teenage revolt we know so well. No child can be happy as a product: the child will find no meaning in a life produced by technology. Here we have one of the sources of the decline in religious faith in our teenage population. As well, they know that their parents dissent from the teachings of the Church: why then should they not do the same in ways that suit their convenience? But far deeper than this is the resentment against a technological world that reduces them to the indignity of products and derives its meaning from power rather than from gift. This becomes all the more

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acute when they find that the brave new world of prosperity leaves them without hope of participation.

I received the talk shortly before it was delivered so that I could give it coverage in the *Irish Catholic*. This is the section which caught my attention, and I must confess that I winced slightly when I read it. It was not too hard to imagine the reaction of parents to being told that they may love their children less because they had planned them. It therefore came as no surprise to find the talk splashed on the front of the national papers the morning after it was delivered. Nor was it a surprise to read all the outraged comment, or to hear the angry callers on the radio.

It must be appreciated that in the present climate in Ireland any false move by the Catholic Church will be exploited to the full. The archbishop of Dublin is the *de facto* leader of the Irish Church and it suits those who wish to marginalise the Church to marginalise its leader. His remarks about family planning provided them with a golden opportunity to do this. They could be used to show just how “insensitive” and “out of touch” the archbishop is. The none too subtle message to the Irish people was: if he is this insensitive and out of touch, what right has he to lead you?

One of the “friendlier” comments was to be found in the editorial of Ireland’s biggest-selling paper, the *Sunday Independent*. It read in part: “. . . Dr. Connell last week revealed himself to be seriously out of touch. His remarks on contraception and the family, not least the notion that the planned child is less loved than the unplanned child, and that one is a product while the other is a gift, were extremely ill-advised. Many families found such categorisation not just offensive and insulting, but also a source of great confusion.”

In a similar vein an editorial in Ireland’s biggest-selling daily, the *Irish Independent*, said: “In his Maynooth speech on Tuesday, Dr. Connell . . . wandered into twilight philosophical areas. He made statements which many regarded as offensive. And he showed himself out of touch with modern life, and with his own flock.”

The *Irish Times*, which is the country’s most influential paper since it is read by Ireland’s most influential people, said in its editorial: “Archbishop Connell clearly has no concept of the immense hurt which his words have conveyed to the innumerable parents who use and have used artificial contraception while establishing homes, with children well-provided for and in an environment of happiness and security. Children in such families ‘may not belong to the family in a personal sense,’ he says, while ‘a properly personal relationship becomes problematic.’ There is ‘insincerity’ in the love of couples who have practised artificial contraception while the ‘contraceptive

culture' has led to children 'who experience resentment against a parentage based on power.'

"This is simplistic and dangerous nonsense. Hundreds of thousands of happy, well-adjusted children in homes throughout this country testify to the fact that the Archbishop does not know what he is talking about."

It went on to demand an apology from the archbishop.

If the archbishop thought these editorials were bad, much worse was to come. A mother phoned a radio show and demanded to know: "Does he think of us as people at all?"

Noreen Byrne of the National Women's Council, a state-funded feminist organisation, told the archbishop that he was being "insensitive." This word cropped up again and again in attacks on Dr. Connell.

In the following weekend's *Irish Times* Archbishop Connell was told of the crisis facing the Church and asked why, in light of this, he chose to turn his guns on "the Irish mammy." The Irish mammy, he was reminded, had suffered greatly in the past from bearing too many children. Why pile suffering upon suffering?

Another woman, Nuala O'Connor, took umbrage at the archbishop for suggesting that children assisted into life by IVF are technological products and accordingly are less loved by their parents. Mrs. O'Connor has had three children through IVF.

II could go on piling up the quotations. I will detain you with only one more, this time from *Irish Times* columnist Fintan O'Toole.

He argued that parents plan their children because, knowing how huge a commitment is involved in raising them, they want to make sure that they bring them into the world under the best possible circumstances. This being so, the act of family planning is an act of love.

He wrote: "For this, the archbishop regards them, not with honest disagreement or understanding, but with scarifying contempt. They are . . . bad spouses and bad parents. More than that, however, he insults their children. Those kids, he implies, are abnormal, emotionally stunted, somehow lacking in essential aspects of human development.

"What would happen if a public figure made similarly sweeping and damning charges against a whole category of people? If, say, a Protestant cleric announced that Catholics are bad and selfish parents and that Catholic children live in distorted families . . . There would be two immediate responses. One, the mildest, would be a demand for evidence . . . The second, more extreme response, would be to demand, at the least for an apology or at the most for a prosecution. People would say that the right to free speech does

not include the right to insult and degrade a whole category of people in pursuit of an ideological objective.”

Notably, O’Toole does not say which is his preferred response. But the mere fact that he could even raise the possibility of prosecution was quite chilling. The archbishop said that parents who plan their children may love them less. Certainly it can be plausibly argued that the remark was ill-judged and ill-considered, but grounds for prosecution? And when one considers how liberal/left commentators such as O’Toole regularly demonise conservatives, the mind boggles. With his suggestion O’Toole managed to fill the air with the whiff of totalitarianism.

Unfortunately, because of the way the archbishop constructed his argument, even those who would normally be sympathetic found it hard to defend him. When his remarks made the front pages of the papers many supporters of the Church could only groan inwardly as yet another own goal found its way into the back of the net and opponents of the Church cheered.

Even many of those who live out the philosophy of *Humanae Vitae* to the letter found it hard to accept the assumption that some parents may love their children less because they had planned them. The great majority of us plan our families, whether through natural or artificial means. It was hard to believe that we might love our children less as a result.

The archbishop seemed to be trying to warn people against ceasing to regard their children as a quite undeserved gift from God. He appeared to be warning people that, whatever means they might use to plan their families, whether natural or otherwise, there was a real danger that this might happen.

This change of attitude obviously could not occur before we gained the sort of control over our fertility that we have today. On the other hand, as several commentators argued, when people had little control and large families were the norm, children over and above a desired number were often regarded as a burden. Sometimes we can have too many “gifts.”

Whatever the meaning of the archbishop’s argument it was too unqualified, too unnuanced, and therefore was wide open to misinterpretation. The reality is that in the present climate the Church is rather like a football player whom the referee will send off for any offence, real or imagined, because the referee, in this case the media, is not there to ensure fair play but is entirely in sympathy with the opposing side, which, for want of a better term, we will call the liberal/left. No offence by this side, no matter how grave, will receive so much as a warning.

This has a quite distorting effect upon public opinion. For one thing it means that we will remember fouls by the Church because they invariably merit a red card and because they are replayed over and over again to make

sure we remember them. No foul by the liberal/left ever merits such treatment, and so it seems to the public as if they never commit a foul.

Of course, this is far from being the case. Two examples will suffice. During the 1995 divorce referendum the most formidable opponent of divorce by far was Professor William Binchy of Trinity College, Dublin. At a press conference during the campaign, divorce proponent and leading politician Ruairi Quinn said that Binchy “is a very clever man, but then so was Hitler.” It isn’t hard to imagine the outraged reaction that would have followed had Archbishop Connell compared Ruairi Quinn with Hitler. Little attention was drawn to the Quinn remark and few remember it. Few even got to know about it.

In January 1996 Noreen Byrne of the National Women’s Council made the following comments to *Newsweek* on the subject of single mothers: “The feeling is, why bother to live with [men] and wash their socks? Just go out and play with them . . . a lot of women are deciding they don’t need men in order to survive.”

It could have been argued that Ms. Byrne was demeaning both men and women—men by implying that they are useless, and women by saying they are only interested in their own pleasure. One politician called on her to apologise to women for the slur she had cast upon them.

That was about it. When the *Irish Times*, which exploited the Connell *faux pas* for all it was worth, finally got around to reporting the matter, it carried a lengthy piece by Ms. Byrne explaining exactly what she meant, and so taking the harm out of the remarks. Her own interpretation of what she said became the accepted interpretation. Not so with Archbishop Connell. His critics’ interpretation of what he said became the one accepted by the public. (Miss Byrne’s own *faux pas*, incidently, did not stop her attacking Dr. Connell).

This kind of bias makes it very difficult for the Church to get its message across to the public unmediated. Its priests do not help matters, as sermons almost invariably avoid matters of controversy.

What can we learn from this episode? Certainly it confirmed one thing we already know, namely that the media are deeply biased against anything that smacks of orthodox Catholicism. But it also revealed the growing strength and power of the therapeutic culture.

Archbishop Connell was attacked on two levels. The first challenged his arguments. The second effectively challenged his right to say anything that might cause “hurt.” It seems that in Ireland today one of the gravest sins of all is saying anything that might hurt people’s feelings.

The therapeutic culture is a consequence of relativism. Once we taught

people to do right. Now we teach them to feel right. In the past we taught them to do right because we thought that it was possible to know right from wrong. Now we think right and wrong are matters of opinion, and so we teach people to decide what is right and wrong for them.

Since right and wrong are relative, our feelings become a better guide to morality than any external authority. We do what we feel is right. We avoid what we feel is wrong. At its most base this philosophy is summarised in the statement: If it feels good, do it.

Since we believe no one has a better insight into matters of right and wrong than anyone else, we mightily resent those who say otherwise. We rebel against anyone who says categorically, "This is wrong regardless of feelings or circumstances." For a start, we believe they have no right to say this, and secondly we resent them for seeming to judge us. In effect we say; "I have decided that this is the right course of action for me. How dare you say otherwise?"

Connell's offense against the therapeutic culture was especially grave. He represents the institution which, above any other, insists that it has the authority to teach right and wrong and which in the past, certainly in Ireland, was guilty of authoritarianism. Secondly, he chose to speak out on a matter which people feel particularly touchy about.

This brought the sensitivity police out in force. As I wrote in my *Sunday Times* column the weekend after the controversy broke out:

There are few more terrifying sights in nature than a feminist pack with the smell of blood in its nostrils. No sooner had news broken that the Archbishop of Dublin, Desmond Connell, had put his foot in it over contraception than the pack could be heard howling at the moon.

Superintendents Mary Henry, Liz McManus, Noreen Byrne and Helen Keogh of the Sensitivity Police cried foul as they moved in with a warrant for the arrest of the hapless prelate on the grounds that he was being "insensitive." In the land of therapeutic politics there are few more serious crimes.

His remarks were "insensitive in the extreme," said Senator Keogh. They were an "outrage" agreed Ms. Byrne, Commissar of the National Women's Council. "Eccentric and daft" charged new Labour recruit, Liz McManus. On *Primetime* on Wednesday night Senator Mary Henry oozed compassion from every pore as she sympathised with all those couples hurt by the archbishop's comments.

The rise of the sensitivity police is a dire development for democratic politics and especially for those who believe that there are standards of right and wrong which apply to everyone.

No one can complain when Church teachings are attacked at the bar of reason. What is happening now, however, is that the right of the Church to say anything at all which might give offence is being challenged.

The sensitivity police who patrol the outskirts of the public arena will admit only those who have bought into the sort of moral relativism which never challenges anyone, and which will never discomfort people with the thought that what they feel is right might not in fact be right at all.

What the Connell controversy has taught us is that in Ireland, as elsewhere, it is becomingly increasingly difficult to speak the truth. It also taught us that when we do speak the truth we must be extremely careful to frame our arguments as well as we possibly can. And as sensitively as we possibly can, because there is nothing to be gained by being gratuitously offensive.

In the end Archbishop Connell's *Humanae Vitae* speech was a missed opportunity. The contraceptive culture has radically altered human relations and our attitude towards human life. For one thing, by allowing us to separate sex from procreation it has led to a mentality which looks upon abortion as a back-up to contraception. Readers of the *Human Life Review* will hardly need to be convinced of this. It has also facilitated both extra-marital and pre-marital sex, thus diminishing drastically the status of marriage in society.

All of this was addressed in the Connell speech. Echoing the words of *Humanae Vitae* he said: "Approval of contraception logically extends the blessing of moral approval to the sexual revolution, which has resulted in the chaos of broken families, co-habitation, promiscuity, uncertainty about the limits that define the nature of the family. It has helped to shape a society of widespread divorce and encouraged resentment against new life in the womb so as to have created blindness to the injustice of abortion. Addiction to sex as an absolute good in itself prompts the kind of fascination that flirts with pornography and, at times, even takes the plunge that defiles the minds of the reading and viewing public through the communications and entertainment media."

The trouble with the therapeutic culture is that it prevents this truth getting out. Emotional blackmail has replaced reasoned debate. Actually, if anything it is even worse than this, and here I will allow an experience of my own to intrude into the story.

My wife and I have recently adopted a baby boy from Vietnam. When we discovered over three years ago that we couldn't have children of our own we immediately set out on the long and arduous adoption route. (It took over eighteen months for the assessment process to begin and ten more months for it to be completed.)

Naturally we ruled out trying to have any children of our own through IVF. It is a sign of how widely acceptable IVF is now that many people asked us whether we had tried this method. Knowing how people today feel

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about “moralising” we simply said we had not without giving the reasons. Since most of our friends know I am the editor of a Catholic paper maybe the reasons didn’t need spelling out. What we did notice, however, was that some people we met seemed vaguely resentful of the fact that we didn’t try IVF. One person, under the influence of a few drinks (*in vino veritas*), became quite agitated on the subject. Desmond Connell was attacked for speaking out against modern reproductive technology. My wife and I have never spoken to anyone about our moral objections to IVF, and yet some people, a minority to be sure, resented us for seeming to pass judgment on others, not through our words, but through our actions.

Liberalism says that we can believe what we like so long as we do not attempt to impose our views on others. This entente cordial—if it can be so called—between religion and liberalism may be coming to an end. It seems increasingly to be the case that we can no longer hold, even in private, any beliefs that might, however indirectly, hold up to judgment our relativistic culture. Simply by existing, orthodox Christians make a relativistic society feel uncomfortable by reminding it of a whole other moral tradition, and so social pressure must be brought to bear on such people to make them conform. Through emotional blackmail the therapeutic culture tries to stop you speaking the truth. The moral resentment I have just described tries to stop you even thinking it. We must all be relativists now. There is a new intolerance abroad in Ireland. Desmond Connell walked straight into it, invited it really, with his speech. But in exposing it, even if inadvertently, maybe he did us a service. The next trick is to make people realise this.



The Coming Inhumanity

Chilton Williamson Jr.

Not so long ago I heard a story I found shocking at the time and that I still recall with unease.

An editor of senior rank, middle aged, at a large, “conservative” Southwestern newspaper (located between Los Angeles and Dallas) which had employed him for the past ten years, sat in his office one morning composing the weekly column he wrote, in his shirtsleeves and with his suitcoat hung on the back of a chair, his briefcase open on the small sofa against the wall. As he worked, a fellow employee appeared in the door of his office (it was open, partly for ventilation, partly to avoid potential risks from meeting female colleagues alone, behind closed doors) with the request that he interrupt his work to meet briefly with a staff member in the personnel department. Wilson (as I’ll call him here) complied, leaving the column up on the computer screen and his coat over the chair as he followed the messenger to personnel. Here the staffer, a woman, after inviting him politely to take a seat, began to speak at some length and in a roundabout way until Wilson, confused but apprehensive, asked her what she was getting at. Oh, the lady said, you really need to see So-and-so—whereupon the messenger appeared out of nowhere again, like something in a fairy tale, and accompanied him to the personnel chief, also a woman, who informed him pointblank that he was fired.

In that case, replied Wilson, dumbfounded but maintaining his habitual gentlemanly composure, he would return to his office and fulfill his obligation to the company by meeting his last deadline. Not to worry, she advised him smoothly; meeting deadlines was of no importance now. In that case, Wilson told her, he would go for his suitcoat, pack his briefcase, and clean out his desk. Not at all, she purred. There was no need for him to return to his office: as they spoke, the messenger was bringing his coat and attaché case to her office. A guard would meet him here; he would be escorted downstairs in the elevator and as far as the front door of the office building, where his keys would be taken from him and he would be released from the glassy, austere, sealed, climate-controlled downtown office building into the hundred-plus-degree heat of the smoggy, sprawling urban oasis created in a waterless desert where no city should ever be.

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And that was Wilson's story, the story I heard. I remember thinking at the time that people who are capable of behaving as this man's employers behaved are capable of packing people off to Auschwitz, the Gulag, or a Tutsi relocation camp. Apparently, mini-Stalins abound in America today, since about a year later a friend of mine (a woman this time) was similarly dismissed from her job by three male employees at the printing plant in Michigan where she had worked for eleven or twelve years—at nearly twice the salary the company expected to pay her successor.

It Can't Happen Here: The slogan, popular in the United States in the 1930s, became the title of a (dreadful) novel by Sinclair Lewis about the Nazification of America. Of course, "it" didn't happen—and probably can't now. But "something" can happen: something new under the sun and unprecedented, in its own way at least. From fear of the Inquisition, Galileo offered his essays on the movement of the heavenly bodies to his patron, the Duke of Tuscany, not as science but rather as poetry, or else a dream. And yet, even as the Inquisition proceeded, the Age of Faith was being supplanted by the far more intolerant Age of Unfaith inaugurated by the Renaissance and the Reformation, followed by what Miguel de Unamuno, the Basque philosopher, novelist, and poet, called "the offspring of these two, the Revolution," to which "we owe also a new Inquisition, that of science and culture, which turns against those who refuse to submit to its orthodoxy, the weapons of ridicule and contempt." One may argue—I do, anyway—that Leftism in the form of Protestant Christianity split with the Church in 1517, grew, and prospered, until, late in the twentieth century, it succeeded finally in infecting the source from which it sprang. Whether that is the case or not, the crisis of American culture and politics at the start of the third millennium is the work of my own miserable generation—the revolutionary idealists of the Sixties—passing like a great indigestible rock, a friend suggests, through the national digestive tract. Well, perhaps. And after?

The makings of the scene between the senior editor and the personnel director are as complex as the cultural and political forces shaping and directing modern society today. Among these are runaway advances in technology, the rule of "efficiency" in service to the "bottom line," the dictatorship of advertisers and of the "consumer," mass illiteracy, the concern with "information" rather than with truth, the rapid erosion of honesty and courage, the collapse of journalism along with the publishing industry in general, rampant materialism (of the philosophic as well as the Wal-Mart kind), and what I think of as the end of consciousness, in which the effective one-party state is mirrored by its mental counterpart, the mentally homogeneous

society. Let us “deconstruct” (as the Left likes to say) this small anecdote for what it has to tell us in suggestive detail about the coming inhumanity.

I begin by noting that 1) *the senior editor who lost his job worked for a “conservative” newspaper*. It is an important point for two reasons: First, because conservative institutions aren’t supposed to operate like Marxist governments; second, for the reason that official “conservatism” at century’s end is culturally and politically indistinguishable from the Pan-Progressivism of which it has become finally (heaving elephantine sighs of relief) a part. Today, conservatism as represented by the Republican Party and “responsible” anti-Democrats, having made its peace with every major Progressivist cause—feminism, affirmative action, multiculturalism, sodomism, immigrationism, as well as (in some instances) abortionism—is virtually identical with Progressivism: a proud component of the Over-Ten-Thousand Dow Consensus supposed to discourage Americans from serious disagreement or debate on any issue of significance, since argument leads to Divisiveness (the “D” word), causes offense, destabilizes markets, and damages portfolios—in addition to which, we’re all agreed on the fundamentals anyway. So don’t expect “conservative” organizations to function like gentlemen’s clubs, because the people who run them aren’t more gentlemanly than anyone else and their “conservative” character is skin-deep only, essentially a marketing ploy intended to distinguish them from the “competition.”

2) *The paper that fired him is located in the American Southwest*. Geographically speaking, the Southwest is one of the most beautiful regions of the United States, a dramatic desert expanse divided by austere mountain ranges and relieved by piney sky islands rising above the purple haze, the landscape overarched by a vast sky in which storm clouds—vaporous images of the thrusting geological formations below—tower. Culturally and humanly speaking, though, the Southwest is a postmodern mess: a Third World slum colonized by the U.S. military and well-to-do First World refugees and retirees drawn by the prospect of twelve months a year of golf and life at womb temperature.

In the Southwest, the only thing worth saving is the land: thus spoke Edward Abbey, a resident of Tucson for most of his life. Southwestern cities and towns, in appearance like military bases thinly disguised as pueblo or Spanish villages and as unlivable as they are hideous to look at, are entirely artificial in their origin: military outposts become magnets for rootless hedonistic migrants who left their native Minnesota or Ohio for a Lotus Land built on air conditioning and aqueducts. “If technology makes certain old forms of community difficult to sustain,” Francis Fukuyama argues in his latest book, *The Great Disturbance: Human Nature and the Reconstitution*.

of *Social Order*, “then we will seek out new ones, and we will use our reason to negotiate different arrangements that will suit our underlying interests, needs, and passions.” Fukuyama forgets that while man is indeed endowed with great creative potential, it is as *creature* that he creates, his creativity being necessarily of the secondary, not the primary, order. It is not for man to create *ex nihilo*—as some would argue building a city of hundreds of thousands, even several millions, of people in the middle of a landlocked desert is an attempt at doing. Man can decorate the world he has been given and even add a few pleasing touches of his own. He cannot, however, *recreate* it—nor, probably, can he destroy it, beyond the point at least where it becomes incapable of sustaining *human* life.

A wholly manmade environment—so far as such a thing is possible—amounts to an inhuman one, human beings having been designed for bounding by God’s creation, not their own. Even when we try—and the relentlessly “efficient” modern world barely makes the effort any more—the beauty we do manage to create is a feeble approximation of what God does. In an essay inspired by a train trip across Pennsylvania in the 1920s, H. L. Mencken (an unapologetic cockney, certainly no connoisseur of natural beauty) deplored the “Libido for the Ugly,” “the lust to make the world intolerable”; while Edmund Burke, who understood aesthetic appreciation in its moral dimension, wrote a book on the subject. It would, of course, be wildly irresponsible to equate beauty with goodness and ugliness with evil, yet it seems entirely reasonable to imagine a connection between man’s uglification of his environment and the moral degradation of man. Is it really possible for children raised in the sprawling, mechanized, plasticized cities and suburbs of modern America—designed for machines rather than for human beings, consumer convenience and the quick buck instead of aesthetic pleasure—to acquire something like an aesthetic sensibility in adulthood? If not, can they ever develop a truly *moral* one? Dangerous and destructive as anti-human environmentalism is, disenvironmentalism may be more dangerous and anti-human still.

3) *The editor had worked for his newspaper for ten years.* Recently, while waiting for Compuserve to post my e-mail, I read an Internet story called “Finished at 40?” about employers’ reluctance to hire anyone past his thirties, for the reasons that people under forty are familiar with the latest technology, command smaller salaries, and are decades away from collecting retirement and health benefits, while the human attributes that come with age (wisdom, experience, judgment, maturity) are considered no longer important in business and industry.

And so newspapers—all but the biggest and most prestigious of them anyway, a mere handful like the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*—are

staffed by editors whose average age is half that of their predecessors a generation ago, while prestigious book publishers are managed by kids more interested in movies and videos than in literature. Today, publishing a newspaper is mostly a front activity in which the “product,” often hardly more than a shopper or a consumer and entertainment guide, becomes a vehicle for selling advertising, while the once great publishing houses are simply an arm of the entertainment business. Recently, in conversation with a well-positioned veteran of the Manhattan book industry, I asked her how long did she imagine a civilization could survive an almost complete breakdown in serious intellectual communication and exchange. “Well,” she replied, “Americans seem to *think* they’re doing pretty well. . . .”

4) *The editor was writing his weekly column when he was fired.* See above. Columns—real ones, that is, attempting a serious consideration of matters of public importance—are deemed unnecessary at best in the newspaper business today and at worst “offensive,” meaning what used to be called “honest.” (A couple of years before, our man was given the task of supervising the editorial work of an affirmative-action hire, a black woman who once began a sentence, “Eons of women . . .”)

5) *The editor kept his office door open at all times to avoid unpleasant incidents involving female colleagues.* The modern American workplace, like modern America itself, is the world liberalism made. In the name of equality, acceptance of differences, equal opportunity, sameness, sensitivity, self-esteem, etc., etc., sexual tyranny has been imposed on American society across the board. In the business world today, men are summarily dismissed from their jobs the instant the dread words “sexual harassment” are breathed, since being a responsible exec means making avoidance of costly lawsuits, not fairness or truth, the bottom line. “If you step on the elevator with a female colleague,” Wilson told me several years ago, “and it crosses your mind to tell her she’s wearing a pretty dress—don’t.” (Joseph Stalin’s Politburo in the ’20s and ’30s would have known just what Wilson was talking about.)

6) *The personnel staffer was a woman.* Women in positions of power and authority these days are expected to know what to do with them. They do; and they do.

7) *The staffer failed to make her meaning plain.* You aren’t expected to speak plainly in America today. It could offend people, embarrass your boss, and get you in a lot of trouble with supervisors, lawsuits, and so on. The old catechism speaks of man being given a tongue in order to speak the truth; presumably, he was expected to speak forthrightly as well as truthfully, truth and clarity being attributes of God that human beings were meant to imitate so far as it was in their power to do so.

Only cowards and weaklings fear to speak the truth and to make their meaning clear. But the ruling class in America has been living by the Big Lie for thirty years and more, and so today it is made up almost exclusively by cowards and sycophants—which is to say, by very dangerous people indeed. Modern American culture is infantile culture, created by adult ideologues living in a child's Let's-Pretend world. Immaturity and hatred of truth keep them humanly incomplete, and incompleteness aggravates cowardice, leading in turn to cruelty encouraged and condoned by infantilist impulses. As the hate-crazed voices in the House impeachment hearings last year suggested, the Left is actually *about* hate—the hatred of timeless and unchangeable reality, of things the way they are rather than the way it would have them be. Therefore the Left, which talks so much and so often about alleviating misery, has created so much of it in the past, while showing every sign it intends the same for the future as well.

8) *The personnel staffer passed the editor along to the personnel director.* Again we see the cowardice, irresolution, and unwillingness to accept responsibility characteristic of American institutions, and of individual members of the American ruling class.

9) *The personnel director was a woman.* Like her assistant, she was expected to use her authority and she did—brutally, in the manner of a petty tyrant, or even a not-so-petty one. In Amerika, only staff assistants beat around the bush. (On reconsideration, one could say she wielded power “like a man”—that is, as the Progressive Mind negatively encourages unsexed females to behave.)

10) *The editor maintained his gentlemanly composure.* And much good did it do him. Gentlemanliness is inauthentic, passé, sexist, and reactionary, as well as a useless complication of efficient, businesslike, interpersonal relationships. (Worst of all, only a *man* can be a gentleman.)

11) *The editor was told that meeting deadlines was of no importance now.* If he'd worked for the ad department, it would have been a different story.

12) *The editor was not allowed to return to his office for his personal effects. An armed guard escorted him downstairs to the front door and took his key.* We're back to infantilism again. Presumably, the personnel office anticipated the possibility Wilson might “go postal”—throw a violent temper tantrum involving gunplay or a bombing. In fact, managed infantilism has become the American way, the strategy that permits a collapsing society to tick along as well as it does. The corruption, by proletarianization, of the American public through the leviathan welfare state, therapeutic government, and the caesarism of Bill Clinton, abetted by the public's desire for total security guaranteed by the state, has made it virtually inevitable; so has the

related self-corruption of the ruling class by its appetite for absolute power, the total control that (like total security) only infants demand.

13) *Wilson was turned out of his climate-controlled monolith into the glaring urban desert.* "...[B]roadly speaking," Fukuyama suggests, "the technological change that brings about what economist Joseph Schumpeter called 'creative destruction' in the marketplace causes similar disruption in the world of social relationships. It would, indeed, be surprising if this were not true." Yes, it would; and the broader one's understanding of "social relationships," the greater the resulting disruption appears to be. For the past two or three hundred years, but in the last century especially, the "progress" of the West, with the United States acting as trailblazer, has been toward a strangely abstracted materialism and away from the natural world—the world it increasingly exploits at an unnatural remove as it travels in the direction of a totally manmade one. The recent history of Western man is the story of humanity's withdrawal from nature, thus from human nature, from truth (meaning metaphysical reality), and, finally, from sanity. Today we are in the process—at times deliberately, unconsciously at others—of abandoning reality for unreality, which in human terms means inhumanity.

Human nature divorced from reality portends the end of experience, replaced inevitably by pseudo-experience offered by processed information and mass entertainment. By now, several generations of Americans have grown up sitting in boxes, watching boxes. An acquaintance who teaches third grade in the public school system of another large Southwestern city describes her students as hardly ever leaving the apartment except to attend school, having few if any friends, participating in no extracurricular sports or games, getting no physical exercise or training, taken on no parental outings (except to the supermarket or, perhaps, church), and reading no books or having books read to them. For these children, TV is everything—not virtual reality but the thing itself, their sole contact with the "world" beyond themselves. Asked to write the standard schoolchild essay—"What I Did Over the Weekend," "What I Did for My Summer Vacation"—they scribble synopses of the TV shows and video movies they have watched, and react with distress when the teacher insists that TV shows aren't something you *do*, and, anyway, it's all make-believe. (Confronted by the assertion that their favorite characters, whether human or cartoon, aren't "really real," this woman's students evince shock, then break down in tears.)

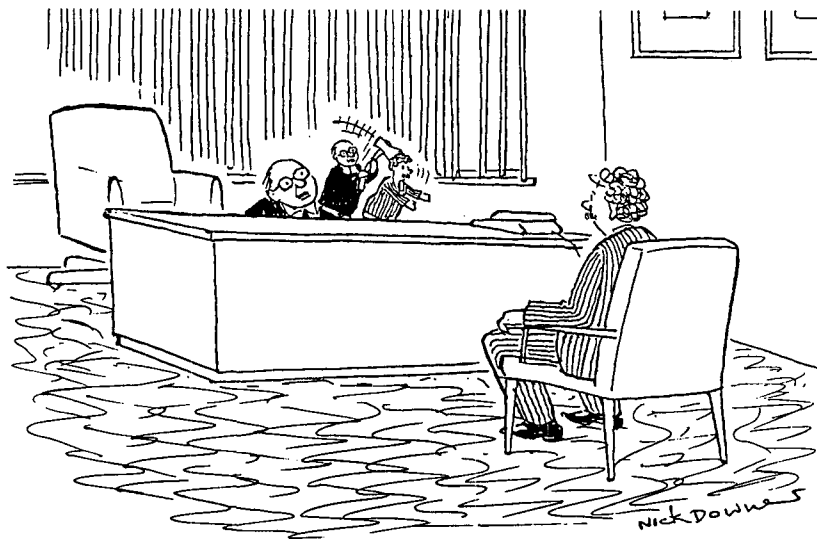
And so: Back to infantilism for the third time. The child being the father—or mother—to the adult, it is unsurprising that grown-up Americans (in years anyway) have a scarcely stronger grip on reality than their children do.

CHILTON WILLIAMSON JR.

Unfortunately infantilism, which in children is a form of social retardation or incomplete development, in adults amounts to a type of inhumanity.

Almost no serious critic contemplating the future of the United States doubts that a fundamental reconstruction of American civilization, and finally the American people themselves, is under way. Francis Fukuyama seems to speak for the capitalist Right when he predicts that modern capitalism will create its own humanity, echoing Hillary Clinton on the Left, who spoke feelingly several years ago of the necessity for “redefining for ourselves what it means to be a human being in the twentieth century.” In fact, Right and Left as they are currently aligned (on top of one another) in what becomes more and more our one-party state—created by the convergence of what used to be a number of differentiated elites into a single homogeneous ruling class with a shared agendum—become, effectively, collaborators in what C. S. Lewis recognized to be not the redefinition of man but his abolition.

Epilogue: As Wilson was to learn more than a year later, following his dismissal from the paper his name was never mentioned by his former colleagues. Was it shame on their part, or had he simply ceased to exist in personal as in institutional memory—abandoned, like a victim of a Soviet show-trial or yesterday’s aborted fetus, on the trash-heap of history, another of those non-persons thrown up—and out—by the forces of twentieth-century history? He doesn’t know and, in the narrower sense, he doesn’t care, since—one of fortune’s favorites after all—he finds life better where he is now. (In the short run, anyway.)



“SOME THINGS, MORRIS, ARE MORE EASILY EXPRESSED THROUGH PUPPETS.”

Prisoner Number 284797

Rita Marker and Kathi Hamlon

November 4, 1998, was a pivotal day for Jack Kevorkian. It was the day after Michigan voters had rejected a measure to legalize assisted suicide. And it was the first time in the years since he had started making headlines that he had been convicted of a crime. A jury found him guilty of assault and resisting arrest. The charges stemmed from a scuffle with police outside a Royal Oak hospital a few months earlier when Kevorkian and his sidekick, psychiatrist Georges Reding, had dropped off the body of an assisted-suicide victim.

Kevorkian launched into a tirade against the system and verbally attacked the jurors, calling them pawns in a conspiracy against him, made up of government forces, police, and media. But, despite his earlier demands that he be sent to prison for the maximum penalty if found guilty, Kevorkian decided to have his friend and sometimes death assistant Neal Nicol pay the fines and court costs because, he said, "I have things I have to do."¹

Indeed he did.

That very day, he was going to make contact with Mike Wallace of CBS' *60 Minutes* and offer him an exclusive, complete with two videotapes. One, made on September 17, was of the actual killing of 52-year-old Thomas Youk, a Waterford Township resident with Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS). The other was an interview done the previous day with the soon-to-be-dead "subject" (Kevorkian's own term).

Although Mike Wallace has been openly supportive of assisted suicide, he wasn't automatically ready to open doors for Kevorkian at *60 Minutes*. That took some help. According to Wallace, his friend Charles Eisendrath, who is a journalism professor at the University of Michigan, called to tell him he had a "wonderful broadcast" for him. At first Wallace wasn't interested because Kevorkian was "shopworn" and a "publicity seeker." But then Eisendrath put journalist Jack Lessenberry on the phone. Lessenberry told Wallace that the tape was so extraordinary that Wallace should at least talk to Kevorkian. When Wallace did call, he and Kevorkian talked for a half-hour. His curiosity piqued, Wallace told Kevorkian, "Send me the tape, FedEx."² It arrived the next morning.

Mike Wallace and *60 Minutes* executive producer Don Hewitt decided to

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air segments of the tapes and give Kevorkian the platform he wanted. The broadcast took place on November 22, 1998—the last Sunday of the November “sweeps,” the highly competitive network ratings race upon which advertising rates are based.

The Kevorkian segment gave *60 Minutes* the season’s best rating and put CBS ahead of NBC overall. More than 15 million households watched as Jack Kevorkian ended the life of Thomas Youk. (Youk’s death was the first in which Kevorkian *admitted* that he, not the victim, administered the lethal dose. There may have been many other deaths in which Kevorkian actually gave the lethal injection, just as there may be far more victims than the 110 whose names are known.)

60 Minutes viewers watched clips from Kevorkian’s home video, interspersed with softball questions from Wallace to Kevorkian.

Youk was shown sitting in his wheelchair, depressed, hopeless, and, as Kevorkian described him, “terrified of choking—terrified.” Kevorkian told Wallace, “He just was terrified of—he was very afraid of choking to death, and he must have felt that he was on the verge of it. And I couldn’t have him suffer in that kind of frame of mind because if a man is terrified, it’s up to me to dispel that terror.”

Instead of pressing Kevorkian about ways to help Youk rather than killing him, Wallace simply murmured, “Mm-hmm,” in apparent assent. There was no mention of the fact that, with proper treatment and care, ALS patients do not choke or suffocate. Wallace simply accepted Kevorkian’s false premise that Youk had only two options: choke or let Kevorkian kill him.

Throughout the videotape it was evident that Kevorkian was in charge of the situation. It was Kevorkian, not Youk, who decided that death should take place by lethal injection, rather than assisted suicide.

Wallace told viewers, “Kevorkian suggested that he give Tom a lethal injection. He says that’s more reliable and more humane, and he wants to push the public debate from doctor-assisted suicide to euthanasia.” Turning to Kevorkian, Wallace asked, “Did Tom know that you were making, in effect, an example [of him]?”

“Yes,” Kevorkian replied. “And I sensed some reluctance in him. I—I did.” When Wallace asked, “How do you know he agreed?” Kevorkian recalled, “I had him sign, saying that he chose direct injection.”

The “more reliable and more humane” method that Kevorkian chose was a bit trickier than the unlicensed physician had indicated. Kevorkian made a number of attempts to insert the needle. After many unsuccessful jabs, he finally inserted it between two of the fingers of Youk’s right hand. Then,

talking at Youk, he announced: "And we're ready to inject! We're going to inject in your right arm. OK? Okey-doke."

After showing the lethal series of three injections, Wallace told viewers, "He's dead," to which Kevorkian added, "Yep. The heart has stopped." (Describing Kevorkian's demeanor during his running commentary on the program, Brian Dickerson of the *Detroit Free Press* wrote, "I've seen car mechanics muster more compassion at the demise of a carburetor."³)

Kevorkian then issued a challenge. He defied prosecutors to charge him with a crime. He told Wallace, "Either they [the prosecutors] go or I go." When Wallace asked what he meant, Kevorkian replied, "If I'm acquitted, they go because they know they'll never convict me. If I'm convicted, I will starve to death in prison. So I will go. One of the two of us is going to go. And that's why I did this."

Wallace asked, "You were engaged in a political, medical, macabre publicity venture, right?"

"Probably," Kevorkian said.

Wallace said, "He gave us the tape, he says, to force their hand." To this, Kevorkian responded, "Absolutely, absolutely. I've got to force them to act. They must charge me, because if they do not, that means they don't think it's a crime. Because they don't need any more evidence, do they? Do you have to dust for fingerprints for this?"

Even before the broadcast, as word of the *60 Minutes* program was getting around, Kevorkian made it clear that he was spoiling for a fight. "I want a showdown," he told the *Oakland Press*. "It's time to end this circus. I want to be prosecuted for euthanasia. I am going to prove that this is not a crime, ever, regardless of what words are written on paper."

Kevorkian thought he had it all. He had a victim with a devastating terminal illness (unlike more than half of his previous victims, who did not have terminal illnesses or, in some cases, did not have any physical illnesses at all). The Youk family was supportive. The Oakland County prosecutor had been reluctant to bring charges for prior deaths. And Kevorkian had just been the "star" of the biggest news magazine in the world.

Kevorkian had missed just two things. He hadn't recognized his own incompetence, and he hadn't reckoned with the possibility that a jury would see him for what he is—a murderer.

Prosecutors obtained a copy of both videotapes in their entirety. Only three days after the *60 Minutes* airing, Kevorkian got his wish.

He was charged with murder, assisted suicide, and delivery of a controlled substance. The murder charge stemmed from the lethal-injection killing.

Because Kevorkian had initially gone to Youk's home to plan and prepare for an assisted suicide, he had violated Michigan's newly enacted law against assisted suicide. And since Kevorkian is not a licensed physician, he could be charged with delivery of a controlled substance. At his arraignment he pleaded not guilty and was released on a \$750,000 personal bond.

Then, a funny thing happened on the way to the courtroom. After all his grandstanding, his insistence that he wanted to be charged, Kevorkian tried to derail the trial. (Kevorkian has always been consistent in his inconsistency.) First he asked that Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Jessica Cooper dismiss the charges against him. When she failed to do so, he filed an emergency appeal with the Michigan Court of Appeals. Kevorkian based the appeal, which he wrote and filed himself, on the Ninth Amendment, claiming that it gives people the right to end their suffering. The court turned it down.

This trial would be very different from the three previous assisted suicide trials in which Kevorkian was found not guilty. In the first place, longtime Kevorkian attorney Geoffrey Fieger would not be sitting at the defense table.

In pre-trial proceedings, Kevorkian was represented by David Gorosh, a young attorney who had previously been with Geoffrey Fieger's firm. Rather than sitting at the defense table with his attorney, a nonchalant Kevorkian chose to sit in the gallery with his friends Neal Nicol and Ruth Holmes. Events both inside and outside the courtroom—court proceedings, protests, etc.—were dismissed by Kevorkian as “boring.”⁴

By the time the trial began, Jack Kevorkian had decided to serve as his own attorney. Gorosh and another attorney, Lisa Dwyer, were relegated to the position of legal advisors. However, they sat with Kevorkian at the defense table and attempted to coach him throughout the trial.

Over and over Judge Cooper urged Kevorkian to reconsider his decision to represent himself. But Kevorkian refused.

“Do you understand you could spend the rest of your life in prison?” she asked.

“There's not much of it left,” he replied. He explained that taking control and defending himself was what he'd planned all along. “There are certain points I can bring out better than anyone else,” he said.

It took no longer than his opening statement for observers to realize that Kevorkian was as inept at defending himself as he had been at finding the veins of his victims. Throughout the trial, he fumbled, he stumbled, he rambled.

When the judge patiently tried to explain a point of law to him, he appeared

confused. No sooner had he begun his opening statement than Judge Cooper had to ask the jury to leave the room. Kevorkian had told the jury, "To have a crime, you need a vicious will and a vicious act." Not only was that not true, but Kevorkian was improperly trying to argue the law, not the facts of the case. When prosecutor John Skrzynski objected, Judge Cooper sustained his objection. Instead of accepting the ruling, Kevorkian tried to explain himself to the judge: "What I was trying to prove here is that I didn't have the intent to kill, just as the executioner doesn't," he said. "His intent is to do his duty, because he may despise what he is doing. But he's forced to do it by his position." He went on, "I despise a human being dying at my hands. But my intent isn't to kill a person. I am forced by my position as a physician to do this. And that is reasonable apprehension."

Judge Cooper attempted to show Kevorkian the difference between arguing the facts and the law but he just didn't get it. He also didn't get the fact that he wasn't going to score any points by comparing himself to an executioner.

But this was only the beginning of Kevorkian's courtroom performance. At one point he referred to his actions as the "final solution." He said he didn't want Youk to have to stay in the condition he was in: "That wasn't the aim. The aim was a final solution to incurable agony."

He tried to explain how direct euthanasia is more "efficient" than assisted suicide, where patients inflict their own deaths. "This is a medical service. What happens if a needle pops out? You can't do a medical service willy-nilly, haphazard." (It seemed beyond Kevorkian's understanding that he wouldn't be permitted to perform an actual medical service since he's not licensed to practice medicine.) He railed, "The prosecutor calls it murder, kill, a crime. I call it a medical service."

Bouncing from one thought to another, he tried mightily and failed miserably to form some type of coherent argument. And he seemed to have totally misunderstood the significance of a ruling that had been made before the trial started.

In past trials, whenever Kevorkian's case has needed bolstering, he or his attorney has called on the family of a victim to testify on his behalf. Kevorkian had planned to use that tactic in this case as well.

A week before the proceedings, his legal advisor, David Gorosh, had told the press that Kevorkian is not a murderer. "How many other murder cases have you heard in your life, in the history of the United States, where the 'so-called' victim's family embraces the defendant and calls him an 'angel of mercy?'" he said.⁵

But, just days before the trial started, prosecutors had filed a motion to bar

any emotional family testimony regarding Thomas Youk's physical condition—the type of pain-and-suffering testimony that Fieger had used so successfully to persuade juries that they should ignore the law and acquit Kevorkian. Judge Cooper ruled that such testimony would be admissible for the assisted-suicide charge, but could not be used for the murder charge.

Prosecutors then took a gamble and dropped the assisted-suicide charge. Without that charge the emotionally charged testimony would not be placed before the jury. Their gamble paid off.

Without doubt, the family's testimony would have been extremely sympathetic to Kevorkian. It seems that all members of the Youk family supported the notion that Thomas Youk should die sooner rather than later. In fact, it appears that his family facilitated his appointment with death. Hospice nurse Marianne Potter reports that the family had told her that they had obtained information off the Internet on the Hemlock Society and the Michigan assisted-suicide advocacy group, Merian's Friends. (The Hemlock Society is known for referring people to Kevorkian. Merian's Friends is named after Merian Frederick, Kevorkian's 19th known victim.)

On a number of occasions, Youk's wife, Melody, told the press of her support for Kevorkian. Youk's mother, Elizabeth, explained to Larry King that her son had asked her what she would think if Kevorkian were called in. "I told him I was born and raised a Catholic, but it was his decision," his mother said.⁶ Youk's brother, Bob, was upset by the publicity after the death, but said he still supported Kevorkian for "what he's done for Tom."⁷

It was another brother, Terry, who played the most active role in arranging for Kevorkian to kill Thomas Youk. Terry told Mike Wallace, "We were at the end of our rope. We—we didn't have any options. And if it weren't for Dr. Kevorkian, I'm not sure what we would have done."

It was Terry who composed the letter to Kevorkian. It was Terry (who happens to be a documentary filmmaker from Vermont, planning to produce pro-assisted-suicide material) who arranged the initial meeting.⁸ And it was Terry who called Kevorkian the day after that meeting to say that the death should take place then, rather than the following week as originally planned.

Family members were prepared to testify positively on Kevorkian's behalf about Thomas Youk's debilitated condition and his alleged wish to die. And, even though the judge had clearly ruled that such testimony would not be permitted in the murder trial, Kevorkian persisted.

He tried to call Melody Youk and Terence Youk to the witness stand. The

prosecutor objected, and Judge Cooper asked Kevorkian for a legal response to the objection.

Instead of a legal response, Kevorkian went into another rambling monologue, claiming that Melody Youk could testify about his intent.

Judge Cooper calmly explained that the law in Michigan is clear. The testimony was not admissible. "I know you disagree with that," she told him, "and I know that that's what you want to talk to the jury about. But you can't. The jury doesn't decide if the law is correct. The jury decides if the facts are correct."

Unable to call the Youks as witnesses, Kevorkian rested his case without calling a single witness.

As she had done many times throughout the short trial, Judge Cooper urged Kevorkian to reconsider his decision to represent himself. And, again, he refused. Kevorkian forged on, all the way through closing arguments, digging himself in deeper and deeper.

Even his close friend Neal Nicol acknowledged that Kevorkian was doing a terrible job at playing lawyer. "As an attorney, he sucks," said Nicol. But Nicol went on to say that Kevorkian's inept courtroom performance didn't pose a problem since a conviction could result in getting the case before a higher court. Kevorkian would be a "bigger pain in jail than he is out," Nicol said. "He's in a win-win situation."⁹

It was becoming increasingly clear that, if the jury considered the facts, Jack Kevorkian would get the chance to be a pain in jail.

On the day before the trial began, Kevorkian had proclaimed, "This is a historic trial. This will say a lot about the state of our civilization. Will this be a jury that would convict Susan B. Anthony? Would they convict Martin Luther King, Jr. Or will they have common sense?"¹⁰

Kevorkian had two big problems. He was neither Susan B. Anthony nor Martin Luther King, Jr., and the jury did have common sense.

The facts in the case were simple and indisputable.

Within a time span of less than 48 hours, Jack Kevorkian had met Thomas Youk for the first time, and had killed him with a lethal injection.

And all of it was captured on video, taped by the murderer. The jury would see that videotape.

Before showing the tape, prosecutor John Skrzynski set the tone by asking the jury to keep in mind that Kevorkian was not above the law. "Begin to focus on what Jack Kevorkian does, and what Jack Kevorkian says," Skrzynski urged.

Skrzynski also clarified the difference between assisted suicide and murder.

“Tom Youk did not kill himself with Jack Kevorkian’s help. Jack Kevorkian killed Tom Youk by injecting him with drugs,” he explained, “and Jack Kevorkian does not have the right to kill.”

Skrzynski took little time to lay out the case. Kevorkian’s own videotape was his centerpiece. He let it speak for itself.

During closing arguments Skrzynski referred to Kevorkian as “a medical hitman in the night with his bag of poison to do the job.” Again he reminded the jury that Kevorkian had known Youk for less than 48 hours before he killed him.

Then, as Skrzynski replayed parts of the tape, he pointed out the crass, cold nature of the killing. He showed that Kevorkian didn’t even bother to shut Youk’s gaping mouth before removing the needles and other medical devices—implying that Kevorkian was not truly concerned about Youk’s dignity.

At one point, Skrzynski replayed a section of the unedited tape. On it, Kevorkian was starting to insert the needle into Youk. He was fumbling to get it in. Youk tried to say something. But Kevorkian ignored him. He knew what he wanted. He wasn’t interested in what Thomas Youk wanted. Minutes later Thomas Youk was dead.

“We don’t know what he said, and it’s too late now because he’s gone now,” Skrzynski told the jury. “What did he say? Did he say ‘wait’?”

The bottom line was that Kevorkian didn’t even stop long enough to find out.

The questions about Thomas Youk’s last words will always remain. The tape was not clear enough, nor could it be enhanced enough, for the entire word to be understood. One observer described it as having a long “a” sound. Youk’s hospice nurse, Marianne Potter, who was familiar with his speech, told Court TV that she had been asked by prosecutors to try to decipher the word from the tape. While she could not discern a complete word, she was sure it began with a “W.”

“I hope and pray that he wasn’t saying ‘wait,’” she said. “My heart goes out, because, even if he wasn’t saying ‘wait,’ why wasn’t he given the courtesy of figuring out what he *was* saying?”

Miss Potter also told Court TV, “The day before I learned he died, I asked him, ‘Do you want to die?’ and he said, ‘No.’”¹¹

The information about Youk’s last utterance gives added significance to a comment Kevorkian made to Jack Lessenberry while viewing the tape before its broadcast on *60 Minutes*. Lessenberry asked Kevorkian if Youk had said any last words. Kevorkian laughed and said, “I don’t know. I never understood a thing he said.”¹² This was the man who stood before jurors in

closing argument, trying to persuade them that he would lead the nation in a new and better direction. “Just look at me. Do you see a murderer?” he asked. He went on to tell jurors that an acquittal would “lead to human progress—a little—when we need it.”

He said he considered it a privilege to be where he was and proclaimed, “I did this to get where I am now.”

With statements like this throughout the trial, Kevorkian paved the way for Skrzynski to sum up him and his activities. “It all added up,” Skrzynski said, “to a man with more interest in a self-serving publicity stunt than in Tom Youk.”

Kevorkian had asked jurors to look at him and determine whether they saw a murderer.

The jury did just that.

On Friday, March 26, 1999, at 4:55 PM, the jury of seven women and five men returned their verdict: Guilty. The thirteen hours of deliberations had reportedly been devoted to whether he was guilty of first- or second-degree murder. His guilt was never in question.¹³

Kevorkian was poker faced as the verdict was read. Later he said, “I got what I wanted—a conviction. Why? That proves how corrupt the society is, and how malevolent are those who run it. They don’t care what the people want.” And he still said that he had the right to do what he did, regardless of the jury’s verdict.¹⁴

Mayer Morganroth (who would be Kevorkian’s attorney for his appeal) echoed Kevorkian’s claim that he got what he wanted. “He wants to take it to the Supreme Court, and he knows he needs a conviction to do that,” he said. “So he’s happy.”¹⁵

But Kevorkian seemed anything but happy. After the verdict, he whined, “I don’t want to be a martyr.” Then he railed against the jury, saying, “Manslaughter, I could understand how they would arrive at that. But murder? This? They must have been an astonishingly cruel jury!”¹⁶

Kevorkian still held out some hope. He was released until sentencing and he, as well as his supporters, thought he would be given a light sentence. Their hopes were dashed on April 13.

On sentencing day, April 13, 1999, Youk’s wife and brother addressed the court, pleading with the judge to spare Kevorkian from prison. They spoke with emotion about Thomas Youk’s illness. Melody Youk told Judge Cooper that Kevorkian “is a man who is honored by many for having the courage to stand up for [the terminally ill] without regard for his personal jeopardy.”¹⁷ After speaking in glowing terms about Kevorkian, they criticized the prosecutors

for bringing a case and talked about the pain that the trial had inflicted on the family.

However, John Skrzynski reminded the court and all who were watching that Kevorkian was the one who had chosen to put everyone in that situation. He explained that if Kevorkian's intent had been to help Thomas Youk, he didn't need to tape the death and show it on national television. The prosecutors had not gone looking for Kevorkian. Kevorkian had gone looking for a prosecution.

The statements from the family and the prosecution completed, Judge Cooper spoke directly to Kevorkian:

This is a court of law and you said you invited yourself here to take a final stand. But this trial was not an opportunity for a referendum. The law prohibiting euthanasia was specifically reviewed and clarified by the Michigan Supreme Court several years ago in a decision involving your very own cases, sir.

. . . We have the means and the methods to protest the laws with which we disagree. You can criticize the law, you can write or lecture about the law, you can speak to the media, or petition the voters. But you must always stay within the limits provided by the law. You may not break the law. You may not take the law into your own hands.

In point of fact, the issue of assisted suicide was addressed in this state by referendum just last November. And while the proponents of that were out campaigning, you were with Thomas Youk. And the voters of the state of Michigan said "no." And they said no, 2 ½ to 1.

. . . No one is unmindful of the controversy and emotion that exists over end-of-life issues and pain control. And I assume that the debate will continue in a calm and reasoned forum long after this trial and your activities have faded from public memory.

. . . This trial was not about the political or moral correctness of euthanasia. It was about you, sir. It was about lawlessness. It was about disrespect for a society that exists and flourishes because of the strength of the legal system.

No one, sir, is above the law. No one.

. . . You were on bond to another judge when you committed this offense, you were not licensed to practice medicine when you committed this offense, and you hadn't been licensed for eight years. And you had the audacity to go on national television, show the world what you did, and dare the legal system to stop you.

Well, sir, consider yourself stopped.

With that, Judge Jessica Cooper sentenced 70-year-old Jack Kevorkian to 10 to 25 years in prison for the second-degree murder conviction and 3 to 7 years for the conviction on delivery of a controlled substance. The sentences are to run concurrently. Kevorkian won't be eligible for parole for 6 years and 8 months.

Immediately following sentencing Jack Kevorkian was taken to Jackson

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State Prison where he was fingerprinted and deloused, given a pair of blue twill pants and a shirt, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant and soap.

He was later transferred to Oak Lakes Correctional Facility in East Lake where he reportedly eats hearty meals. He gave up his plans for a hunger strike after he found out that the prison system would not stand in the way of his starving to death.

Life has definitely changed for Jack. He's no longer known as "Dr. Death." Now he's just plain Prisoner No. 284797.

He sits in his cell for 22 hours a day. Sometimes he reads. Sometimes he writes letters. Sometimes he writes limericks:

*Autonomy — what we all crave
As birthright through life to the grave—
Is but a vain quest
In this land that's oppressed
By tyrants hell-bent to enslave.¹⁸*

Unable to face the fact that his megalomania has landed him where he is, he sees himself as a political prisoner—as a victim of the system.

Jack Kevorkian made a huge error. After fooling a lot of people into thinking he was a practicing physician, he fooled himself into thinking he could practice law. This time it's Jack himself, not a vulnerable client, who has to suffer the consequences of his arrogance.

After riding a publicity high in the international media, Jack Kevorkian is now where he belongs. In prison. Convicted of murder. Known by a number, not a name.

Notes

1. Brian Harmon, "Kevorkian guilty in tussles with cops," *Detroit News*, Nov. 5, 1998.
2. Transcript, CNN, *Larry King Show*, Nov. 30, 1998.
3. Brian Dickerson, "Science experiment lacked basic humanity," *Detroit Free Press*, Nov. 23, 1998.
4. Stephen Huber, "Prosecution seeks to restrict details on Kevorkian client," *Oakland Press*, March 4, 1999.
5. Stephen Huber, "Judge rejects Kevorkian appeal," *Oakland Press*, March 16, 1999.
6. Transcript, CNN *Larry King Show*, March 22, 1999.
7. Transcript, CNN *Larry King Show*, March 22, 1999.
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"I LIKED HIM BETTER WHEN HE WAS A COWARD."

APPENDIX A

[Clarke D. Forsythe, an attorney, is president of Americans United for Life. This article first appeared in *Christianity Today* (5/24/99) and is reprinted with the author's permission.]

Abortion Is Not a “Necessary Evil”

Clarke D. Forsythe

Twenty-six years after the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision, the public debate on abortion seems to have reached a stalemate. The issue continues to be debated in Congress and state legislatures across the country, but, year to year, there seems to be little change in public opinion.

This does not mean, however, that the abortion issue is going to recede in intensity any time soon. There are many reasons for this, but perhaps the most important is simply that “the majority of Americans morally disapprove of the majority of abortions currently performed,” as University of Virginia sociologist James Hunter concludes in his path-breaking 1994 book, *Before the Shooting Begins: Searching for Democracy in America's Culture Wars*. Hunter's analysis is based on the 1991 Gallup poll “Abortion and Moral Beliefs,” the most thorough survey of American attitudes toward abortion yet conducted.

The Gallup study found that 77 percent of Americans believe that abortion is at least the “taking of human life” (28 percent), if not “murder” itself (49 percent). Other polls confirm these findings. And yet, while many Americans—perhaps 60 percent in the middle—see legalized abortion as an evil, they see it as “necessary.”

The *Chicago Tribune* aptly summarized the situation in a September 1996 editorial: “Most Americans are uncomfortable with all-or-nothing policies on abortion. They generally shy away from proposals to ban it in virtually all circumstances, but neither are they inclined to make it available on demand no matter what the circumstances. They regard it, at best, as a necessary evil.”

If Middle America—as Hunter calls the 60 percent—sees abortion as an evil, why is it thought to be *necessary*? Although the 1991 Gallup poll did not probe this question specifically, it made clear that it is not because Middle America sees abortion as necessary to secure equal opportunities for women. For example, less than 30 percent believe abortion is acceptable in the first three months of pregnancy if the pregnancy would require a teenager to drop out of school (and the number drops below 20 percent if the abortion is beyond three months). Likewise, less than 20 percent support abortion in the first three months of pregnancy if the pregnancy would interrupt a woman's career (and that support drops to 10 percent if the abortion is after the third month).

Four “necessary myths”

Instead, many Americans, therefore, may see abortion as “necessary” to avert “the back alley.” In this sense, the notion of legal abortion as a “necessary evil” is based on a series of myths widely disseminated since the 1960s. These myths

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captured the public mind and have yet to be rebutted.

Myth #1: One to two million illegal abortions occurred annually before legalization. In fact, the annual total in the few years before abortion on demand was no more than tens of thousands and most likely fewer. For example, in California, the most populous state where it was alleged that 100,000 illegal abortions occurred annually in the 1960s, only 5,000 abortions were performed in 1968, the first full year of legalization.

Myth #2: Thousands of women died annually from abortions before legalization. As a leader in the legalization movement, Dr. Bernard Nathanson later wrote: “How many deaths were we talking about when abortion was illegal? In N.A.R.A.L. we generally emphasized the drama of the individual case, not the mass statistics, but when we spoke of the latter it was always ‘5,000 to 10,000 deaths a year.’ I confess that I knew the figures were totally false, and I suppose that others did too if they stopped to think of it. But in the ‘morality’ of our revolution, it was a useful figure, widely accepted, so why go out of our way to correct it with honest statistics?”

In fact, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) statistics in 1972 show that 39 women died from illegal abortion and 27 died from legal abortion.

Myth #3: Abortion law targeted women rather than abortionists before legalization. In fact, the nearly uniform policy of the states for nearly a century before 1973 was to treat the woman as the second victim of abortion.

Myth #4: Legalized abortion has been good for women. In fact, women still die from legal abortion, and the general impact on health has had many negative consequences, including the physical and psychological toll that many women bear, the epidemic of sexually transmitted disease, the general coarsening of male-female relationships over the past 30 years, the threefold increase in the repeat-abortion rate, and the increase in hospitalizations from ectopic pregnancies.

A generation of Americans educated by these myths sees little alternative to legalized abortion. It is commonly believed that prohibitions on abortion would not reduce abortion and only push thousands of women into “the back alley” where many would be killed or injured. Prohibitions would mean no fewer abortions and more women injured or killed. Wouldn’t that be worse than the status quo?

Middle America’s sense that abortion is a necessary evil explains a lot of things, and, by giving coherent explanation to many disparate facts and impressions, it may provide a way beyond the stalemate to—as Hunter calls for—an elevation in the content and conduct of the public debate.

First, this notion of abortion as a necessary evil explains the seemingly contradictory polls showing that a majority of Americans believe both that abortion is murder and that it should be legal. The most committed pro-life Americans see legality and morality to be inextricably intertwined and therefore view the polling data as contradictory. But Middle America understands “legal” versus “illegal” not in moral terms but in practical terms—criminalizing the procedure. Based on the historical myths, Middle America believes that criminalizing abortion would only aggravate a bad situation.

Second, the myth of abortion as a necessary evil also explains the power of the “choice” rhetoric. For the most committed abortion proponents, “choice” means moral autonomy. but there are less ideological meanings. According to the choice rhetoric, Americans can persuade women to make another choice, but they can’t make abortion illegal, because that would mean no fewer abortions and simply push women into the back alley. This explains why Middle Americans will support virtually any regulation, short of making abortions illegal, that will encourage alternatives and reduce abortions. In a sense, by supporting legal regulations but not prohibitions, many Americans may believe that they are choosing “the lesser of two evils.”

The rhetoric of abortion as a “necessary evil” (though not the phrase itself) is a key tactic of abortion advocates. It is roughly reflected in President Clinton’s slogan that he wants abortion to be “safe, legal, and rare” and is at the heart of the President’s veto of the federal partial-birth abortion bill. In the face of polls showing that 70 to 80 percent of Americans oppose the procedure, the President says that the procedure is horrible (it’s an evil) but contends that “a few hundred women” every year must have the procedure (it’s necessary).

Indeed, the rhetoric of abortion as a necessary evil is designed to sideline Americans’ moral qualms about abortion. For example, when Congress first began to consider the bill prohibiting partial-birth abortion, abortion advocates bought a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* showing a large coat hanger and the caption, “Will this be the only approved method of abortion?” The coat hanger, reinforcing the image of the back alley, remains a powerful rhetorical symbol. It reinforces the notion that there are two and only two alternatives: abortion on demand or the back alley.

Finally, the myth of abortion as a “necessary evil” also explains why 49 percent of Americans may believe that abortion is “murder” without translating this into fervent social or political mobilization. While Middle Americans may view abortion as an evil, they view it as intractable. For this reason, they view fervent campaigns to prohibit abortion an unrealistic if not counterproductive, while they are drawn to realistic alternatives and regulations. They agree that there are too many abortions and would like to see them reduced. Abortion is not a galvanizing electoral issue for Middle America, because Middle America doesn’t see that much can be done about the issue legally or politically.

The future of abortion

The myth of abortion as a necessary evil has serious implications for future public debate. First, it means that abortion opponents have won the essential debate that the unborn is a human being and not mere tissue. In fact, the whole thrust of the “choice” argument admits this and seeks to sideline Americans’ moral qualms by telling Americans that, even if it is a human life, the most that can be done is to persuade women not to have abortions.

Second, it means that the ideological arguments of both sides (“choice” versus

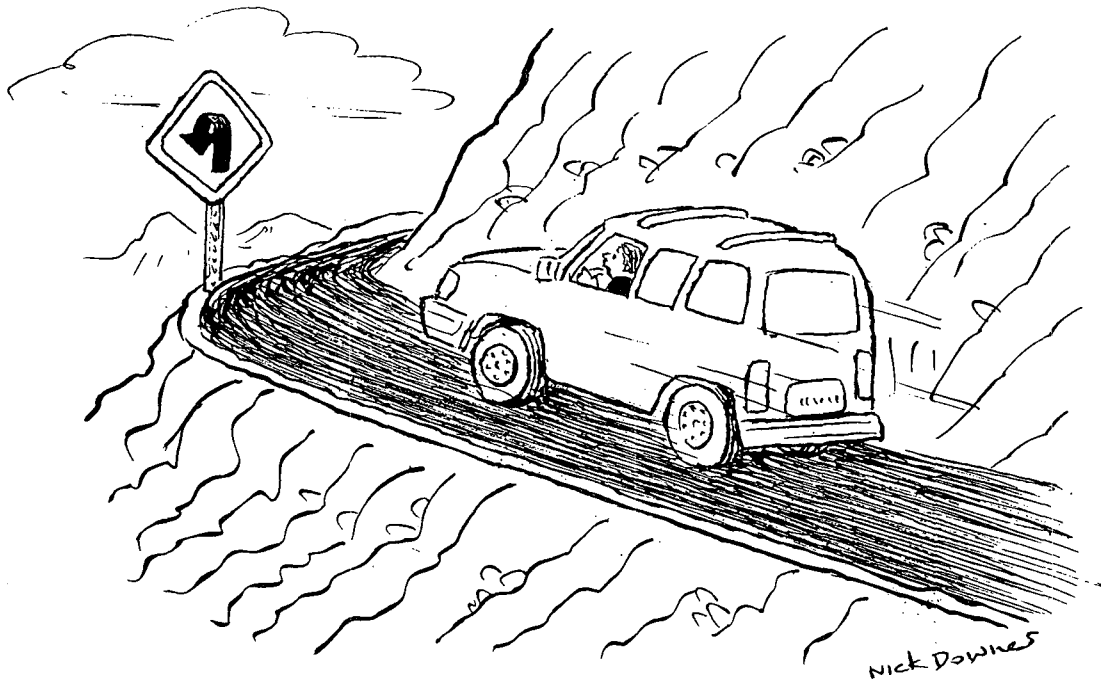
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“child”) often miss the much more practical concerns of many Americans.

Third, it means that Americans balance the fate of the woman and the fate of the child. Although they understand the fate of the child to be fatal, they want to avoid the same result for women and believe that legalized abortion has been good generally for women.

This means that maximizing the fatal impact of abortion through, for example, graphic pictures of aborted babies is not a “silver bullet” that will transform public opinion alone. Instead, elevating the content and conduct of the public debate requires addressing both aspects—the impact on women as well as the impact on the child. Helping the public understand the impact on both, and the alternatives available, may contribute to a renewal of public dialogue that we so sorely need on this issue.

But a renewal of the public dialogue won’t mean much if the people are not allowed to express the public will on this issue, as they usually do in our democratic republic. Twenty-six years ago, the Supreme Court claimed hegemony over the issue and created a nationwide rule of abortion on demand, preventing democratic debate and solutions. The public policy dictated by the Supreme Court collides with majority opinion and reflects the views of only the 20 percent who are committed to abortion on demand. Twenty-six years later, that is the main reason the pot keeps boiling.



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[Paul Greenberg is editorial page editor of the *Little Rock (Arkansas) Democrat-Gazette* and a nationally-syndicated columnist. The following column was published on July 11, 1999 and is reprinted with permission (Copyright, 1999, Los Angeles Times Syndicate).]

Why Right-to-Lifers Won't Just Shut Up

Paul Greenberg

Milwaukee, Wisc. Even when my friend Anne Dierks called for Arkansas Right to Life, and I explained that I seldom accept speaking engagements out of state, thank you very much, I knew I'd be here. I knew I'd say yes, I'll give the keynote at this year's National Right to Life convention.

Because there are some invitations a person doesn't refuse. Just as, on a long-ago summer's day outside a little church next to the railroad tracks in Pine Bluff, Ark., I linked arms with some young people to sing "We Shall Overcome." No matter how it might look.

It's been said before: The evils that befall the world are not nearly so often the product of bad people as they are the result of good people who remain silent when they should speak out.

So here I am in Milwaukee. So are a thousand or more other people—here because, like me, they've got to be. About some things you don't have much choice. A moral imperative, a German philosopher called it.

These people aren't supposed to be here. This issue was settled years ago, decades ago, by a single, definitive Supreme Court decision in 1973. Haven't these folks heard of *Roe v. Wade*? Don't they know they're fighting for a lost cause?

Abortion on demand is the law of the land, and always will be. Or so we're told. Just as a different generation of Americans was told that *Dred Scott v. Sandford* was the law of the land, and the slavery question had been settled. All the states were going to be slave states. Case closed. To paraphrase my favorite line from a Ring Lardner short story: Shut up, they explained.

Those old-time abolitionists and Republicans and Free-Soil Democrats and Antislavery Whigs—what a motley crew that was—were supposed to represent a lost cause, too. But they understood something:

No cause is forever lost. Not in this ever-changing world. Because no cause is forever won. That's the nature of politics. Of ideas. Of faith. Day by day we make our own choices. And the folks gathered here have chosen life.

What a collection of aces are gathered here. Talk about diversity: This crowd *really* looks like America. And they've all been drawn here by the one issue that cuts across every political, social, religious, ethnic, geographical, sexual, class and party line. None of that matters, not here, not now, not when life is at stake. For these people understand something: If abortion is not wrong—abortion on demand, abortion for no good medical reason, abortion as a routine, accepted feature of American society, the taking of innocent life without restriction or scruple or

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qualm—if all that is not wrong . . . then nothing is.

And soon enough, nothing will be—given that kind of pervasive, unthinking disregard for life. For that is the nature of evil. It spreads. It becomes ordinary, profitable, banal. Abortion today, euthanasia tomorrow, eugenics next in our brave new cloned world.

Now and then, I wonder if those on the other side of this issue can have thought this thing through, or don't they *dare* to think it through?

Does that explain their need for so many evasions and euphemisms? Is that why so many say they personally don't approve of abortion, meaning they personally wouldn't do anything to stop it?

George Orwell said it: "In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible." It still is.

Hasn't even our president said he believes abortion should be rare? The only great difference between his position and the right-to-lifers' is that they believe it.

Attention long has been focused on the slaying of the unborn. But now Death has opened a second front, against those at the other end of life's spectrum: the old and infirm, all those whose "Quality of Life"—another slippery phrase—isn't high enough. At least in the eyes of our new elite.

Now it is our elders, our handicapped, our ailing whose existence is begrudged them.

Soon enough, it will be those whose income, or class, or race, or social circumstances fail to meet someone's idea of the requisite quality, and they will be marked by our ever-enveloping culture of death.

A confession: Those of us who revere life have been rightly rebuked for not caring enough for life *after* birth. It's time we did, and stood up against the creeping Kevorkianism in American life, or rather American death.

And those of us who say we respect life need to respect the living, including those who disagree with us. Martin Luther King said it: You can't teach anybody anything unless you love 'em first.

In this fight, some of us have forgotten that we have an ally in the conscience of our adversaries. We should never cease appealing to it. Those on the other side of this issue are for life, too. They just may not know it yet. We need to keep reminding them. If we do that, once again We Shall Overcome.

APPENDIX C

[John Kass is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune. The following two columns appeared in that newspaper on June 23 and July 1, 1999 respectively, and are reprinted with permission. (@ Copyrighted Chicago Tribune Company. All rights reserved.)]

Draw the line now against using babies as medical products

John Kass

It's an ugly twist on an old science fiction theme:

Would you use the body parts of an innocent baby so that you could live a happier life?

Would you support a system of incentives to kill other babies, and process them like meat at a packing plant, for the benefit of a frightened Baby Boom generation terrified of Alzheimer's disease and death?

Of course not. The suggestion is monstrous and dehumanizing. By comparison, it makes what the Serbs and Albanians are doing to each other look like a gentle game.

But the science fiction scenario doesn't generate the terrifying passions of old Balkan blood feuds.

Instead, it's calculated, without anger, and practiced by reasonable men and women in white lab coats.

It's about pure reason, efficiency and scientific rationalism. It's what a culture can do when it loses its soul. If you don't believe me, ask a Jew about the Nazi concentration camps.

So get horrified. Because it's not science fiction. It's happening now, in our country.

I read about it in Sunday's Tribune, in a fascinating story by science writer Ronald Kotulak under the headline "Stem cells opening path to brain repair."

It began with an anecdote about a woman with Parkinson's disease. Her name is Dr. Jacqueline Winterkorn. The drugs she was taking to fight the disease weren't working anymore.

"It's a very sad disease," Dr. Winterkorn was quoted as saying. "People are locked into bodies that don't move. Their brains are working, their minds are working, but they can't talk and they can't move."

In other words, they're human beings immobilized through no fault of their own, trapped without speech. They have emotions, but they can't do anything about it. They're helpless.

Like a fetus.

But Dr. Winterkorn's condition began improving, the story said, after she was given millions of new brain stem cells because her own brain cells weren't doing their jobs. Her brain cells weren't producing enough dopamine to control her movements.

The new brain stem cells worked just fine. They produced dopamine in her brain.

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She improved. The scientists are thrilled.

“The prospect of repairing a damaged brain is pretty remarkable,” said Dr. Curt Freed, who did the study. “It has been possible to show significant improvements in some patients who suffered from a chronic neurologic disease for an average of 14 years.”

But there is a price for Dr. Freed’s success. The new brain cells have to come from somewhere. And they don’t come from pigs.

They come from fetuses, which is a polite way of saying they come from tiny human beings. The tiny human beings didn’t willingly give up their brains. Nobody asked them to sign papers donating their bodies to science.

They didn’t have much say in the matter. They were aborted.

The National Institutes of Health—which means the federal government—has lifted its ban on the use of human fetal cells and is bankrolling several other similar studies.

Meanwhile, the White House worries that video games cheapen human life and make possible massacres like the one in Littleton, Colorado.

Courts and abortion rights advocates have said that what grows in a mother’s womb is not a human being. You don’t say baby. That’s impolite. You say “it,” because that makes a human being easier to kill.

The debate of abortion is an old one now. Most folks have settled into their positions and defend them vigorously. That’s not going to change.

What’s changing is that we’re progressing to a civilized new stage—turning human beings into valuable commodities—in which the bodies of the helpless are used to improve the lives of the powerful.

And it’s being done in the name of cold scientific reason. The rhetorical pathway was cleared years ago, when the Germans built Buchenwald and Auschwitz and other places.

Soon other folks with Parkinson’s or other brain disorders such as Alzheimer’s disease will seek such treatments. The Baby Boom generation that has never been denied will make its demands.

It’s human nature to use available resources to satisfy the most powerful human need: staying alive.

So aborted human babies will become resources. They’ll become products, subjected to the market. Because they’ll have value, there will be an incentive to provide more. Their bodies will be served up for the benefit of adults.

If we don’t stop it now, if we accept this crime in the name of scientific reason, we’ll lose ourselves.

Ask a mother carrying a child inside her. Ask her if it’s not human. Ask any father who puts his hand on his expectant wife’s belly and feels a tiny foot.

In a few weeks, they’re out and looking up at you. They grab your finger. You kiss their necks. Someday, when they’re old enough, they might ask you what fetal brain stem cell research is all about.

What will you tell them?

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Research debate tackles new world some dare not brave

John Kass

A discussion begins in Washington on Thursday. It's not about sex or money. It's not about scandals or interest rates or war.

So it might not get the media coverage it deserves.

But it could be the most important debate of our generation. It will determine whether we're going to make it easy on ourselves to make a bargain with science and the future.

Depending on how it comes out and what we settle for, it will determine what kind of human beings we will become, as science moves quicker than our ability to understand its consequences, in areas from human cloning to fetal stem cell research.

And it will answer a question:

Is it right to take human beings and process them as resources to benefit other human beings?

About 100 doctors and scientists have signed a statement from the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity to oppose something horrible—embryonic and fetal stem cell research, which uses aborted children and viable fertilized embryos to develop cures for some diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

At the news conference, the doctors are being joined by U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, the Republican from Kansas, who is expected to lead a fight against changes in federal policy that now allows the research.

The National Institutes of Health already supports and finances the research using fetuses. Now, the NIH wants to use embryos too.

Among those opposing the research is former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop.

Some scientists argue that they need the human "material," as they call it, to study how the mind works, in order to attack the horrible diseases.

But the doctors who have signed the document say that's wrong. Stem cell research on brain diseases is in its early stages, and there are other means to grow the cells to attack brain diseases.

Sen. Brownback said it is important to realize that the ethical line of using human life for stem cell research need not be crossed.

"For those who say there are moral and ethical issues on the other side, who say we have the moral responsibility to solve diseases like Parkinson's, I say, look at the other possibilities that we have," Brownback said Wednesday in an interview.

"We don't have to give up on solving Parkinson's. We have other ways of doing it. And that seems to be a prudent way to proceed," he said. "It's almost every week that another study comes out about advances in adult stem cell research. Let's not get into the situation where you go into all these legal and ethical issues—you'd

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have enormous ethical and moral issues here, and you shouldn't jump into it."

The debate over the use of fetal brain tissue in experiments was touched on in this space Monday. And I could hear the angry howling.

I'm not opposing science, or research, or organ donation, or any other reasonable practice. Organ donors offer their consent to have their bodies used by science.

But aborted children don't have that opportunity. They're not asked to give their consent. And they are used in stem cell research to help adults fight brain diseases.

Fifty years ago, the Nuremberg war crimes trials led the world to promise never to use human life in scientific experiments without consent. But now we're changing our minds, in order to win a scientific benefit.

And we cannot make a political deal on this issue without publicly and fully discussing the consequences of such selfish thinking.

Some people argue that to oppose this research is to condemn people with Parkinson's to death.

U.S. Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) thinks so. Though we disagree on this issue, he should be heard too.

"I think this is valuable research," Durbin said. "We have to set up safeguards that will keep it from becoming commercialized. The important thing about these [fetal] neural cells is that they may be able to help in cases that we can do nothing about now, conditions like that which keeps Christopher Reeve in a wheelchair."

But there are other ways to obtain stem cells, according to the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity. And even if there weren't other ways, using human babies and embryos should not be allowed.

Stem cells can be obtained from the living human nerve tissue of consenting adults and from adult cadavers, according to researchers. Like the fetal stem cell research, all of this is experimental.

Here's one reason why the fetuses and embryos are used. It's easier. They're available.

And that's the problem.

Because it is easy, and because there is promise in the research, we might be willing—through small steps we don't even notice at the time—to barter something away.

Our humanity.

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[The following article was posted May 14, 1999 on FrontPagemag.com, an on-line publication of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture in Los Angeles, Ca. It is reprinted here with the permission of Mr. Weinkopf, who is the webzine's managing editor.]

License to Live

Chris Weinkopf

Sea turtles, large-mouth bass, and bottlenose dolphins are all featured on specialty license plates in Florida. So are more than a dozen colleges and universities and eleven professional-sports teams. At last count, the sunshine state offered 43 different specialty plates, which cost drivers twenty dollars more than the generic kind, with proceeds going to a specified cause. The legislature and governor routinely authorize such plates without controversy—that is, until advocates proposed a design depicting child-drawn sketches of a boy and a girl, and a crayon-scrawled caption, “Choose life.”

Democrats, joined by NOW and the ACLU, complain that by issuing such plates, Florida would be taking sides in a contentious political debate. But that charge, which is negated by a legal process that lets proponents of any cause propose their own plate, presupposes an important question: are the words “Choose life” political? Not more so than “Conserve Wildlife” or “Invest in Children,” which already adorn Florida plates.

It is not as if proponents had recommended “Ban Abortion Now.” “Choose life”—which will fund adoption agencies, not anti-abortion groups—assumes the legality of abortion without commenting on the political questions surrounding it. It urges only that expecting mothers, presented with the choice to have an abortion, reject it. For abortion-rights defenders, who insist they have no affection for abortion (and often claim to be “personally opposed” to it), that sentiment should be innocuous.

But it isn't, according to Florida's congressional Democrats, who unanimously oppose the “Choose life” plate. “People have died over this issue,” state Senator Patsy Kurth gravely cautions. “When this license tag becomes law and it goes on the backs of cars . . . I believe it is going to be the first license tag that is going to add to the road rage that is out there.” State Rep. Elaine Bloom sounds the same alarm, ominously predicting during the “Choose life” debate that “This tiny spark on the hallowed floors of the House is nothing compared to the road rage you're going to see” when the motto hits the streets.

Less tame bumper stickers—from both sides of the debate—have been on American autos for 25 years, without causing much in the way of freeway shootings. The claim that “Choose life” will incite riots at stoplights may make for effective demagoguery, but that's about it. Democratic state Senator Skip Campbell attempted a different sort of fear-mongering, suggesting that skinheads could take a cue from pro-lifers, and create a “Be a Nazi” license plate. The comparison is as insulting as

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it is preposterous, and like the other arguments against the “Choose life” tag, disingenuous.

“Choose life” may lack the political connotations its opponents decry, but it unambiguously, if gently, argues against getting an abortion and for giving birth—the choice “pro-choice” activists are loath to support. The ACLU, which regularly defends the free expression of Klansmen and pornographers, is less enthusiastic about the sort of expression that might prevent abortions. In a letter to then-Governor Lawton Chiles, urging him to veto the license plates, it warned that the proceeds could “end up in the hands of not merely adoption agencies, but ‘pro-life counseling’” groups. It fears not that abortions might become illegal, but that women might be persuaded not to get them.

“This is not only about a slogan,” insists Rep. Lois Frankel, a Democrat from West Palm Beach. “This is about whether this license plate begins the slow death of the right to choose for women in this state.” That’s a bit histrionic, but actually not far off the mark. “Choose life” does not explicitly challenge the “right” to abortion, but emphasizes a cultural rejection of its exercise—a trend that has its professional champions running scared. Political shifts follow social ones. Abortion advocates realize that if the American public starts to view abortion as not just another “medical procedure,” and unborn children as something more than “fetuses” or “products of conception,” their cause is in jeopardy. If too many people start choosing life, there will be little need or tolerance for the culture of death.

Desperate movements resort to desperate measures, which, in the case of Florida’s abortion-rights proponents, means obstructing a measure that will funnel upwards of \$600,000 to scared, needy, usually young, pregnant women. It also means concocting outlandish accusations rather than allowing the insidious idea to permeate the culture that crisis pregnancies need not end in abortion. Former Governor Lawton Chiles accepted the ACLU’s recommendation and vetoed the specialty-plate legislation last year, but the state legislature has passed it again, and Chiles’ successor, Republican Jeb Bush, is set to sign it into law. When he does, unborn children in Florida will finally enjoy a status somewhat closer to that of large-mouth bass and bottlenose dolphins.

APPENDIX E

[The following is taken from the On the Right column by William F. Buckley, Jr. (© 1999. Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.)]

New Jersey: Another View on Abortion

William F. Buckley Jr.

Two years ago, two fellow critics of the Supreme Court's decision in 1973 overturning the states' abortion laws, met to ask, How might opponents of abortion proceed to make their case and advance their arguments without slamming shut the gates on civilized political exchange?

At one of the initial meetings, Ralph Reed of the Christian Coalition was there, as also Henry Hyde, the legislator; George Will, the columnist; and Peter Flanigan, a prominent figure on Wall Street who has engaged in civic and educational work throughout a productive career that included a term as assistant to President Nixon. After innumerable meetings and much correspondence, a statement emerged, endorsing a bill that has been introduced in the New Jersey Legislature. It is called the Post-Viability Abortion Ban Bill.

The common insight was to the effect that Republicans and Democrats should collaborate to make progress in modest measures toward the desirable goal, which of course would be a society in which abortion was voluntarily rejected by mothers as a means of dealing with unwanted pregnancies. Simply to call for a constitutional amendment (which will never happen), it was agreed, is to forfeit practical measures that might save individual lives by making incremental progress against abortion on demand.

One participant thought it useful to grab the brass ring held out by Gov. Christine Whitman's message of 1997 when she vetoed the bill outlawing partial-birth abortion (the bill was passed over her veto). Mrs. Whitman argued that she thought the attempted prohibition unconstitutional (the court subsequently affirmed her judgment), but suggested that a different formulation on the abortion question might be welcome.

State Sen. Joseph Kyrillos has introduced such a bill, which will be debated next fall. The organizers mobilized their little legion, and the legislation has been endorsed by nine men and women whose opposition to abortion has been categorical, but who believe that incremental progress is the reasonable way to go.

Charles Colson is a signatory, the learned and adamant head of the Prison Fellowship. Robert P. George is an illustrious legal and philosophical figure at Princeton University. Mary Ann Glendon is similarly renowned at Harvard. Donald P. Hodel was president of the Christian Coalition, and signatory Randy Tate was its executive director. Father Richard John Neuhaus is editor of *First Things* and a formidable figure in the world of political morality. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese is another scholar and author. And this journalist and Peter Flanigan are the remaining signatories.

The Right-to-Life spokesman in New Jersey, Mrs. Marie Tasy, immediately

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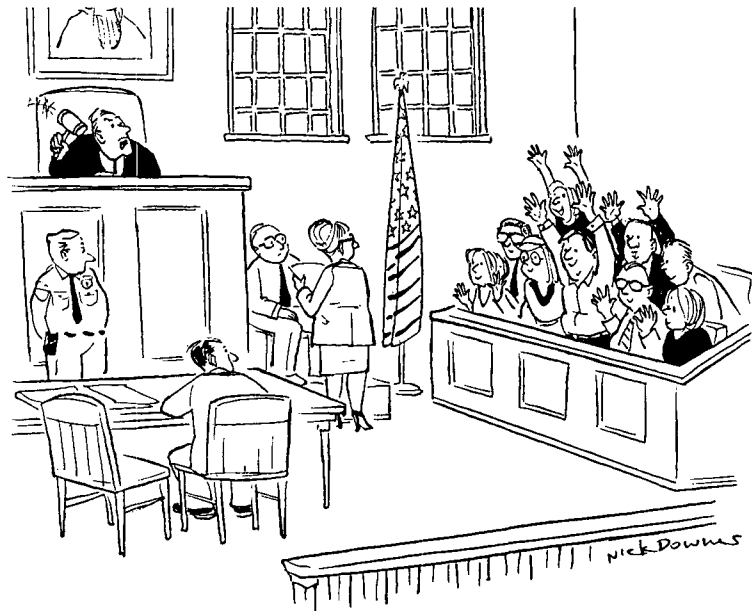
opposed the bill. She does so on the grounds that it would have no effect, that no prospective discarded fetus is likely, on account of this bill, to be born to take succor from the Fifth and 14th Amendments.

Now the Post-Viability Abortion Ban Bill specifically fails to list vague concerns for the mother's mental health as permissible grounds for an abortion. By closing that door, an enormously important step is taken. Opponents of the bill reason as follows: The mother who wants a late-term abortion is not going to arrive at the abortionist's door with a physician to plead her case. The abortionist will be the only doctor on site, and it is likely that he will be tempted to give medical arguments for proceeding to do what he is in the business of doing, never mind the penalties in the bill; \$25,000 per illegal abortion. (Mrs. Tasy has also advanced a political point, that the whole purpose of the exercise is to give Gov. Whitman a better leverage in her forthcoming contest for senator with a constituency dismayed over her latitudinarian record on abortion.)

The signers of the statement anticipated the substantive objection, acknowledging that there are unscrupulous physicians in the land. "We fully support the clarifying and strengthening of the bill's language to protect against such abuses, so long as it does not destroy the possibility of the bill's becoming law."

Seventy percent of the American people oppose partial-birth abortion. Sen. Kyrillos, who introduced the post-viability bill, is not himself opposed to all abortions. But he correctly views his measure as a step in the direction of new social formulations. If you want an abortion, get it before the human tissue discarded could actually live, if protected, outside the mother's womb.

The New Jersey initiative should advance political reasoning on an issue concerning which polarizations are sometimes done at the expense of human lives.



"JURY WILL DISCONTINUE 'THE WAVE' IMMEDIATELY!"

APPENDIX F

[The following Wall Street Journal editorial page essay ran on August 19, 1999 and is reprinted with permission of The Wall Street Journal © 1999 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All rights reserved. Mr. Ponnuru is a senior editor of National Review magazine.]

Abortion Is Not the Answer to Crime

Ramesh Ponnuru

Why have crime rates been falling in the 1990s? Criminologists have suggested a number of possible explanations. The end of the crack boom, the strong economy, tougher sentencing policies, better policing techniques, and state laws letting law-abiding citizens carry concealed handguns have all been mentioned.

Now two researchers are advancing yet another theory: The legalization of abortion in the 1970s, they say, may be responsible for about half of the drop in crime in the 1990s. The reason we aren't being terrorized by more 20-year-old thugs, in other words, is that they were aborted 20 years ago. It turns out that the death penalty stops crime after all.

The notion that abortion solves social problems has always been implicit in the pro-choice movement's rhetoric about the perils of bringing "unwanted children" into the world. Steven Levitt, an economist at the University of Chicago, and John Donohue III, a professor at the Stanford University Law School, have merely added some statistics to that intuition in an unpublished paper. Their main evidence seems to be that states that had high abortion rates in the 1970s have seen the most dramatic drops in crime now, and that states that legalized abortion earlier began to see those drops earlier too.

Obviously, a society that has 39 million abortions will have 39 million fewer potential criminals—and 39 million fewer potential crime victims, policemen, moviegoers, taxpayers and so forth. But Messrs. Levitt and Donohue point out that the aborted children would have been more likely than average to become criminals, both because of their mothers' demographic characteristics—disproportionately black or Hispanic, poor and teenaged—and because of their unwantedness.

The argument can't be dismissed out of hand. No less a scholar than James Q. Wilson made a similar point in "On Crime," attributing the rise in crime in the 20th century partly to advances in public health: Many modern criminals would in earlier times have died in childhood.

But are Messrs. Levitt and Donohue right? To say for sure, we would have to know what would have happened to crime rates if abortion had stayed illegal, and social science cannot construct such counter-factual histories. We might conceive, for instance, that less abortion would yield more illegitimacy. But in fact, abortion and illegitimacy rates rose in tandem in the 1970s and have been falling in tandem recently.

There are other reasons to question the scholars' conclusion. Britain's crime rate was rising 20 years after abortion was legalized. Russians abort seven out of 10

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pregnancies, and their society is not noticeably safer as a result. In a recent monograph on the underclass for the American Enterprise Institute, Charles Murray contends that while crime is falling, the number of criminals in America is actually still rising—which suggests that crime is dropping mainly because more of them are behind bars. It's possible, also, that the legalization of abortion increased crime by undermining respect for the sanctity of life, although any such effect would be hard to measure.

Does it matter if Messrs. Levitt and Donohue are right? Cory Richards, vice president for public policy at the pro-abortion rights Alan Guttmacher Institute, told the Chicago Tribune that the study “is an argument for women not being forced to have children they don't want to have,” which is to say for allowing abortion. Many pro-lifers, on the other hand, have violently denounced the study. But this politicization of science, or at least of science reporting, is both foolish and unnecessary. The findings shouldn't affect our view of abortion at all.

If we can determine that an unborn child has a good chance of becoming a criminal, presumably we could do the same for a five-year-old. We could then eliminate all five-year-olds with budding criminal propensities. Or we could really take preventive action, and sterilize women who have a high risk of bearing such children. But while Margaret Sanger might have approved, nobody today would propose these eugenic policies, except in a Swiftian vein. Or we could identify adults who are more likely, on the basis of some characteristic, to be criminals and take precautionary action. Oh wait, we already do that: It's called racial profiling, and Vice President Gore just described it as a hate crime.

The argument that abortion should be tolerated because it reduces crime will be persuasive only for people who already favor tolerating abortion for other reasons. It will not impress people who think abortion ought to be considered a crime itself.

There seems, however, to be a modern tendency to expect science to resolve difficult moral questions for us. Just the other day a justice on the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that “decades of social science” had established that homosexuality is not immoral. Science, even social science, has accomplished many things, but it cannot tell us what is right or wrong. It cannot tell us how we ought to live. And it cannot tell us what we should do about those dangerous characters lurking in the womb.

APPENDIX G

[*Michael M. Uhlmann is a contributing editor of Crisis for which he writes the Late Edition column. The following first appeared in the July-August (1999) issue of the magazine and is reprinted with their permission.*]

The Shibboleths of Academic Freedom

Michael M. Uhlmann

Utilitarian philosopher Peter Singer has for many years contemplated the mysteries of the human condition from his perch at Australia's Monash University. His studied conclusion, articulated in numerous articles and books, is that traditional morality is so much delusional hogwash.

If you look closely at what most men do, as opposed to what they claim they are doing, Singer says, you will see them engaged in an effort to maximize their own pleasure. And Professor Singer wishes to help them along by contriving a set of ethical rules to make them comfy as they pursue their inclinations.

Lest you get the idea that Dr. Singer is a mere apostle of self-indulgence, it should be said at once that he is as stern as a Victorian schoolmarm when it comes to certain kinds of behavior. We should be scrupulous, for example, to respect the rights of animals. Singer's opinions on this subject have made him into something like the philosopher-king of the animal rights movement. He is also a moving force behind The Great Ape Project, which seeks to secure legal protection for certain higher-order simians.

Some apes, he argues, are entitled to rights of personhood, a status he refuses to grant to all human beings. In Singer's view, human infants are, at best, only presumptively rights-bearing creatures. For at least a couple of months after a child is born, he says, the law should recognize a parental right to kill their offspring.

In so arguing, of course, Singer is doing little more than extending the logic of *Roe v. Wade* to children already born—a proposition that would perhaps shock the conscience of the late Harry Blackmun, though there is little in his opinion or in subsequent opinions of the Supreme Court to prevent that extension. Singer's razor shreds the pretense of decency that shrouds for many the barbarism of the Court's reasoning.

Dr. Singer's candor, however, is not always appreciated. He is effectively banned from lecturing in Germany, where angry crowds greet his appearance with unpleasant reminders of Nazi eugenics. But what is unacceptable in Germany has apparently become a badge of honor at Princeton University, which recently invested Singer with a professorship in bioethics.

A robust group of Princeton students, showing more moral wisdom and courage than their mentors, staged a protest rally in April, with the promise of more when Singer arrives this fall. Steve Forbes, presidential candidate and Princeton trustee, in a comparable display of wisdom and courage, asked Princeton president Harold Shapiro to rescind Singer's appointment. As the dynamics of the presidential race

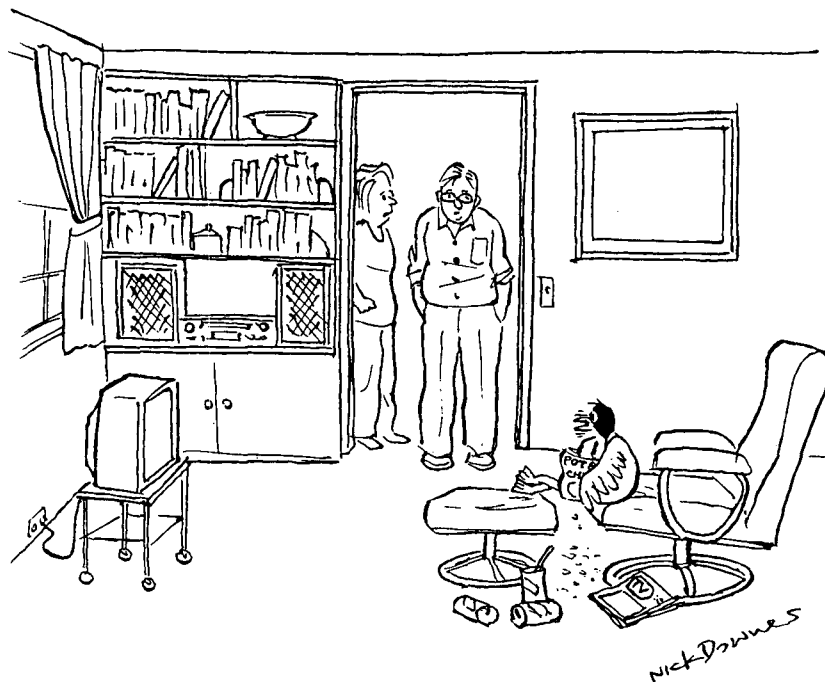
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develop, Forbes's gesture could make infanticide a national issue.

In response, President Shapiro has predictably embraced what William F. Buckley once aptly called "the shibboleths of academic freedom." Shapiro wishes to paint Singer's opponents as so many censorious pecksniffs who would impose their views on unsuspecting undergraduates. This is a routine, and routinely hypocritical, argument by the university presidents, who preside over the most Pavlovianly liberal institutions in American society. "You wouldn't want to come to a university where only certain views are allowed," Dr. Shapiro huffed to the *Daily Princetonian*. Indeed, but precisely for that reason, Shapiro should pay closer attention to the opinions of his faculty, most of whom share philosophical and political ideas of a similar stripe.

Professor Amy Gutmann, who was instrumental in bringing Singer to Princeton, perhaps revealed more than she intended in saying that Singer holds "a mainstream philosophical view." Some mainstream. Some view. Given the canons that govern modern academia, she is, alas, correct, but that only serves to remind us—to paraphrase Mr. Buckley again—that we'd all be better off governed by the first 2,000 people in the phone book than by the Princeton faculty.

Professor Singer will no doubt assume his post unchastened by anyone in Princeton's hierarchy. Students, however, are another matter. With ingenuity, they can make professor Singer's stay as uncomfortable as possible. Let him explain his theories to a cadre of handicapped students. The prospect is almost too delicious to contemplate.



"JUST HOW MUCH LONGER WILL IT TAKE HIM TO FIND HIS ECOLOGICAL NICHE?"

APPENDIX H

[Wesley J. Smith, an attorney for the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, is the author of Forced Exit: The Slippery Slope from Assisted Suicide to Legalized Murder (Times Books). The following appeared in the Wall Street Journal on Aug. 3, 1999. Reprinted with permission of The Wall Street Journal ©1999, Dow Jones & Co., Inc. All rights reserved.]

Don't Rationalize Suicide

Wesley J. Smith

Last week Surgeon General David Satcher, with Tipper Gore at his side, issued a "call to action" to prevent suicide. Dr. Satcher is right to identify suicide as an urgent problem. Some 31,000 Americans die each year at their own hands, and between 1952 and 1996 the number of suicides among adolescents and young adults tripled. Nearly 18 elderly Americans kill themselves on an average day.

But Dr. Satcher's campaign faces an uphill battle. The U.S. is growing increasingly pro-suicide; even many physicians and mental-health professionals openly promote suicide. The euthanasia movement extolls suicide as "death with dignity." Derek Humphry's how-to book "Final Exit" became a national bestseller. Jack Kevorkian has helped kill about 130 people, but despite his murder conviction, he remains a very popular man. He was among those feted last year at Time magazine's 75th anniversary party, where actor Tom Cruise rushed up to shake his hand.

When it comes to suicide, America is Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Oregon voters legalized physician-assisted suicide, but when newspapers run headlines about the state's soaring suicide rate among adolescents, nobody connects the dots. Some newspapers that have editorialized in favor of the legalization of assisted suicide also applaud Dr. Satcher's 15-point prevention plan.

Many bioethicists, psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers no longer believe that mental-health professionals have a duty to prevent all suicides. Instead, they divide suicide into two categories: "rational" and "irrational." Under this theory, professionals should attempt to stop only irrational suicides—that is, impulsive or frivolous ones. If the suicidal person seems to have a "rational" basis for self-destruction, the professional's duty is merely to help him sort out the pros and cons. If the suicide is then deemed rational, the mental-health professional is to do nothing to impede the patient's death. Indeed, some advocates believe that the proper response of the professional in such cases is to help the patient die.

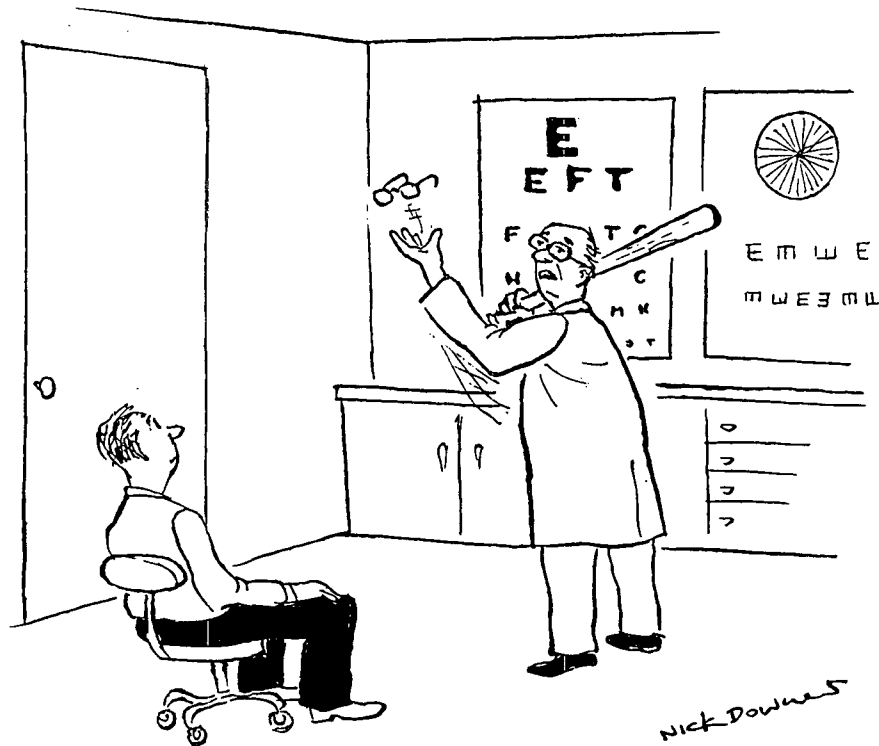
The exact definition of rational suicide is still being worked out in the professional literature and at mental-health symposia. But a rough consensus has emerged. James L. Werth, one of the foremost proponents of the concept, has written that a decision "to suicide," as he ungrammatically puts it, should be viewed as "rational" if the patient suffers from a "hopeless condition." Mr. Werth's definition of hopeless condition "includes but is not limited to terminal illnesses, severe physical or psychological pain, or mentally debilitating or deteriorating conditions, or a quality of life that is no longer acceptable to the individual."

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By this definition, all suicide but the most impulsive is rational. Anyone who wants to die doesn't find his quality of life acceptable. Thus Mr. Werth implicitly calls for a program of death on demand.

What is truly alarming is that proponents of rational suicide are respected mainstream academics and clinical practitioners, professionals who treat suicidal people or teach those who do. More worrisome still, Mr. Werth recently reported that 80% of survey respondents from the American Psychological Association support his definition of rational suicide and a five-step process he created for determining whether the patient's suicide decision-making processes are "sound." An appalling 85% of respondents believed that a mental-health professional who follows Mr. Werth's published guidelines would be acting ethically.

If Dr. Satcher really wants to run an effective campaign against suicide, he is going to have to confront the euthanasia and rational-suicide movements. And he will have to face squarely the fundamental question: Will we view suicide as a terrible tragedy or, as Derek Humphry calls it, as the "ultimate civil right"? Are we a society that embraces the value of each and every one of us, or do we accept the notion that some lives aren't worth living—that some people can be "rationally" exterminated?



"HERE'S SOMETHING ELSE YOU SHOULD NEVER DO WITH YOUR EYEGASSES."

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