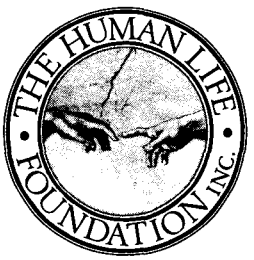
the HUMAN LIFE REVIEW



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. . . FROM THE PUBLISHER

This issue begins our 17th year of publication, and continues our customary editorial "mix" of original articles plus several already printed elsewhere.

We have also included a chapter (see "A President's Tears," page 33) from the just-published book *Children at Risk*, by Dr. James Dobson and Gary L. Bauer (Word Publishing, Dallas, London, Vancouver, Melborne). The subtitle is "The Battle for the Hearts and Minds of Our Kids"—which is an accurate description. We recommend the book, and will be glad to pass on any requests to our friend Mr. Bauer, whom we first met in the White House in the early days of the Reagan Administration (later he became Reagan's Domestic Policy Advisor).

You will note that Mr. Reagan plays a part in several of the pieces in this issue, and the editor's introduction includes a letter from Malcolm Muggeridge praising the former president's opposition to abortion. Muggeridge was writing about Reagan's article *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation*, which we were proud to publish in 1983.

The following year it was reprinted in a hardcover edition (by Thomas Nelson Publishers) which included Muggeridge's *The Humane Holocaust*, our lead article in this issue. It made a handsome little volume, which is now a collector's item—but of course we still have a few copies of the original edition, which includes an introduction by Editor Jim McFadden. Just let me know if you would like to get a copy for your own permanent library ("while they last," as they say, and at the original low price of just $7.95) and I'll be glad to send one to you.

As usual, you will find information about back issues, bound volumes, etc. again, "while they last"—printed on the inside back cover.

EDWARD A. CAPANO
PUBLISHER

THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

WINTER 1991

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INTRODUCTION

MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE WAS, in our opinion, the greatest journalist of his time. He greatly enjoyed calling himself a "vendor of words," mocking the trade he loved. When we first met in person (I had corresponded with him since the sixties), knowing that I had started in newspapers, he began telling me of his days on the (then Manchester) *Guardian*, and suddenly interrupted his own narrative—he enjoyed that too—with "Jim, could you ever do a story without getting out the cuttings and spreading them all about?" We call them clippings, but I doubt there is an old newsman living who doesn't remember doing exactly that. I still do.

Going through our Muggeridge files brought back more memories than we can recount, of course, but we should mention that he was, from the beginning, an intellectual patron of this review ("your mag," he always called it). When we were planning our first issue (in late 1974) I wrote him, asking for an article. He answered graciously as usual, saying he would indeed "do a piece" for us, he admired anyone "willing to fight a lost cause." Those were by no means discouraging words to us: that's precisely what we were willing to do *in re* abortion.

But of course he always had "too much on my plate," he was working on the third volume of his *Chronicles of Wasted Time* (it's not just *our* opinion that it may be the best autobiography of the century) which he never could bring himself to finish. In the event, he wrote only a handful of pieces for us. But he inspired many others: until his hearing faltered a few years back, we discussed "our issue" almost weekly by phone. He poured endless streams of ideas, insights, and of course jokes (we usually called on Friday, to let his tonic laughter wash away the week's frustrations).

Muggeridge was incapable of writing badly, so we have no doubt that you will enjoy *The Humane Holocaust*, which we have reprinted as our lead article here. As always, "St. Mugg" tells a good *story* while setting forth his prophecies for our "age of compassion." As you will see, he does not conceal his Christian beliefs, which he had re-embraced in middle life. It is interesting to note that, when he died on November 14 last, few of his many obituaries stressed that

point; as Wm. F. Buckley Jr. put it, "They did not seem to know that he had become the foremost evangelist of Christianity in the English language." (Indeed, the New York *Times* said not a word about his conversion to Catholicism!).

We trust that you will also be interested in another bit of our history that involved Muggeridge. In 1983 we published *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation*, by then-President Ronald Reagan. It was quite a *coup* for us—sitting Presidents just don't *do* that kind of thing. So we had some copies specially bound, and expressed one to Muggeridge. We received the following reply:

> Dear Jim:
>
> I was delighted to have the elegant copy of President Reagan's article. It is, of course, a fine piece of journalism—concise, eloquent without being rhetorical, and, above all, unequivocal. What, however, impresses me most is that a President of the United States while in office should have the courage and honesty to commit himself, without any sort of reservation, to de-legalizing abortion. There is no comparable figure on our side of the Atlantic who could be relied on to take a similar stand. Indeed, the leader of the Liberal Party, David Steel, was responsible for launching the Bill legalizing abortion in the House of Commons, thereby preparing the way for abortion on demand.
>
> The abortion issue is far and away the most important one now facing what we continue to call Western Civilisation. If we go on tolerating legalized abortion, it will amount to collective suicide. In this country, a baby is aborted—that is, murdered—every three minutes, with the result that already school classrooms are being shut down for want of pupils. What a strange irony it is that the Liberal Mind today is for Herod and the slaughter of the innocents in preference to Mother Teresa's readiness to take in and care for any unwanted baby! On such vital moral issues as abortion, politicians tend to sit on the fence, hoping to pick up a few votes from both sides. Your President Reagan is the only example I've come across in half a century of knockabout journalism of a political leader ready to stand up without any reservations for the sanctity of life rather than for what passes for being the quality of life. All honour to him!
>
> Affectionately,
> Malcolm

It was hardly like his typical letter to me: Mr. Mugg knew that I would send a copy to Mr. Reagan. But it shows you the kind of thing he could sit down and knock out almost to the end (he was past 80 then). When later we published the President's article in book form, we included that letter as the perfect introduction, and appended *The Humane Holocaust* as well.

There are several more pieces on our old friend in this issue, about which more below.

Our second article is also reprinted, from the monthly *Commentary*, which described the author, Margaret Liu McConnell, as "a young writer who lives in New York City," noting that it is "her first published article." We think

you will join us in hoping that it is not her last—you may also find what she has to say a fitting follow-up on St. Mugg's jeremiad—what Mrs. McConnell tells *us* is, one need not be totally against abortion to realize that it should not be annointed a "constitutional right."

The same might be said of our next piece. Miss Sibyl Pease has not yet graduated from college (we trust our publishing her here will not prolong the process!), but she has already faced the facts of campus life today. A number of other publications have recently devoted attention to the many academic institutions that nowadays enforce "PC" (Politically Correct) orthodoxy on students, to promote "independent" thinking, of course. Abortion may not top the list—"animal rights" evidently does—but it is a strong contender, as Miss Pease explains. As it happens, this is also Sibyl's first published article—again, we hope for many more.

Next you get a full chapter from the new book *Children at Risk*. By another coincidence, Mr. Gary Bauer was a domestic-policy advisor to President Reagan, so he not only knows whereof he speaks on family matters, but also was there to see Mr. Reagan's reaction to the good news about the little "Baby Jane Doe" who survived "recommended" infanticide. It's a good story, as is Bauer's re-telling of the beautiful nugget from Whittaker Chambers' *Witness*, an autobiography that rivals Muggeridge's own. Another coincidence: Muggeridge was a great admirer of both Chambers and his once-famous book. I had known Chambers in his *National Review* days (we briefly shared a cubby-hole "office"); I once told Malcolm that "Whit" had described Liberalism as (I hope I remember it exactly) "Christianity without the cross"—Muggeridge roared his approval with a "Very *good*, that!"

Our focus now shifts abruptly, but without straying from our usual "life issues" theme. Miss Maria McFadden, now our managing editor, once tried to be a volunteer good Samaritan—literally. The Samaritans being the name of a group that exists to, well, talk people out of committing suicide. It wasn't easy work, but she learned a great deal, and we think you will find her account of it fascinating. By no coincidence, Maria also found Mr. Muggeridge quite relevant to her story (she wrote it some weeks before he died).

Regular readers will recall that, in our previous (Fall, 1990) issue, Mr. Chilton Williamson wrote on what we called the "Greening" of abortion: his point was, that many of those most concerned with preserving "nature" seem not to include *human* nature in their anxieties—indeed, some are strongly pro-abortion. He continues the argument here, writing from his Wyoming lair (nobody can accuse *him* of not knowing about natural beauty!). Again, we think you will find it very interesting stuff.

We certainly claim the same thing for our final article, which reports the "abortion news" as it looked to Americans a century ago. In fact, we have run several previous articles, by Mr. Marvin Olasky, on the same general subject

(Olasky has since written a book about it all). Here, Prof. Phyllis Zagano concentrates on the peculiar career of the famous Madame Restell, who long reigned as New York City's most infamous abortionist—at least that is how the newspapers treated her *then*—today's media would no doubt treat her quite differently? For instance, the New York *Times* headlined Madame's demise "End of a Criminal Life"—which shows you just how much the times and the *Times* have changed.

Prof. Zagano's story should be of particular interest to those scholars who hold—against all the evidence she presents here—that the old, original laws prohibiting abortion were intended solely to protect women, and not the unborn (see especially the wording of the New York state statute on page 72).

As promised, we follow with several pieces on Malcolm Muggeridge, prefaced by a photograph—we wish we could run it in full color—of a painting done several years back by portrait-artist Cyril Leeper at the Muggeridge's cottage in Robertsbridge, Sussex. Prof. Ian Hunter leads off. As you will see, he knew the Muggs very well, and wrote a book about Malcolm. Here, he provides a good deal of information about his friend's life and works, including quite a few things we hadn't known before.

Next, Maria McFadden tells of her own visit to Park Cottage, which turned out to be a funny affair—but then it was impossible to visit the Muggs without having fun and, as you will see, Kitty was just as much fun as Malcolm. Then Faith Abbott (who happens to be Maria's mother) recounts her own talks and travels with both Malcolm and Kitty, which extended from Canada to Florida. She also describes the strange reaction of the New York *Times* upon being informed that it had failed to even mention Malcolm's conversion to Catholicism, and explains how she learned the proper way to steep Earl Grey Tea.

Your servant also attempts to describe the story of Malcolm's "brief visit" to the famous Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen: admittedly, I couldn't find words adequate to do the story justice, but at least it is not a story you've read before. Malcolm was always going to "write something about that," but never did. Nor did the good bishop. So I decided that even an inadequate report would serve as a kind of tribute to both of them. I can assure you that, in all my years of listening (writers do listen—they *have* to), I've never heard anything quite like their conversation that day.

* * * * *

Fittingly, we begin our usual appendices with a column (*Appendix A*) written by Mugg's great friend Bill Buckley a few days after Malcolm achieved the end he longed for. As his many readers know, Buckley can be eloquent: he certainly rose to the occasion for his favorite vendor of words. He was also Buckley's favorite guest on *Firing Line*: indeed, several of the shows are rebroadcast during the Christmas season each year—faithful friend Bill considers them the perfect present for his viewers.

Appendix B is, we think you will agree, quite unusual, not only because of what Kay Ebeling says, but also because the column first appeared in *Newsweek*, which is not given to questioning the dogmas of Feminism. Miss Ebeling does so with considerable gusto—but then she considers herself a victim of the "Great Experiment That Failed."

Miss Michelle Cretella (*Appendix C*) is also an angry young woman: she sees no reason why men should no longer be held responsible for the children they father—it's too *easy* to just "pay for half the abortion, and move on"! She too considers women—and their "fetuses" as well—to be victims of the New Morality.

In *Appendix D*, we have Mr. John Leo, who writes for another magazine (*US News & World Report*) that seems an unlikely carrier of the strong views he has on the treatment being meted out to those involved in Operation Rescue. And he holds the American Civil Liberties Union responsible—it won't *do* anything for the rescuers because, of course, the ACLU itself is overwhelmingly pro-abortion. We are indebted to Mr. Leo for being the man to finally make that case—it's about time *somebody* did?

It's also about time to conclude this issue, which we trust you will find unusually interesting. And we'll be back with more of the same in due course.

J.P. MCFADDEN
EDITOR

The Humane Holocaust

Malcolm Muggeridge

ONE OF THE MOST CURIOUS encounters I ever had in a television studio was participating in a BBC program set up when the South African surgeon, Dr. Christian Barnard, had just carried out his first heart-transplant operation in the Groote Schuur Hospital in Pretoria. The program was billed as "Dr. Barnard Faces His Critics," which, as I well knew, was BBC-ese for "Dr. Barnard Faces His Adulators," as, indeed, proved to be the case. One of the great contributions of television to preparing the way for the collectivist-authoritarian way of life towards which all western countries are, in their different ways, sleep-walking, is its capacity to present consensus in terms of ostensible controversy.

The studio was packed with medical practitioners of one sort and another, including distinguished figures like Lord Platt, all of whom were in a state of euphoria about Dr. Barnard's achievement. As befitting such an occasion, the Church was represented, in the person of the appropriately named Dr. Slack, who on its behalf gave full approval, not just to the particular transplants in general as and when required, whatever the organ concerned. In the event, I found myself pretty well the lone representative of the critics Dr. Barnard had been billed as meeting.

When the time came for me to put a question, one shaped itself insistently in my mind. Was Dr. Barnard, I asked him, the first surgeon to chance his arm with a heart-transplant operation, whereas elsewhere there were still qualms and hesitations, because in South Africa the doctrine of apartheid had devalued human flesh, reducing it from something God had deigned to put on, to a mere carcass?

The question, when I put it, was extremely ill-received. Some of the doctors present went so far as to manifest their displeasure by hissing, while Lord Platt rose to apologize to Dr. Barnard, pointing out that I represented no one but myself, and that he, and he was sure all the others in the studio, would wish to dissociate themselves from my insulting question. Dr. Barnard himself, I should imagine

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Malcolm Muggeridge, generally considered to have been the *premier* journalist of the century, died on November 14, 1990. This article first appeared in our Winter 1980 issue.

deliberately, misunderstood what I had asked, assuming that what troubled me was a fear lest he had transplanted a black African's heart in a white African's body. In fact, the donor was a white girl.

As Dr. Barnard made no serious effort to answer my question, I persisted, to the furthur displeasure of the doctors, pointing out that his and their attitude showed little sense of the sanctity of life, which, in the Hippocratic oath they had all presumably taken, they had sworn to respect. As a Christian, I said, I worshipped a God who, according to the New Testament, could not see a sparrow fall to the ground without concern, and quoted Blake's beautiful couplet in the same sense:

A Robin Redbreast in a cage
Puts all Heaven in a Rage

This caused a titter of amusement, and I lapsed into silence. It is the usual practice after such programs for all the participants to make for the hospitality room, there to continue the discussion over a drink. For once, I just made off, having no taste for any further contact with Lord Platt, Dr. Slack and the others. It was comforting subsequently to receive a letter from a doctor who had once worked at Groote Schuur Hospital, but had left, he explained, because he found the attitude there to surgery to be more veterinary than medical.

Dr. Barnard's own attitude to his surgery is well conveyed in his autobiography, *One Life.* His account of his first post-mortem is almost lascivious; as are his first essays with animals, whose snug little abattoir, he tells us, "smelt of guinea pigs, rabbits and hundreds of mice. Yet it was like heaven, and even today those odours excite me with memories of our first days, so filled with hope and dreams." One of his dreams was to "take a baboon and cool him down, wash out his blood with water, then fill him up with human blood"; another, to graft a second head on a dog, as has allegedly—though I don't believe it—been done in the USSR.

All this was but a prelude to the great moment when the two hearts—the donor's lively one and the recipient's failing one—were ready, and all was set for the first heart-transplant operation. "This isn't a dog," Dr. Barnard reflected exultantly. "*It's a man*!", and then a doubt seized him; was he, after all, entitled to experiment with a human being? His hesitation lasted only for a few seconds, though; the excitement of the occasion, with, as it seemed, the whole

world looking on, restored his confidence, and he got to work with his knife.

As it happened, there was one other moment of, if not doubt, then wonderment. The donor, Denise Darvall, was in a respirator; it would be necessary to stop the respirator, and take her heart, which was still beating. Another doctor, de Klerk, was participating in the operation; he wanted Denise's kidneys, but Dr. Barnard made it quite clear what were the priorities. His instructions were to "cut for the heart and let de Klerk worry about his kidneys afterwards." In the event, having stopped the respirator, they waited for the heart to stop beating before transferring it to the recipient, Washkansky. "What intermingling of mythology and ritual," Dr. Barnard asks himself, "prevented us from touching a heart in a body which had been declared clinically dead?", and, like Pontius Pilate on another dramatic occasion, does not wait for an answer.

Washkansky received Denise's heart, and, presumably, de Klerk her kidneys. The heart worked, and the patient in a manner of speaking, lived. Congratulatory messages came pouring in; the television cameras rolled—exclusive TV rights had been disposed of, resulting in unseemly scenes in the hospital. Washkansky, but not Denise, was brought into the act; the arc lights shone on him, a meeting with his loving relatives was set up, and he succeeded in uttering a few cheerful words into a specially sterilized microphone. At the end of eighteen days, he thankfully expired. "They're killing me," he managed to get out before he died. "I can't sleep, I can't eat, I can't do anything. They're at me all the time with pins and needles . . . . All day and all night. It's driving me crazy."

Washkansky's successor, Dr. Philip Bleiberg, a dentist, managed to survive for two years, though his private account of how he fared roughly coincided with his predecessor's. In the published version—these rights, too, had been disposed of—he was obliged to put on a brave face, and only three weeks after he had received his new heart, he was able to tell an expectant world that he had succeeded in having sexual intercourse. It was the twentieth century certification of being fully alive: *copulo ergo sum.* Behind the mania about transplant operations, lies the mad hope that in due course genital transplants may become possible—new ballocks in old crotches—so that sated lechers can begin all over again.

The Barnard experience stayed in my mind, and as I thought about

it, I realized that it amounted to a sort of parable illustrating a basic dilemma of our time, as between the sanctity of life as conceived through the Christian centuries, and the quality of life as conceived in a materialist society. Those doctors in the BBC studio rejoicing in the new possibilities in surgery that Dr. Barnard seemed to have opened up, saw human beings as bodies merely, and so capable of constant improvement, until at last perfection was achieved.

No more sick or misshapen bodies, no more disturbed or twisted minds, no more hereditary idiots or mongoloid children. Babies not up to scratch would be destroyed, before or after birth, as would also the old beyond repair. With the developing skills of modern medicine, the human race could be pruned and carefully tended until only the perfect blooms—the beauty queens, the mensa I.Q.'s, the athletes—remained. Then at last, with rigid population control to prevent the good work being ruined by excessive numbers, affliction would be ended, and maybe death itself abolished, and men become, not just like gods, but in their perfect mortality, very God.

Against this vision of life without tears in a fleshly paradise, stands the Christian vision of mankind as a family whose loving father is God. Here, the symbol is not the perfected body, the pruned vine, the weeded garden, but a stricken body nailed to a cross, signifying affliction, not as the enemy of life, but as its greatest enhancement and teacher. In an army preparing for battle the unfit are indeed discarded, but in a Christian family the handicapped are particularly cherished, and give special joy to those who cherish them.

Which vision are we for? On the one hand, as the pattern of our collective existence, the broiler house or factory-farm, in which the concern is solely for the physical well-being of the livestock and the financial well-being of the enterprise; on the other, mankind as a family, all of whose members, whatever physical or mental qualities or deficiencies they may have, are equally deserving of consideration in the eyes of their creator, and whose existence has validity, not just in itself, nor just in relation to history, but in relation to a destiny reaching beyond time and into eternity. Or, in simple terms, on the one hand, the quality of life; on the other, the sanctity of life.[1]

The sanctity of life is, of course, a religious or transcendental concept, and has no meaning otherwise; if there is no God, life cannot have sanctity. By the same token, the quality of life is an earthly or worldly concept, and can only be expressed legalistically,[2] and

in materialistic terms; the soul does not come into it. Thus a child conceived in conditions of penury, or with a poor heredity, or against its mother's wishes, or otherwise potentially handicapped, may be considered as lacking the requisite quality of life prospects, and so should not be born. Equally, it follows, at the other end of our life span, that geriatrics unable any longer to appreciate what this world has to offer in the way of aesthetic, carnal and egotistic satisfaction, in other words, by virtue of their years losing out on quality of life, should be subjected to euthanasia or mercy-killing, and discreetly murdered.

On this basis, for instance, Beethoven would scarcely have been allowed to be born; his heredity and family circumstances were atrocious, a case history of syphilis, deafness and insanity. Today, his mother's pregnancy would be considered irresponsible, and as requiring to be terminated. Dr. Johnson, when he was born, was scrofulous, and already showed signs of the nervous disorders which plagued him all his life. He, too, under present conditions would probably not have been allowed to survive. Indeed, a good number of the more notable contributors to the sanctity of life, like Dr. Johnson, would have failed to make the grade on quality of life, the supreme example being the founder of the Christian religion. Imagine a young girl, unmarried and pregnant, who insists that the Holy Ghost is responsible for her pregnancy, and that its outcome, according to a vision she has been vouchsafed, would be the birth of a long-awaited Messiah. Not much quality of life potential there, I fancy, and it wouldn't take the pregnancy and family-planning pundits long to decide that our Saviour, while still at the fetus stage, should be thrown away with the hospital waste.

These are hypothetical cases; near at hand, we have been accorded, for those that have eyes to see, an object lesson in what the quest for quality of life without reference to sanctity of life, can involve. Ironically enough, this has been provided by none other than the great Nazi holocaust, whose TV presentation has lately been harrowing viewers throughout the western world. In this televised version, an essential consideration has been left out—namely, that the origins of the holocaust lay, not in Nazi terrorism and anti-semitism, but in pre-Nazi Weimar Germany's acceptance of euthanasia and mercy killing as humane and estimable. And by one of those sick jokes which haunt our human story, just when the penitential holocaust

was being shown on American, and then on German and other Western European TV screens, a humane holocaust was getting under way, this time in the countries that had defeated Hitler's Third Reich, and, at the Nuremburg War Crimes Tribunal, condemned as a war crime the very propositions and practices with which the Nazi holocaust had originated, and on which the humane one was likewise based.

No one could have put the matter more cogently and authoritatively than has Dr. Leo Alexander, who worked with the Chief American Counsel at the Nuremberg Tribunal:

> Whatever proportion these crimes finally assumed, it became evident to all who investigated them that they had started from small beginnings. The beginnings at first were merely a subtle shift in emphasis in the basic attitudes of the physicians. It started with the acceptance of the attitude, basic in the euthanasia movement, that there is such a thing as life not worthy to be lived. This attitude in its early stages concerned itself merely with the severely and chronically sick. Gradually, the sphere of those to be included in this category was enlarged to encompass the socially unproductive, the ideologically unwanted, the racially unwanted, and finally all non-Germans. *But it is important to realize that the infinitely small wedged-in lever from which the entire trend of mind received its impetus was the attitude towards the non-rehabilitable sick [My italics].*[3]

Surely some future Gibbon surveying our times will note sardonically that it took no more than three decades to transform a war crime into an act of compassion, thereby enabling the victors in the war against Nazi-ism to adopt the very practices for which the Nazis had been solemnly condemned at Nuremberg. Then they could mount their own humane holocaust, which in its range and in the number of its victims may soon far surpass the Nazi one. Nor need we marvel that, whereas the Nazi holocaust received lavish TV and film coverage, the humane one just goes rolling along, largely unnoticed by the media.

It all began in the early twenties, in the decadent years in the post-1914-18 war Germany which have been so glorified by writers like Christopher Isherwood, but which, as I remember them at first hand, were full of sinister portent for the future. All the most horrible and disgusting aspects of the last decades of the twentieth century—the pornography, the sadism, the violence, the moral and spiritual vacuum—were already in evidence there.

In this sick environment, the notion of mercy-killing was put forward in 1920 in a book entitled *The Release of the Destruction of Life Devoid of Value* by Alfred Hoche, a reputable psychiatrist, and Karl Binding, a jurist. The authors advocated killing off "absolutely worthless

human beings," pointing out that the money spent on keeping them alive thus saved could be used to better purpose—for instance, on helping a young married couple to set up house. Frederick Wertham, in his scholarly and deeply disturbing book, *A Sign For Cain*, says that the Hoche-Binding book influenced, or at least crystalized the thinking of a whole generation.

From these beginnings, a program of mercy-killing developed which was initiated, directed and supported by doctors and psychiatrists, some of them of considerable eminence—all this when the Nazi movement was still at an embryonic stage, and Hitler had barely been heard of. Initially, the holocaust was aimed, not against Jews or Slavs, but against handicapped Aryan Germans, and was justified, not by racial theories, but by Hegelian utilitarianism, whereby what is useful is *per se* good, without any consideration being given to Judeo-Christian values, or, indeed to any concept whatsoever of Good and Evil. Subsequently, of course, the numbers of the killed rose to astronomical figures, and the medical basis for their slaughter grew even flimsier; but it should never be forgotten that it was the euthanasia program first organized under the Weimar Republic by the medical profession, which led to and merged into the genocide program of 1941-45. "Technical experience gained first with killing psychiatric patients," Wertham writes, "was utilized later for the destruction of millions. The psychiatric murders came first."

Can this sort of thing happen in countries like Canada and England and the United States? In my opinion, yes; in fact, it is already happening. Abortion on demand has come to be part of our way of life; in the world as a whole there are estimated to have been last year something in the neighborhood of fifty million abortions—an appalling figure, which, however, with media help did not loom very large, or throw any kind of shadow over 1979 as the Year of the Child. To quiet any qualms Christians might have about it, an Anglican bishop has devised an appropriate prayer for use on the occasion of an abortion which received the approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It runs, "Into thy hands we commit in trust the developing life we have cut short," though whether with the idea of God's continuing the interrupted development elsewhere, or of extinguishing in Heaven the life that was never born on earth, is not clear. In the case of euthanasia, a hymn may seem more in keeping with the occasion—"The life Thou gavest, Lord, we've ended . . . ."

Euthanasia, it is true, has not yet been legalized except in some American states, but notoriously it is being practiced on an ever-increasing scale. Already among old people there is reluctance to go into government institutions for fear of being done away with. As for governments—hard-pressed financially as they all now are, and unable to economize on defense expenditure for fear of laying themselves open to the charge of jeopardizing national security, or on welfare expenditure for fear of losing votes—will they not look ever more longingly at the possibility of making substantial savings by the simple expedient of mercy-killing off the inmates of institutions for the incurably sick, the senile old, the mentally deranged and other such? With abortions and family-planning ensuring a zero population growth rate, and euthanasia disposing of useless mouths among the debilitated old, besides mopping up intervening freaks, the pursuit of happiness should be assured of at any rate financial viability.

In Christian terms, of course, all this is quite indefensible. Our Lord healed the sick, raised Lazarus from the dead, gave back sanity to the deranged, but never did he practice or envisage killing as part of the mercy that held possession of his heart. His true followers cannot but follow his guidance here. For instance, Mother Teresa, who, in Calcutta, goes to great trouble to have brought into her Home for Dying Derelicts, castaways left to die in the streets. They may survive for no more than a quarter of an hour, but in that quarter of an hour, instead of feeling themselves rejected and abandoned, they meet with Christian love and care. From a purely humanitarian point of view, the effort involved in this ministry of love could be put to some more useful purpose, and the derelicts left to die in the streets, or even helped to die there by being given the requisite injection. Such calculations do not come into Mother Teresa's way of looking at things; her love and compassion reach out to the afflicted without any other consideration than their immediate need, just as our Lord does when he tells us to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked. She gives all she has to give at once, and then finds she has more to give. As between Mother Teresa's holocaust of love and the humane holocaust, I am for hers.

There is an episode in my own life which, though it happened long ago, provides, as I consider, a powerful elucidation of the whole issue of euthanasia—a study, as it were, in mercy-living in contradistinction to mercy-killing. Some forty years ago, shortly

before the outbreak of the 1939-45 war, the person whom I have most loved in this world, my wife Kitty, was desperately ill, and I was informed by the doctor attending her, had only an outside chance of surviving. The medical details are unimportant; probably today, with the great advances that have taken place in curative medicine, her state would not be so serious. But as the situation presented itself then, she was hovering between life and death, though, needless to say, there was no voice, as there might well be nowadays, to suggest that it might be better to let her go.

The doctor explained that an emergency operation was essential, and, in honesty, felt bound to tell me that it would be something of a gamble. Her blood, it appeared, was so thin as a result of a long spell of jaundice that before he operated a blood-transfusion was desperately needed—this was before the days of plasma. As he said this, an incredible happiness amounting to ecstasy surged up inside me. If I could be the donor! My blood-count was taken, and found to be suitable; the necessary gear was brought in, very primitive by contemporary standards—just a glass tube one end of which was inserted in her arm and the other end in mine, with a pump in the middle drawing out my blood and sending it into her. I could watch the flow, shouting out absurdly to the doctor: "Don't stint yourself, take all you want!", and noting delightedly the immediate effect in bringing back life to her face that before seemed grey and lifeless. It was the turning point; from that moment she began to mend.

At no point in our long relationship has there been a more ecstatic moment than when I thus saw my life-blood pouring into hers to revivify it. We were at one, blood to blood, as no other kind of union could make us. To give life—this was what love was for; to give it all circumstances and eventualities, whether God creating the universe, or a male and female creating another human being; whereas to destroy life, be it in a fertilized ovum one second after conception, or in some octogenarian or sufferer from a fatal illness, was the denial of life and so the antithesis of love. In life-denying terms, as we have seen, compassion easily becomes a holocaust; garden suburbs and gulags derive from the same quest for quality of life, and the surgeon's knife can equally be used to sustain and extinguish life. Dostoevsky makes the same point: "Love toward men, but love without belief in God, very naturally leads to the

greatest coercion over men, and turns their lives completely into hell on earth." We should never forget that if ever there was a killing without mercy, a death without dignity, it was on Golgotha. Yet from that killing, what a pouring out of mercy through the subsequent centuries! From that death, what a stupendous enhancement of human dignity!

NOTES

1. See the interesting Study Paper put out by the Law Reform Commission of Canada in its "Protection of Life" series, *Sanctity of Life or Quality of Life.*
2. *Ibid*
3. From a paper — "Medical Science Under Dictatorship" — by Dr. Alexander, now a Boston psychiatrist, which appeared in the *New England Journal of Medicine* of July 4, 1949, and quoted in an article in the Spring, 1976 issue of *The Human Life Review* entitled "The Lesson of Euthanasia" by Fr. Virgil C. Blum, S.J. and Charles J. Sykes. Another article in the Spring, 1977 issue of *The Human Life Review* to which I am greatly beholden is "The Slide to Auschwitz" by Dr. C. Everett Koop, a pediatric surgeon of international renown and a devout Christian.

Living With *Roe v. Wade*

Margaret Liu McConnell

THERE IS SOMETHING decidedly unappealing to me about the pro-life activists seen on the evening news as they are dragged away from the entrances to abortion clinics across the country. Perhaps it is that their poses remind me of sulky two-year-olds, sinking to their knees as their frazzled mothers try to haul them from the playground. Or perhaps it is because I am a little hard put to believe, when one of them cries out, often with a Southern twang, "Ma'am, don't keel your baby," that he or she could really care that deeply about a stranger's fetus. After all, there are limits to compassion and such concern seems excessive, suspect.

Besides, as pro-choice adherents like to point out, the fact that abortion is legal does not mean that someone who is against abortion will be forced to have one against her wishes. It is a private matter, so they say, between a woman and her doctor. From this it would follow that those opposed to abortion are no more than obnoxious busybodies animated by their own inner pathologies to interfere in the private lives of strangers.

Certainly this is the impression conveyed by those news clips of anti-abortion blockades being broken up by the police. We pity the woman, head sunk and afraid, humiliated in the ancient shame that all around her know she is carrying an unwanted child. Precisely because she is pregnant our hearts go out to her in her vulnerability. It would seem that those workers from the abortion clinic, shielding arms around her shoulders, their identification vests giving them the benign look of school-crossing guards, are her protectors. They are guiding her through a hostile, irrational crowd to the cool and orderly safety of the clinic and the medical attention she needs.

But is it possible that this impression is mistaken? Is it possible that those who guide the woman along the path to the abortionist's table are not truly her protectors, shoring her up on the road to a dignified life in which she will best be able to exercise her intellectual and physical faculties free from any kind of oppression? Is it possible

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that they are serving, albeit often unwittingly, to keep her and millions of other women on a demeaning and rather lonely treadmill—a treadmill on which these women trudge through cycles of sex without commitment, unwanted pregnancy, and abortion, all in the name of equal opportunity and free choice?

Consider yet again the woman on the path to an abortion. She is already a victim of many forces. She is living in a social climate in which she is expected to view sex as practically a form of recreation that all healthy women should pursue eagerly. She has been conditioned to fear having a child, particularly in her younger years, as an unthinkable threat to her standard of living and to the career through which she defines herself as a "real" person. Finally, since 1973, when the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade* declared access to abortion a constitutional right, she has been invited, in the event that she does become pregnant, not only to have an abortion, but to do so without sorrow and with no moral misgivings. As the highly vocal pro-abortion movement cheers her on with rallying cries of "Freedom of Choice," she may find herself wondering: "Is this the great freedom we've been fighting for? The freedom to sleep with men who don't care for us, the freedom to scorn the chance to raise a child? The freedom to let doctors siphon from our bodies that most precious gift which women alone are made to receive: a life to nurture?"

My goal here is not to persuade militant pro-choicers that abortion is wrong. Instead, it is to establish that abortion cannot and should not be seen as strictly a matter between a woman and her doctor. For the knowledge that the law allows free access to abortion affects all of us directly and indirectly by the way it shapes the social climate. Most directly and most easy to illustrate, the realization that any pregnancy, intended or accidental, may be aborted at will affects women in their so-called childbearing years. The indirect effects are more difficult to pinpoint. I would like tentatively to suggest that *Roe v. Wade* gives approval, at the highest level of judgment in this country, to certain attitudes which, when manifest at the lowest economic levels, have extremely destructive consequences.

But to begin with the simpler task of examining *Roe*'s questionable effect on the world women inhabit: I—who at thirty-two am of the age to have "benefited" from *Roe*'s protections for all my adult years—offer here some examples of those "benefits."

It was my first year at college, my first year away from my rather strict, first-generation American home. I had a boyfriend from high

school whom I liked and admired but was not in love with, and I was perfectly satisfied with the stage of heavy-duty necking we had managed, skillfully avoiding the suspicious eyes of my mother. But once I got to college I could think of no good reason not to go farther. For far from perceiving any constraints around me, I encountered all manner of encouragement to become "sexually active"—from the health center, from newspapers, books, and magazines, from the behavior of other students, even from the approval of other students' parents of their children's "liberated" sexual conduct.

Yet the truth is that I longed for the days I knew only from old movies and novels, those pre-60's days when boyfriends visiting from other colleges stayed in hotels (!) and dates ended with a lingering kiss at the door. I lived in an apartment-style dormitory, six women sharing three bedrooms and a kitchen. Needless to say, visiting boyfriends did not stay in hotels. By the end of my freshman year three out of the six of us would have had abortions.

How did it come to pass that so many of us got pregnant? How has it come to pass that more than one-and-one-half million women each year get pregnant in this country, only to have abortions? Nowadays it is impossible to go into a drugstore without bumping into the condoms on display above the checkout counters. And even when I was in college, contraception was freely available, and everyone knew that the health center, open from nine to four, was ready to equip us with the contraceptive armament we were sure to need.

Nevertheless, thanks to *Roe v. Wade*, we all understood as well that if anything went wrong, there would be no threat of a shotgun marriage, or of being sent away in shame to bear a child, or of a dangerous back-alley abortion. Perhaps the incredible number of "accidental" pregnancies, both at college and throughout the country, finds its explanation in just that understanding. Analogies are diffficult to construct in arguments about abortion, for there is nothing quite analogous to terminating a pregnancy. That said, consider this one anyway. If children are sent out to play ball in a yard near a house, a responsible adult, knowing that every once in a while a window will get broken, will still tell them to be very careful not to break any. But what if the children are sent into the yard and told something like this: "Go out and play, and don't worry about breaking any windows. It's bound to happen, and when it does, no problem: it will be taken care of." How many more windows will be shattered?

There were, here and there, some women who seemed able to live outside these pressures. Within my apartment one was an Orthodox Jewish freshman from Queens, another a junior from Brooklyn, also Jewish, who was in the process of becoming Orthodox. They kept kosher as far as was possible in our common kitchen, and on Friday afternoons would cook supper for a group of friends, both men and women. As darkness fell they would light candles and sing and eat and laugh in a circle of light. I remember looking in at their evenings from the doorway to the kitchen, wishing vainly that I could belong to such a group, a group with a code of behavior that would provide shelter from the free-for-all I saw elsewhere. But the only group I felt I belonged to was, generically, "young American woman," and as far as I could see, the norm of behavior for a young American woman was to enjoy a healthy sex life, with or without commitment.

A few months later, again thanks to *Roe v. Wade*, I discovered that the logistics of having an abortion were, as promised, extremely simple. The school health center was again at my service. After a few perfunctory questions and sympathetic nods of the head I was given directions to the nearest abortion clinic.

A strange thing has happened since that great freedom-of-choice victory in 1973. Abortion has become the only viable alternative many women feel they have open to them when they become pregnant by accident. Young men no longer feel obligated to offer to "do the right thing." Pregnancy is most often confirmed in a medical setting. Even though it is a perfectly normal and healthy state, in an unwanted pregnancy a woman feels distressed. The situation thus becomes that of a distressed woman looking to trusted medical personnel for relief. Abortion presents itself as the simple, legal, medical solution to her distress. A woman may have private reservations, but she gets the distinct impression that if she does not take advantage of her right to an abortion she is of her own accord refusing a simple solution to her troubles.

That is certainly how it was for me, sitting across from the counselor at the health center, clutching a wad of damp tissues, my heart in my throat. The feeling was exactly parallel to the feeling I had had at the beginning of the school year: I could be defiantly old-fashioned and refuse to behave like a normal American woman, or I could exercise my sexual liberation. Here, six weeks pregnant, I could be troublesome, perverse, and somehow manage to keep the baby, causing tremendous inconvenience to everyone, or I could take the

simple route of having an abortion and not even miss a single class. The choice was already made.

Physically, also, abortion has become quite a routine procedure. As one of my grosser roommates put it, comforting me with talk of her own experiences, it was about as bad as going to the dentist. My only memory of the operation is of coming out of the general anesthesia to the sound of sobbing all around. I, too, was sobbing, without thought, hard and uncontrollably, as though somehow, deep below the conscious level, below whatever superficial concerns had layered themselves in the day-to-day mind of a busy young woman, I had come to realize what I had done, and what could never be undone.

I have since had three children, and at the beginning of each pregnancy I was presented with the opportunity to have an abortion without even having to ask. For professional reasons my husband and I have moved several times, and each of our children was born in a different city with a different set of obstetrical personnel. In every case I was offered the unsolicited luxury of "keeping my options open": of choosing whether to continue the pregnancy or end it. The polite way of posing the question, after a positive pregnancy test, seems to be for the doctor to ask noncommittally, "And how are we treating this pregnancy?"

Each one of those pregnancies, each one of those expendable bunches of tissue, has grown into a child, each one different from the other. I cannot escape the haunting fact that if I had had an abortion, one of my children would be missing. Not just a generic little bundle in swaddling clothes interchangeable with any other, but a specific child.

I still carry in my mind a picture of that other child who was never born, a picture which changes as the years go by, and I imagine him growing up. For some reason I usually do imagine a boy, tall and with dark hair and eyes. This is speculation, of course, based on my coloring and build and on that of the young man involved. Such speculation seems maudlin and morbid and I do not engage in it on purpose. But whether I like it or not, every now and then my mind returns to that ghost of a child and to the certainty that for seven weeks I carried the beginnings of a being whose coloring and build and, to a large extent, personality were already determined. Buoyant green-eyed girl or shy, dark-haired boy, I wonder. Whoever, a child would have been twelve this spring.

I am not in the habit of exposing this innermost regret, this endless remorse to which I woke too late. I do so only to show that in the wake of *Roe v. Wade* abortion has become casual, commonplace, and very hard to resist as an easy way out of an unintended pregnancy, and that more unintended pregnancies are likely to occur when everyone knows there is an easy way out of them. Abortion has become an option offered to women, married as well as unmarried, including those who are financially, physically, and emotionally able to care for a child. This is what *Roe v. Wade* guarantees. For all the pro-choice lobby's talk of abortion as a deep personal moral decision, casting abortion as a right takes the weight of morality out of the balance. For, by definition, a right is something one need not feel guilty exercising.

I do not wish a return to the days when a truly desperate woman unable to get a safe legal abortion would risk her life at the hands of an illegal abortionist. Neither could I ever condemn a woman whose own grip on life is so fragile as to render her incapable of taking on the full responsibility for another life, helpless and demanding. But raising abortion to the plane of a constitutional right in order to ensure its accessibility to any woman for any reason makes abortion too easy a solution to an age-old problem.

Human beings have always coupled outside the bounds deemed proper by the societies in which they lived. But the inevitable unexpected pregnancies often served a social purpose. There was a time when many young couples found in the startling new life they had created an undeniable reason to settle down seriously to the tasks of earning a living and making a home. That might have meant taking on a nine-to-five job and assuming a mortgage, a prospect which sounds like death to many baby boomers intent on prolonging adolescence well into middle age. But everyone knows anecdotally if not from straight statistics that many of these same baby boomers owe their own lives to such happy (for them) accidents.

When I became pregnant in college, I never seriously considered getting married and trying to raise a child, although it certainly would have been possible to do so. Why should I have, when the road to an abortion was so free and unencumbered, and when the very operation itself had been presented as a step on the march to women's equality?

I know that no one forced me to do anything, that I was perfectly free to step back at any time and live by my own moral code if

I chose to, much as my Orthodox Jewish acquaintances did. But this is awfully hard when the society you consider yourself part of presents abortion as a legal, morally acceptable solution. And what kind of a world would it be if all those in need of a moral structure stepped back to insulate themselves, alone or in groups—ethnic, religious, or economic—each with its own exclusive moral code, leaving behind a chaos at the center? It sounds like New York City on a bad day.

This is not, of course, to ascribe the chaos reigning in our cities directly to *Roe v. Wade*. That chaos is caused by a growing and tenacious underclass defined by incredibly high rates of drug abuse, and dependence on either crime or welfare for financial support. But sometimes it does seem as though the same attitude behind abortion on demand lies behind the abandonment of parental responsibility which is the most pervasive feature of life in the underclass and the most determinative of its terrible condition.

Parental responsibility can be defined as providing one's offspring at every level of development with that which they need to grow eventually into independent beings capable of supporting themselves emotionally and financially. Different parents will, of course, have different ideas about what is best for a child, and different parents will have different resources to draw upon to provide for their children. But whatever the differences may be, responsible parents will try, to the best of their ability and in accordance with their own lights, to raise their children properly. It is tedious, expensive, and takes a long, long time. For it is not a question of fetal weeks before a human being reaches any meaningful stage of "viability" (how "viable" is a two-year-old left to his own devices? A five-year-old?). It is a question of years, somewhere in the neighborhood of eighteen.

Why does any parent take on such a long, hard task? Because life is a miracle that cannot be denied? Because it is the right thing to do? Because there is a certain kind of love a parent bears a child that does not require a calculated return on investment? Because we would hate ourselves otherwise? All these factors enter into the powerful force that compels parents to give up years of their free time and much of their money to bring up their children. Yet the cool, clinical approach *Roe v. Wade* allows all of us—men no less than women—in deciding whether or not we are "ready" to accept the responsibility of an established pregnancy seems to undermine

an already weakening cultural expectation that parents simply have a duty to take care of their children.

A middle- or upper-class woman may have high expectations of what she will achieve so long as she is not saddled with a baby. When she finds herself pregnant she is guaranteed the right under *Roe v. Wade* to opt out of that long and tedious responsibility, and does so by the hundreds of thousands each year. By contrast, a woman in the underclass who finds herself pregnant is not likely to have great expectations of what life would be like were she free of the burden of her child; abortion would not broaden her horizons and is not usually her choice. Yet she often lacks the maternal will and the resources to take full responsibility for the well-being of her child until adulthood.

To be sure, these two forms of refusing parental responsibility have vastly different effects. But how can the government hope to devise policies that will encourage parental responsibility in the underclass when at the highest level of judgment, that of the Supreme Court, the freedom to opt out of parental resonsibility is protected as a right? Or, to put the point another way, perhaps the weakening of the sense of duty toward one's own offspring is a systemic problem in America, present in all classes, with only its most visible manifestation in the underclass.

The federal Family Support Act of 1988 was the result of much study and debate on how to reform the welfare system to correct policies which have tended to make it easier for poor families to qualify for aid if the father is not part of the household. Among other provisions intended to help keep families from breaking up, states are now required to pay cash benefits to two-parent families and to step up child-support payments from absent fathers. New York City, for example, has this year begun to provide its Department of Health with information, including Social Security numbers, on the parents of every child born in the city. Should the mother ever apply for aid, the father can be tracked down and child-support payments can be deducted from his paycheck. Such a strict enforcement of child-support obligations is a powerful and exciting legal method for society to show that it will not tolerate the willful abandonment of children by their fathers.

It is evident that there is a compelling state interest in promoting the responsibility of both parents toward their child. The compelling interest is that it takes a great deal of money to care for a child

whose parents do not undertake the responsibility themselves. For whatever else we may have lost of our humanity over the last several decades, however hardened we have been by violence and by the degradation witnessed daily in the lost lives on the street, we still retain a basic decent instinct to care for innocent babies and children in need.

It is also evident that parental responsibility begins well before the child is born. Thus, the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court of New York in May of this year ruled that a woman who uses drugs during pregnancy and whose newborn has drugs in its system may be brought before Family Court for a hearing on neglect. Yet how can we condemn a woman under law for harming her unborn child while at the same time protecting her right to destroy that child absolutely, for any reason, through abortion? Is the only difference that the first instance entails a monetary cost to society while the second does not?

There is another kind of behavior implicitly condoned by *Roe v. Wade*, which involves the value of life itself, and which also has its most frightening and threatening manifestation in the underclass. Consensus on when human life begins has yet to be established and perhaps never will be. What is clear, however, is that abortion cuts short the development of a specific human life; it wipes out the future years of a human being, years we can know nothing about. Generally we have no trouble conceiving of lost future years as real loss. Lawsuits routinely place value on lost future income and lost future enjoyment, and we consider the death of a child or a young person to be particularly tragic in lost potential, in the waste of idealized years to come. Yet under *Roe v. Wade* the value of the future years of life of the fetus is determined by an individual taking into account only her own well-being.

Back in 1965, justifying his discovery of a constitutional right to privacy which is nowhere mentioned in the Constitution itself, and which helped lay the groundwork for *Roe v. Wade*, Justice William O. Douglas invoked the concept of "penumbras, formed by emanations" of constitutional amendments. Is it far-fetched to say that there are "penumbras, formed by emanations" of *Roe v. Wade* that grant the right to consider life in relative terms and to place one's own interest above any others? This same "right" when exercised by criminals is a terrifying phenomenon: these are people who feel no guilt in

taking a victim's life, who value the future years of that life as nothing compared with their own interest in the victim's property. Of course, one might argue that a fetus is not yet cognizant of its own beingness and that, further, it feels no pain. Yet if a killer creeps up behind you and blows your head off with a semi-automatic, you will feel no pain either, nor will you be cognizant of your death.

Roe v. Wade was a great victory for the women's movement. It seemed to promote equality of opportunity for women in all their endeavors by freeing them from the burden of years of caring for children conceived unintentionally. But perhaps support for *Roe v. Wade* should be reconsidered in light of the damage wrought by the kind of behavior that has become common in a world in which pregnancy is no longer seen as the momentous beginning of a new life, and life, by extension, is no longer held as sacred.

At any rate, even if one rejects my speculation that *Roe v. Wade* has at least some indirect connection with the degree to which life on our streets has become so cheap, surely there can be no denying the direct connection between *Roe v. Wade* and the degree to which sex has become so casual. Surely, for example, *Roe v. Wade* will make it harder for my two daughters to grow gracefully into womanhood without being encouraged to think of sex as a kind of sport played with a partner who need feel no further responsibility toward them once the game is over.

For me, that is reason enough not to support this elevation of abortion to the status of a constitutional right.

The Writing on the Wall

Sibyl Pease

"If God is dead and an actor plays His part, his words of fear will find a place in your heart." These words are from a song written by a musician popular here at the University of Minnesota, where I am an English student. This snatch of song always reminds me of "student culture"—that is, the peculiar society that springs up in college, where most of us eat, sleep, and breathe doubt. In many ways, though, it is not even fear, but only God's absence that finds a place in the heart.

The Twin Cities are, if ever there were, college towns. I attend the largest of the major colleges within the metropolitan area. The University proper has the square footage of a medium-sized midwestern town. There are some 40,000 students on campus every day, and one statistic estimated 110,000 people in the whole system, if you count faculty, staff, and maintenance. Most of these people are *unusually* outspoken. There are hot debates going on in hallways, in shuttle buses, in every cafeteria, bowling alley, cafe, and second-hand store within five miles of the campus. There are some issues so touchy, in fact, that they are argued on the walls of the Ladies' Rooms. On several occasions, I have been late to class after trying to finish reading these arguments.

It has been researched (in connection with extremely ill-equipped facilities at Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis) that on the average it takes women about two minutes to get in and out of the restroom. Not counting washing hands, etc., that leaves perhaps fifty seconds or so to get involved in the graffiti. I read fast, and therefore have had a good dose of these arguments. There are only three topics that I have ever run across in the restrooms at school: Lesbianism, the whys and wherefores, the pros and the cons; Peace, the disdain of all things American and protests against various conflicts past and present. And the biggest by far, abortion.

I am, like any other self-respecting student and hot-blooded twenty-year old, a person of extreme passion in my beliefs—in what these days are known as my "personal values." I am also, like any other kid in the 90's, mixed up, blundering, and full of angst and doubt.

Sibyl Pease still expects to graduate from the university this year.

There are very few things that I can look at as I did when I was sixteen. As a sophomore in high school, the arguments I had about morality were usually fought with people cowed by my vocabulary, and who all, more or less, had the same opinions I did. In other words, there was always a point in any argument when I knew I had won (usually by default), when the other person would simply give in. In high school, I was sorely afflicted by the teenage disease of Always Being Right, and could afford to parade my beliefs around above my head, becoming outspoken and opinionated to a fault. Coming to college, especially this one, was a shock.

Now there were not only my peers, but unimaginable, immortal professors with both doctorates and interesting hair, arguing with every bit as much passion, and better vocabularies, the exact opposite of what I was arguing. Consequently I spent most of my freshman year in college defending the Catholic Church and its view on abortion. In high school, I could out-argue anybody. I got to the University and found I had the endurance of a flea. These people would stay up all night to have the last word, and during that time would openly accuse me of being ignorant, cruel, revisionist, and narrow.

My "personal value" about abortion, alas, has not changed, and it is actually a point of frustration for me (not sarcasm) that makes me say this.

I have met almost complete resistance to this view. Unfortunately, even if I were not a member of the Catholic Church, and even if I were a godless pagan who shaved the eyebrows off puppies, I would still regard abortion as evil. Nothing in my world of literature seems black and white, but everything I read about evil reminds me of abortion. It is a flagrant violation of the laws of nature, all the rules of respect and reverence for what is living, to that which brings the spiritual and material worlds together. I have no romantic views of poverty; I do not think that children are treasured in the hunger and squalor of ghetto life as the only source of hope. I know how bad it can be, how many children who are carried to term are tossed into the metal dumpsters in the alleys, even here in pristine Minnesota. Yet I cannot condone a practice which exterminates people.

I have had this argument many times, and come away shaking, to sit in the cafe near campus, replaying all the points made, wondering if I'd been clear enough, adult enough, to be convincing. After so many of these arguments, after so many of the same accusations leveled at my head ("you don't care about your own sex," "you're

against anyone sleeping together"), I began to break down.

By my sophomore year I was a natural at avoiding the abortion conflict, putting my mind to the task of hiding my unsavory opinion while looking "cool" (read "openminded"). I was disappointed in myself; I could not rid my stomach of the curling feeling or my chest the ache, when I was confronted, in quite casual conversation, about the "ignorance of the 'anti-choice' position." I'd hear it out of professors' mouths, as if in footnotes, as though it were a *given*, beyond question. As though it were settled.

Why couldn't I just agree with them? I suppose it's the same everywhere in the world, this feeling that it was all false. Abortion does *not* not take into account the sacredness of a woman's body. It is *not* compassion towards children. It *does* have medical and psychological side-effects. It *isn't* choice, or free and informed decision. What it *is* is a triple rape: it rapes the dignity and sanctity of a woman's body; it rapes the defenseless child of life, and it rapes our language by masquerading as some kind of social good. Language is one of my most treasured things in this world. So here I was, stuck with my "repressive" thoughts, trying to hide them. One day, it dawned on me that I might be wrong. After all, I was a student of academia, as well as in it, and I couldn't discount all of my teachers and peers. After all, who was I to know everything? Here's what happened.

The University newspaper, *The Minnesota Daily,* continually thrashed out the "choice" issue, and one day as I was grimacing through yet another debate, I came across an article which reported that the student health facility, Boynton Health Service, had been getting a lot of pressure from "women's groups" and other radicals, including members of the notorious Progressive Student Organization. If you walk around campus, you will spot the PSO members. They wear a lot of black, and carry placards. One of them will probably holler at you through a bullhorn about 'animal rights' or whatever the current cause happens to be.

They and other highly-vocal pressure groups had gone to the administration at Boynton and demanded to know why abortions were not being offered to the general student body. Why were our mandatory health-service fees not funding this "service"? By the next day there was a flood of letters to the editor. Within the week, the Board of Regents announced that due to the obviously sharp differences of opinion, they would put the matter up for referendum.

The student-government elections were scheduled for the next week, and the student body could vote on it. I had no idea who was running for office, and didn't really care (the student government here is pretty wimpy) but by golly, I was going to vote, and I was willing to miss my Autobiography class to do it.

Every day as the election got closer, I walked around campus, coiled. Minnesotan spring is like Walt Whitman poetry at its best, or like the garden in "Morning Has Broken." Finals were only weeks away, and for the first time in three drought-stricken years, the city was green. I sat on the back patio of the student union, looking over the Mississippi River. Spring fever is not what I had, it was spring cholera. I had been in school for eleven straight months. I was burned out.

More than anything, I was dreading the elections. From what I knew of my fellow students, the only ones who would bother to vote would be the ones who brought the subject up in the first place, and the election was as good as lost. I would go to the ombudsman to explain why I could not pay my health service fee. At least I wouldn't give them any of my money for anything as brutal as abortion, but it would be a dragging, uphill battle. Just thinking of it made me want to jump into the river.

Later, I was sitting in my favorite cafe when the thought came to me—almost for the first time, with stabbing clarity—that I really *could* be mistaken. I could admit it there and then, and not worry about it anymore. Maybe abortion was in God's plan for the world. Maybe He approved of it, because after all, there were so many people who were convinced with all of their strength and minds that abortion was a great *good.* Could it be that they were right, all of them, and I was wrong? And as I thought this, I also remembered, quite by chance, that I had a rosary in the pocket of my backpack, and that St. Lawrence Church was only two blocks away.

I don't pretend any divine inspiration in this. I just happenend to remember there were people in many cultures who, when in doubt, prayed to their saints for guidance. If tribes in the deep jungles of Africa could perform their religious ceremonies to the jaguar god and have every anthropology student in reverent awe of them, why couldn't I, knowing I might be wrong? I mentally wrote off my next class and walked over to St. Lawrence, muttering to the Almighty as I went. I asked, in the least toadying way I knew, for some enlightenment. I asked Them, all three, to please let me know if

I was wrong. I told Them that I knew better than to try to make a deal, but if the referendum passed, I'd take it as a suggestion that I was wrong. I couldn't promise I'd come to believe abortion was good, but I'd take the consequences.

I said the Rosary. If anyone knew about women's bodies and the respect we ought to have for them, it would be Mary. I've always admired Mary. She has spunk.

This taught me a lot about sanctification through grace. I relied entirely upon this invisible God (who may or may not be there, who are you to *judge*, as my classmates would say) to work in the insular world of the University of Minnesota, and then I gave the whole thing up. I went to bed that night determined not to be surprised when the results were published.

The election day came. There were ballot booths set up on both sides of the river, and on both campuses, Minneapolis and St. Paul. There was a little swarm of people around the first booth I came to. I got eight sheets of paper with lists of names and titles, which I went through at random. I didn't vote for anyone with a name like Barry or Damien or Janelle. I got all the way to the last sheet, and there was no referendum. I was on the St. Paul campus, and figured that maybe they simply didn't get to vote on the issue there. When I got off the shuttle bus in Minneapolis, there was another booth. I went up to it.

"Hi, can I see your I.D.?" asked the guy behind the card table. "Oh," I said, "I already voted. Where's the, uh, referendum?" He scrunched up his face and cocked his head. "Referendum?" he echoed. I wondered for one wild moment if I was going batty. "Yeah, you know, the, er, health center thing?" I was ashamed to say it, to be inquiring about something so controversial, when I knew that the next thing happening might be the Leftist Thought Police coming up and demanding to see proof that I was a valid liberal youth wearing regulation high-top sneakers and more than two earrings. "You want the referendum. On the health center. Thing." He was mystified. He shrugged his shoulders and said, "I dunno. It's not here. Maybe you don't vote on it here." I went away even more mystified than he had been. No referendum.

Next day in the *Daily*, I read that the referendum had been thrown out by the Regents at the very last minute. Apparently the "abortion rights" committee had placed a page-sized ad in the paper a couple

of days previously which was "manipulative." It stated, "Vote Yes for Choice." I had seen that ad, and had no idea that it was against any rule, but evidently it was, so the whole issue could not be voted on until next year, at the next set of student-government elections. If I heard another word from anyone about abortions being funded through student health fees, I can't remember it. The pro-lifers were wisely silent, and I, for one, was too grateful to say I told you so.

The school rolled over that issue the way it does so many touchy topics, the way we all do. Traditional values are always in the minority, just like uncomfortable truth. This time, though, I think the minority won, even if for only a year. This victory is another to classify under the "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" category.

I am a coward—I am frightened of going out on a limb alone, as are, perhaps, many of my peers. Prayer makes the difference, and will, if we persevere, untangle the knots we make for ourselves.

Many times, though, it seems like the battle against abortion is already lost. Babies are no longer babies but "products of conception," "fetuses," or "uterine tissue." In universities, rhetoric can overwhelm the simple truth, and those who want truth to survive will, as Christ promised, drink from His cup of pain. Colleges are drowning in relativism, in the credo "What's true for you may not be true for me." This credo is killing the unborn and it's killing us.

However, the battle is not over, and the fight goes on: Nietzsche was wrong. God isn't dead.

A President's Tears

Gary Bauer

ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING BOOKS I have ever read is *Witness*, the memoirs of Whittaker Chambers, a communist agent who eventually rejected Marxism and opted for liberty. One of the turning points in his life that led to his rejection of communism took place in October of 1933 when Chambers discovered his wife was pregnant.

Many of his fellow communists believed that it was morally wrong for a professional revolutionary to have children at all. Chambers assumed that his wife would abort the baby. But in a chapter only six pages long, simply titled *The Child*, Chambers writes that his baby was saved. He says,

> My wife came over to me, took my hands and burst into tears. "Dear heart," she said in a pleading voice, "we couldn't do that awful thing to a little baby, not to a little baby, dear heart." A wild joy swept me. Reason, the agony of my family, the Communist Party and its theories, the wars and revolutions of the 20th century, crumbled at the touch of the child.

Later after the baby was born Chambers wrote:

> I went back to my wife who was no longer only my wife but the mother of our child—the child we all yearn for, who, even before her birth, had begun, invisibly, to lead us out of that darkness, which we could not even realize, toward that light, which we could not even see.[1]

One of the hottest battlegrounds in America's current civil war focuses on the worth and value of human life. Arrayed against them are those who argue for a "quality of life" ethic.

Not coincidentally, the issue of abortion most resembles the other issue that led our forefathers to literally take up arms against each other—the question of slavery. In many crucial ways, abortion and slavery are not merely similar issues—they are the same issue.

Abortion and Slavery

The original contract of our nation's founding—the core document that defines who we are—is the Declaration of Independence. It is in the words of the Declaration that our founding fathers proclaimed

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the self-evident truths that led us to take up arms and break away to form a separate independent nation.

Of these truths, the most central is embodied in this simple but powerful sentence: "all men are created equal," that they are endowed by their Creator with "certain unalienable Rights," and that among these rights are "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." This is the American creed—a basic truth that is the foundation of our liberty.

But every school child knows that from the very birth of our nation the Constitution permitted a contradiction to these clear words. Faced with the need to build a nation composed of states with different economic and social needs, the founders permitted slavery to continue so that the slave states could be brought into the Union. We can debate their pragmatism, but one thing was clear to many of the founders, and it became painfully more obvious with each passing year: this contradiction between the principles of the Declaration and the fact of sanctioned slavery could not exist forever. "A house divided cannot stand."

The history books reflecting on that era tell a story of a country trying to hide from that basic truth. Either the nation would be all slave, and the spirit of our Declaration turned into mere words, or it would be all free whatever price had to be paid.

In 1857, the United States Supreme Court in one of it most shameful moments decided in the Dred Scott case that slavery was permissible. That decision declared that a Black slave was not a person under the Constitution but mere property whose future depended on the whims of its owner. "A Black man has no rights which the white man is bound to respect," said Chief Justice Roger B. Taney.

As in many other times of crisis, America was blessed in that day by the life of a great man willing to speak the truth about the horror of slavery and of the Supreme Court decision that ratified it. Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator, spoke plainly: "If slavery is not wrong, then nothing is wrong." Even though the implications for his own political future were unclear, Lincoln used moral persuasion to convince his fellow Americans that the nation was abandoning its commitment to the equality and worth of all human life.

In one of his famous debates with Senator Stephen Douglas, Lincoln said ". . . eighty years ago we began by declaring all men equal, but now (as steadily as a man's march to the grave) we have run down to that other declaration, that for some men to enslave others

is a sacred right of government. These principles cannot stand together. They are as opposite as God and Mammon, and whoever holds to the one must despise the other." Ultimately, it took Lincoln's inspired words plus the lives of 600,000 of our forefathers to help the nation to reaffirm that *all* men are created equal.

Roe v. Wade

Once again, a Supreme Court of the United States was called upon in 1973 to defend an unprotected minority that was being deprived of life itself. And in the tradition of the Dred Scott case, it failed the test.

The Supreme Court, in the *Roe v. Wade* decision, struck down in one stroke every state law restricting abortion. Some of our conservative friends were outraged then and remain agitated today that the court in its decision violated the rules of federalism—the idea that each state must be able to make its own laws, consistent with the Constitution. But they miss the larger point.

The Dred Scott case excluded Blacks from the protections granted by the Declaration. The *Roe v. Wade* case did the same for our unborn children. Justice Harry Blackmun wrote in his opinion, "We need not decide the difficult question of when human life begins." But, of course, that is exactly what the Court had to decide. If the child in his mother's womb is human, and surely he can be nothing else, then the rights affirmed by the Declaration and given by God must not be taken away.

For nearly two decades, the most defenseless among us have had rights only if they were "wanted" by the mother who carried them. Otherwise they are mere property to be disposed of for whatever reason, or for no reason. And in those intervening years, nearly 25 million unborn babies have been disposed of—victims of our society's worship of choice and rampant individualism. Under *Roe*, an unborn child has no rights anyone is bound to respect.

Again over 100 years ago, Lincoln saw the danger of this selective granting of rights. He asked:

> I should like to know if taking this old Declaration of Independence, which declares that all men are equal upon principle and making exceptions to it where will it stop. If one man says it does not mean a negro, why not another say it does not mean some other man?

Today Lincoln might have asked, if the Declaration does not apply to the unborn child, then why can't another man say it doesn't cover

a handicapped newborn child or the terminally ill or the handicapped? But that is exactly what has happened.

With each passing day, the process of taking the right to life from one individual or another because someone declares them unwanted or a burden or not possessing a sufficient quality of life has broadened and accelerated. In 1983 the state courts of Indiana allowed the starvation death of "Baby Doe" in Bloomington because the child had Down's Syndrome.

No one argued about whether Baby Doe was a human being. Unlike the invisible baby in the womb, this infant was born and there for all of us, including wise judges, to see. The issue at stake was whether this handicapped baby had a right to medical treatment to preserve his life.

The decision of the judges was a triumph for the quality of life over the sanctity of life. Baby Doe committed no transgression. His only mistake was to have the misfortune of being born in a society with not enough love to go around. Today we believe he sits on the right hand of the One who said, "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

Who Lives? Who Dies?

In Oklahoma, a team of physicians conducted a grotesque experiment on newborn handicapped children, representing the triumph of the quality of life ethic. Over a five year period, the physicians decided which infant suffering from spina bifida—an imperfect closure of part of the spinal column—would live and which would die.

The criteria used by the medical team to decide who would survive included a formula whose purpose was intended to predict the quality of life of the child if it were allowed to grow up. Items in the formula included the child's intellectual and physical endowments, how much society would likely have to contribute to raising the child, and the economic status of the family. In other words, babies from poor families were denied medical treatment.

Of the 69 babies in the "study," 24 received the minimal treatment and all of them died. The remaining children received full treatment and all of them lived. In other words, a team of doctors took upon themselves the right to play God.

There have been other dramatic examples of the cheapening of life in Western Society. Evidence grows that some women have obtained

(and continue to obtain) abortions because they were unhappy with the sex of their unborn child. By an overwhelming margin, the defenseless babies being aborted in these cases were female! What a twist of a "woman's right."

The Family Research Council has urged the Justice Department to investigate whether civil rights laws are being violated by such abortions. We asked Molly Yard and the National Organization of Women to join us in the complaint. They never responded. Apparently, abortion is satisfactory to some feminists if it is intended to eliminate baby girls!

It is difficult to imagine a more evil development in our society. We only have to look at the outcome of a similar philosophy that took root in Germany and ended with the horror of the "final solution to the Jewish problem." This downward slide was explained dramatically by Dr. Leo Alexander in an article in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, written in 1949.

Dr. Alexander was a consultant to the Secretary of War in the Nuremberg Trials. He had extraordinary access to accused Nazi war criminals in the medical community. Writing from that unique perspective, Dr. Alexander argued that so-called "compassionate killing" of the terminally ill inevitably set the stage for the Holocaust. He wrote:

> Whatever proportions these crimes finally assumed, it became evident to all who investigated them that they had started from small beginnings. The beginnings at first were merely a subtle shift in emphasis in the basic attitude of the physicians. It started with the acceptance of the attitude . . . that there is such a thing as life not worthy to be lived. This attitude in its early stages concerned itself merely with the severely and chronically sick. Gradually the sphere of those to be included in this category was enlarged to encompass the socially unproductive, the ideologically unwanted, the racially unwanted and finally all non-Germans.[2]

Before his death, Dr. Alexander told a friend that trends in our country were "much like Germany in the '20s and '30s. The barriers against killing are coming down."[3]

The same *New England Journal of Medicine* in which 50 years ago Dr. Alexander wrote his original warning presents evidence of the cheapening of human life. On April 12, 1984, Dr. Sidney Wanzer, a board member of the Society for the Right to Die, joined by nine prominent colleagues, wrote a commentary entitled, "The Physician's Responsibility Toward Hopelessly Ill Patients."

In it, the doctors from leading institutions such as Harvard and

Johns Hopkins called for the cessation of "artificially administered nutritional support, including fluids, from various kinds of patients, such as those seriously and irreversibly demented."

On January 8, 1988, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* published an anonymous article entitled "It's Over Debbie." In this piece, a physician gives his account of the lethal injection he administered at the request of a young woman terminally ill with cancer. In March of 1989, 10 influential physicians on a panel chaired by Daniel Federman of Harvard Law School, called for "wide and open discussion" of "assisted suicide," and while admitting the subject was "complex," assured readers that all but two of the doctors believe "it is not immoral."

More recently, Marcia Angell, the Executive Editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, was quoted as saying, "I think perhaps we're ready to consider euthanasia that is very, very strictly controlled."

Polling data indicates these attitudes are not limited to a fringe of the medical community. Seventy percent of physicians polled in San Francisco said they thought incurable patients should be able to request euthanasia and 45 percent said they would be willing to carry it out.

A Colorado survey showed 59 percent of doctors in that state would be willing to give patients a lethal drug if it were legal. Efforts are underway in several states to legalize euthanasia by putting initiatives on the state ballot. A failed effort to do this in California collected over 130,000 signatures in favor of the initiative. Its proponents reportedly plan another attempt soon. This time they will *start* with 130,000 computerized names and addresses.[4]

In a recent book entitled *Setting Limits*, Dr. Daniel Callahan, one of America's leading bioethicists, has actually suggested that upon reaching a certain age, the elderly "have no right to burden the public purse." The doctor has suggested the ideal age would be between 80-85.[5] But someone else may believe the age should be 75 or 70. And if 70, why not 69, or 50, or 40 or . . . 18?

Once the door marked "death" is open, it does not close easily. Joseph Fletcher, a theologian, has suggested that infants may be killed if they don't measure up to fifteen "indicators of personhood."[6] The sanctity of life ethic protects us all; the quality of life ethic will ultimately protect none of us.

The law has already been changed in the Netherlands. Doctors now actually make house calls to assist patients in dying at their

own hands. Some estimate that as many as 5,000 Dutch citizens die this way each year—always at their own request and "choice," of course. But the line between choice and compulsion is thin.

One critic of the Dutch program says that "Dutch society has so emphasized the duty of the hopelessly ill to forego treatment" that they feel compelled to ask to be killed. "Elderly people begin to consider themselves a burden to society . . . under an obligation to start conversations on Euthanasia, or even to request it."[7] Down the slippery slope they went.

Both the abortion issue and the related question of euthanasia are the subjects of legal maneuvering and court battles. Millions of Americans celebrated when the Supreme Court, in July, 1989, for the first time since 1973, began to undermine the unrestricted right to abortion. But the celebration should be muted, for in this narrow victory there was no language that went to the heart of the issue—the Constitutional protection of life.

Even on the current "conservative" court, there may only be two or three justices at most who are willing to extend the protections of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution to all Americans, including the unborn.

But whatever the courts do, they are only part of the civil war raging over the issue of life and death. What is loose in our society is a philosophy promoted by the cultural elites that goes to the very heart of the nature of our nation and even of Western civilization.

Either as a society we will believe and teach our children that life is always sacred, or we will believe and teach that it has no intrinsic value aside from what we assign to it. Like the other issues at stake in the conflict, the answer cannot embrace both philosophies. Either one will prevail or the other.

The wording of our Declaration of Independence leaves no doubt that life is always sacred, but in the name of progress or science, we have retreated far from that clear understanding today. Regardless of the outcome of pending court cases, this battle will be won by the side that is able to win the hearts and minds of their fellow citizens.

Malcolm Muggeridge, who has received world fame as a lecturer and broadcaster, described the choice this way:

> Which vision are we for? On the one hand, as the pattern of our collective existence, the broiler house or factory farm, in which the concern is solely for the physical well-being of the livestock and the financial well-being

> of the enterprise; on the other, mankind as a family, all of whose members, whatever physical or mental qualities or deficiencies they may have, are equally deserving of consideration in the eyes of their creator, and whose existence has validity, not just in itself, nor just in relation to history, but in relation to a destiny reaching beyond time and into eternity. Or in simple terms, on the one hand the quality of life; on the other, the sanctity of life.[8]

A Personal Note

A woman I never met has had a tremendous impact on me. In fact, I would not be alive today if it weren't for her courage. Whether she was a scared teenager, rich or poor, will be forever hidden from me. All I know is that she decided to give birth to my father in 1914 and place him in an orphanage.

My father had a hard life during those early years. He was in and out of foster care but finally was adopted, unfortunately, into a family which abused him. He fell into the grip of alcoholism as a young man and wrestled with it on and off the rest of his days.

He was never quite able to understand why he had been abandoned by his birth parents. Some of the most painful moments I have experienced were those times as a young boy when I watched my father weep for the parents that he never knew.

In the depths of the Great Depression, Dad dropped out of school to find work to help his family. As a result, he enjoyed none of the financial success our society emphasizes these days. His lack of education and a persistent battle with alcoholism limited his working years to a series of low-paying blue-collar jobs. But he always worked no matter how menial the task and, out of pride, never considered taking any government handout, although our family would certainly have qualified. What little we did have was always shared—with the church and with those in our own neighborhood who had even less.

Many today would argue that Stanley "Spike" Bauer would have been better off to have never been born at all. No doubt there were times when he would have agreed. But with all the odds against him, he did manage to accomplish a lot in his life. He met a sweet 17-year-old girl who would become my mother. He married her and they were husband and wife until he passed away 49 years later.

My father understood honor and duty. He volunteered for the Marines in World War II, served in the South Pacific, was wounded in action and saved the lives of two buddies in the heat of battle.

He received two purple hearts and a bronze star for bravery under fire. Returning home traumatized by the horror of war, he remained haunted by dark dreams of death and destruction.

My mother tolerated much and no doubt saved my father from a life in the gutter. Together they bought a home, paid their taxes, had a son, introduced me to the saving power of faith and taught me that if I worked hard enough, anything was possible. When I was 13 years old and I accepted the forgiveness of Christ, the footsteps I heard behind me as I walked to the front of the church were those of my Dad. We were baptized together, a memory I will keep with me always.

I left home to go to Washington, D.C. in 1969 to attend law school. By 1987 my father's son had become the Senior Domestic Policy Advisor to the President of the United States.

Now the cycle continues. God has given my wife and me three children who are filled with dreams and potential. I cannot know what happiness or suffering lies ahead for them or for myself. None of us can see the future. But I do know that life is a precious gift from God—that life is better than the culture of death which has taken so many unborn children from us.

Would some of the babies aborted since 1973 have been "crack" babies? Would some have been poor? Would some have been burdens on society? The answer is yes to all three questions. Does that mean they do not have a right to life? The answer is no.

Some of these children, perhaps many, would have overcome these obstacles and given us gifts we can only vaguely imagine. If that young girl many years ago had chosen death, my father would have never been born. And without his life and my mother's, mine would have been impossible. And without Carol and me, Elyse, Sarah, and Zachary would never have come into the world.

Along with millions of other Americans, my family's favorite movie is the Frank Capra classic, *It's a Wonderful Life*, starring Jimmy Stewart as George Bailey—a big-hearted, "aw shucks" kind of guy who was always sacrificing for others.

As anyone who has seen the movie knows, George falls on hard times and is tempted to take his own life. Standing on a snowswept bridge he wishes he had never been born. A bumbling guardian angel trying to earn his wings is sent by God to try to show George just why his life had been important.

This angel, named Clarence, first shows George what the world

would have been like without him. Then Clarence summarizes the moral of the movie: "Strange, isn't it? Every man's life touches so many other lives, and when he isn't around he leaves an awful hole to fill, doesn't he? . . . You see what a mistake it would be to throw it away?"

"An awful hole to fill . . ." What kind of hole have we created by aborting 25 million babies? What promises are unfulfilled in those tiny innocent lives we've snuffed out? Have we killed the child who would someday find a cure for cancer or AIDS? How many composers, writers, statesmen will never have a chance to live their lives? But just as important, how many common men and women have been eliminated who may have done nothing more than overcome the odds and escape poverty, or a handicap, or disease, to have their own family and bring other children into the world? Only God knows.

A President's Tears

The Cabinet Room at the White House is impressive. Outside the windows on one side of the room are the carefully manicured White House gardens. In the room itself, large portraits of former Presidents bedeck the walls. In the winter, the White House staff used to build a crackling fire in the large fireplace at one end of the room. At the other end, another door opens to the short passageway to the Oval Office. The momentous decisions and discussions that have taken place in the Cabinet room fill volumes of history books.

I remember one event that I don't believe has been recorded anywhere else—and yet it symbolizes the great challenge facing our nation.

On Mondays, when the President's schedule allowed, the senior members of the White House staff would have lunch with Mr. Reagan in the Cabinet room. It was usually a relaxed time. The President would let his hair down and his Irish humor would begin to go into high gear. No press was permitted at these sessions. It was a special time and an important moment away from the glare of the usually present cameras.

Normally our talk was about grand legislative and strategy issues. But I always found the President was more comfortable talking about real live people than arcane Washington maneuverings. One day as we went around the table to take turns raising issues with the President, I chose to read to him a few paragraphs from a *Newsday* story about a little four-year-old girl.

The story was titled, "Baby Doe's Success: Progress defying prognosis." I read the President the opening paragraphs which said in part,

> Keri-Lynn talks and laughs; she smiles and hugs and screams and plants kisses firmly on a stranger's cheek.
>
> She has recently begun to demand more than her share and often resorts to throwing toys or M&Ms when the focus shifts away from her. Then she whispers, "I'm bad," aware that her mother is displeased with her behavior.
>
> "Sit down," Keri-Lynn ordered a visitor last Wednesday night, while demanding that her mother, Linda, bring her a pack of crayons. Later, she whispered, "Dance, Daddy, dance," as her father swept her into his arms to sway to the music of Stevie Wonder.
>
> For most 4-year-olds, those would not be unusual feats. But for Keri-Lynn, daughter of Dan and Linda A., those are actions doctors thought she would never be able to perform.
>
> Just after she was born, doctors said that Keri-Lynn—better known as Long Island's Baby Jane Doe—would never know happiness and would experience only pain. They said she would be bedridden for life, probably unaware of who her parents were. And she was not expected to talk or walk.
>
> But now Keri-Lynn, age 4, wears a white nightgown trimmed in pink and green with a cap of dark brown curls framing her slate-blue eyes. And she demands, in a hushed but firm tone, "Hug me."[9]

I waited a moment watching the President closely and then I told him the good news. "Mr. President, I thought you would want to know about Keri-Lynn. Four years ago when she was born with multiple birth defects, your administration went to court to obtain her medical records because of reports she was not receiving equal medical treatment with 'normal' children.

"In short, some thought she should be allowed to die. As you will recall, Mr. President, we lost the case; but even though we didn't even know the child's name or her parents, they decided to ignore the medical advice and do everything they could to save her. Mr. President, I believe this child is alive today because of the courage of her parents and your courage in taking on the medical establishment."

I paused and waited for the President's reaction. I knew he would be happy, but an extraordinary thing happened at that moment. The President wept. All of us with various degrees of embarrassment watched tears well-up in his eyes. He quickly wiped them away and expressed his gratitude to me for sharing the story.

We went on to other issues that day as we always did. But for a brief moment one of the most powerful men in the world had cried over one little four-year-old who was born on October 11,

1983. A four-year-old born with spina bifida (an open spine), an abnormally small head, excess fluid on the brain, and a damaged kidney. No cameras recorded the moment when the President shed those tears, but it will always remain with me as one of the most vivid memories I have of Ronald Wilson Reagan and the kind of man he is.

But it also left me with a lasting impression. If he could be so moved by the story of this struggling little four-year-old who was defying the odds, couldn't we as a nation find enough love to go around for all of America's abandoned children—the crack babies, the fatherless kids wandering our city streets, the unborn children who will be torn to pieces, the teenagers sucked into the drug culture or enticed into sex without love or marriage or commitment?

We adults have come up with a thousand ways in the last 20 years to "fulfill" ourselves, to reach our potential, and to "grow" but we are losing our children in the process. Unless we can rediscover the passion behind that President's tears and turn it into a national commitment to save the young from the forces loose in our secular age, this special experiment in liberty under God is destined to fail. And we will not only suffer the verdict of history, but we must also answer to that just and loving God from whom each of these children came as His precious gifts of life.

NOTES

1. Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* (South Bend, Indiana; Regnery/Gateway 1979), pp. 325-326.
2. Dr. Leo Alexander, "Medical Science Under Dictatorship," *New England Journal of Medicine*, 241 (July 14, 1989) pp. 39-47.
3. Nat Hentoff, "Small Beginnings of Death," *Human Life Review*, Vol. 14, No. (Spring 1988), p. 54.
4. Victor Cohen, "Is it Time for Mercy Killing?" *The Washington Post*, August 15, 1989.
5. Daniel Callahan, *Setting Limits* (New York; Simon & Schuster, 1987).
6. William A. Donohue, *The New Freedom* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction, 1990), p. 62
7. Cohen.
8. Ronald Reagan & Malcolm Muggeridge, *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation* (New York; Thomas Nelson, 1984) pp. 82-83.
9. Kathleen Kerr, "Baby Doe's Success," *Newsday*, Dec. 7, 1987, p.1.

Suicide—The Next Choice

Maria McFadden

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF SOMEONE called for a telephone survey and asked you "What do you think about suicide?" Would you say "I think it's wrong" immediately? Or would you say "Well, would you clarify suicide: do you mean a teenager who shoots himself because his girlfriend dumped him, or do you mean an old woman who is in horrible pain and opts to end her life rather than go on in a lonely nursing home? A lot depends on the situation." Would you consider the subject theoretically, or would a person immediately spring to mind? Have you ever felt suicidal yourself?

The act of suicide has not been given much attention in these pages. Traditionally considered morally wrong and tragic, there has been little reason to argue over suicide in a journal devoted to tackling the more controversial life issues. And most people find suicide a depressing subject. However, suicide is a leading cause of death in our society, striking the most vulnerable among us—the very old, the sick, and the quite young. It cannot be ignored. It is also rapidly becoming—after abortion, infanticide and euthanasia—the next "complex issue," likely to be trumpeted soon as a "right" and a "choice."

Attitudes toward suicide have shifted throughout history. In ancient Rome, the Stoics saw suicide as an honorable way out of a corrupt society. While the Judeo-Christian tradition demanded a respect for life, some early Christians seemed to have embraced suicide in their zeal for martyrdom. This was later corrected, as the Church in St. Augustine's time declared suicide a mortal sin and against the fifth commandment. In the Middle Ages, suicide was considered so awful a sin that, to discourage it, the successful suicide's remains were horribly desecrated, his family penalized, and a Christian burial denied. With modern "enlightened" times came the belief that suicide is a consequence of mental illness or unbearable circumstances—a less God-fearing society had more compassion for the "victim" and the survivors but less interest in the victim's soul. Today, "suicidology" is a subject studied by sociologists and psychologists, and there are several suicide prevention agencies devoted to helping

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the suicidal not make that final choice. The act of suicide is not a crime in any state, though "assisted" suicide is still illegal in several.

But why *do* people commit suicide? My own interest in understanding the suicidal led me, a few years ago, to work with the Samaritans, a suicide prevention agency. During my training I learned that I had some misunderstandings about suicide. It is a myth, for example, that a person who threatens to kill himself won't: most people who warn about an attempt will eventually make one. It is also a myth that mentioning suicide to a depressed person will give him the awful idea. Some depressed people feel suicidal but are afraid to bring up the subject, for fear the listener will panic or think they are "crazy." A suicidal person is not necessarily mentally ill, but in a crisis: grief, loneliness, illness, or some traumatic event has caused him so much pain that death seems to be the only relief. There *are* people who are mentally ill, or who are so chronically depressed that they gradually lose the will to live; they might make several attempts at suicide and might actually succeed. And there are others who are mentally sound, but because of the circumstances in their lives have begun to despair. Their vulnerability may be more critical if they do not have the support of religious faith, family or close friends, they may feel or actually be isolated. Suicidal people, especially teenagers, often develop "tunnel vision": each new hurt clouds one's vision of the overall picture, and emotional vision gets increasingly narrow, until, without hope for the future, there is only an image of the "way out."

The Samaritans exist to provide what they call "befriending": a suicidal person can call (or visit) and talk about his feelings, and ask for help at any hour of the day or night. As their brochure puts it: "By listening and caring, the Samaritans can alleviate the depression and despair that can lead to suicide and rekindle the hope that life can be worthwhile." Volunteers who man the hotlines, as I did, work a four-hour shift each week, and one overnight a month. The longest I ever remember the phone *not* ringing was 10 minutes, so juggling calls was an important part of our training. We had to assess the suicide risk as quickly as possible, and put a less-desperate case on hold for a few minutes if we needed to answer another call. This was possible because many of the callers were depressed or lonely but not suicidal, and there were unfortunately a large number of "sex callers" simply seeking a female on the other end of the line. (We women counselors became adept at discovering, largely

through instinct, whether the caller was despairing over a sexual problem or whether his telephoning *was* his sexual problem!)

Overnight shifts were the most difficult. I remember understanding as never before that "the darkest hour is just before dawn." Being alone in an office, looking out at a dark city, and trying to comfort someone who is unable to cope with his anxiety or depression—there is little to distract you from the reality that such raw pain is part of the human condition, and that *you* could be in that person's plight. And sometimes callers would hang up abruptly: you could never know if they would be alright and you found yourself searching the papers the next day for suicide reports.

But there was satisfaction and sometimes even joy there too, when a volunteer would get a call or a message that he or she had helped someone. I have a message from a woman who said I saved her life—I'll always keep that little scrap of paper, though I have no idea who she is or even if it was true. The important thing to remember is that suicidal people are in a moment of crisis; that if they can get through it, they can survive.

During my time with the Samaritans, I developed a deeper respect for people struggling with mental illness and depression, and I saw first hand how effective a compassionate listener can be. I was talking once to someone who was so devastated because of a nasty break-up he was feeling suicidal, and at the same time he hated himself for feeling that way because suicide was against his religion. He had gotten himself into a vicious cycle of despair, in which he was at risk almost out of a need to punish himself for despairing.

When I asked him how he would feel if he were hearing about some other person in his same situation, he said he would have had compassion. I think (I hope) he started to realize that he *had* been through hell and he needed to be his own friend to recover, so that he wouldn't be tempted to go against his religious convictions. As I listened to the stories of suicidal callers, I tried to convey, without bringing in God or religion (which we weren't supposed to do unless *they* did first) that I thought life was worth living for its own sake, and that I hoped they too would hang on to that belief (and sometimes that was all I *could* say, as some of their circumstances seemed so hopeless I honestly could not think of any other reason for them to stay alive).

I would like to say here that our society's strong conviction in

the value of life is a factor helping suicidal people want to live, or that most people believe that life and death decisions are not ours to make. But this is not true, and it is getting less true every day. In *The Savage God*, a 1971 book about suicide written by A. Alvarez (who himself attempted suicide as a young man) there is a passage I find chillingly prophetic. Discussing the many artists and writers who have been suicidal, Alvarez talks about a Dostoyevsky character: "Dostoyevsky's Kirilov said that there are only two reasons why we do not all kill ourselves: pain and fear of the next world. In suicide, as in most other areas of activity, there has been a technological breakthrough which has made a cheap and relatively painless death democratically available to everyone [modern drugs and domestic gas] . . . We already have a suicidology; all we mercifully lack for the moment is a thorough-going philosophical rationale of the act itself. No doubt it will come."

Fear of the next world, whether or not still a factor in people's private lives, certainly doesn't enter into current secular wisdom. And with euthanasia and right-to-die movements, a "painless" way to die *seems* to be a possibility, or at least there are people willing to offer it.

Consider "Doctor Death" Kevorkian, and his famous machine. Janet Adkins, only 54 and still quite well but despairing at the thought of living with her suspected Alzheimer's, wasn't prepared to commit her own suicide, but she did employ someone else to help her, trusting him to provide her with a painless exit. Dr. Kevorkian had been looking forward to trying his invention: a machine that a "patient" could operate himself. One push of a button, and the patient is administered an intravenous dose of thiopental, to cause sleep, and then a lethal dose of potassium chloride. Janet Adkins, a member of the Hemlock Society, which supports "active voluntary euthanasia for the terminally ill," heard about Dr. Kevorkian and contacted him. She travelled to Michigan, where suicide and assisted suicide are legal, to use his machine, and she died in Kevorkian's rusty old Volkswagon van last June. (In November, Dr. Kevorkian was indicted for murder. Prosecutor Richard Thompson said of his decision: "For me not to charge Dr. Kevorkian would turn Oakland County into the suicide mecca of our nation." A judge threw out the murder charge on December 13, and Kevorkian was reportedly "pleasantly surprised.")

A. Alvarez wrote that the poet Robert Lowell "once remarked

that if there were some little switch in the arm which one could press in order to die immediately and without pain, then everyone would sooner or later commit suicide." We only have Kevorkian's word that Janet Adkins did die at once and without pain; Kevorkian greeted the authorities with blood on his hands and trousers, and explained that he had had some difficulty inserting the needle in Adkins' vein. Nonetheless, the public perception of the suicide machine seems pretty close to Lowell's imagined switch, and "right-to-die" advocates have reason to support that perception.

It seems obvious that suicide will soon be argued as a right, and a choice—we will have the "thorough-going philosophical rationale" Alvarez wrote about twenty years ago. This has already happened with the campaign to legalize euthanasia, which is often little more than assisted suicide. People with terminal or debilitating illness are understood by our "compassionate" society as having sufficient reason to opt for death. That is why the Hemlock Society exists. Anyone who joins Hemlock can obtain information about the most effective ways to do himself in. Directions are found in the society's newsletter, and in founder Derek Humphry's book *Let Me Die Before I Wake*, which is also available in libraries. Suicide is called "self-deliverance" for the "mature adult who is dying." The literature cautions against use of described methods by anyone who is not terminally ill, or is simply depressed.

But if the philosophy is accepted, will not the "slippery slope" propel the Hemlock solution for terminal illness to crippling diseases, from physical illness to mental illness or retardation? Might not "euthanasia" and encouraged suicide be seen as a solution to those afflicted with crippling depression? Anyone who understands the nature of real depression could make an argument that mental anguish and psychic pain are as hope-draining and excruciating as physical diseases—perhaps even more so. As a matter of fact, for the severely depressed, intense physical pain can come as a relief, a redirection of their focus, a clearing even of their mind (it knows what *that* pain is). A person in depression cannot see ahead to a time when his symptoms will lessen—he has no reason to believe that his future is any brighter than Janet Adkins' future looked to her. And why should he not end his life, get relief from the pain. Who has the *right* to tell him he must continue suffering?

Suicide prevention programs usually run on the conviction that

life, anyone's life, is worth preserving. However, even in these programs—at least the one I am familiar with—there is also an emphasis on the rights of the individual. The Samaritans, who can be called on 24 hours a day, will provide just about any assistance a caller wants, and, in a desperate situation, will try to get the caller to divulge the address where an ambulance can be sent, or try to keep the caller on the phone until the crisis has passed. But calls are not traced, the caller can hang up any time, and one of the principles of the organization is that it is ultimately the person's choice whether or not to take his life. When I spoke with directors of some centers, it became clear to me that the organization is reluctant to officially denounce suicide—they are "not an advocacy group"—and thus be against a person's right to choose.

The Samaritans' literature poses this question: "If an individual wants to commit suicide, why not let him?" Answer: "The question assumes that a suicidal person wants to die. In fact, almost every person who feels suicidal is ambivalent about wanting to live and wanting to die. What is incorrectly labeled a suicide attempt is more often an attempt to communicate than an attempt to die."

Even though the organization is careful to use the language of choice, the statement that few suicidal people really do want to die assumes that life is worth living in the midst of painful circumstances. And no one I worked with on the hotline ever agreed with a caller that death was an acceptable option. But what will happen to these organizations if the dominant and "politically correct" view is that choice over life is what is most important? Then who are these counselors to try to sway a person's choice? Suicide help centers may then resemble abortion clinics—a perfunctory counseling session to find out if the person who wants to end his life knows all the facts ("this is final, you know") has considered the alternatives, and, if the "patient" is still determined, the organization can provide help in choosing the cleanest and least painful method of death—a dignified and humane end to a life lost through choice.

The highest suicide rate in our country is among the elderly, for obvious reasons—illness, isolation from families, fear of "being a burden." Teenagers are another high-risk group, and their suicides are much more widely mourned; they "have their whole lives ahead of them." A frightening factor in teenage suicide is the "copycat" phenomenon: suicides sometimes happen in clusters in the same high school or town. Feeling isolated from the adult world and hearing

of another teen suicide, a teen may be drawn to an attempt himself, thinking, "he/she had the guts to do it, why don't I?" Certainly this involves adolescent rebellion, a wish to do whatever will make adults suffer. But what will happen if adults develop similar attitudes? Some columnists have praised Janet Adkins' "choice." Indeed, people join the Hemlock Society so that, should they find themselves ill, they will also be given the support to have the "courage" to end their lives. Now, they "ought" to be sick, very sick, to choose death. But someday soon mental anguish may qualify as an unbearable sickness. As with groups advocating availability of abortion and infanticide, the message of groups like the Hemlock Society is that it's not your life *per se* that matters, it's your quality of life. If your quality of life will always be marred by mental illness, perhaps you should choose not to live.

When I called the Hemlock Society in New York, the woman I talked to said she did not give out information on dying to anyone who is not terminally ill. When people call who are depressed, she tries to talk them out of their suicidal feelings or get them to seek counseling. However, if a person is terminally ill, she believes that person *does* have the right to die—she thinks that the elderly should not be kept alive on machines, and she herself would like to die as soon as she started to become a "burden" on her family.

This woman said she herself was 85 years old, and had lived a full life, and she sounded so *nice* I almost found myself agreeing with her. But she gave me the impression that Hemlock information was difficult to come by. In fact, it is easy. I sent a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Society, for information, and now I have the order form for Hemlock Society books. If I were to become a member, for $10, I would receive their quarterly newsletter with information on death by several means, including "the use of plastic bags in self-deliverance" and a "drug dosage table," which gives lethal dosage amounts according to type of drug and person's weight, etc. Ironically, this is some of the same information I had at the Samaritans, but there I used it to warn callers about painful side effects of drugs and to encourage those who had taken something to go immediately to the emergency room. I would keep a caller on the line and call poison control on another, and often what I told the caller was what he had taken or wanted to take would give him *not* a sleepy and painless death but violent pain, internal

bleeding, and—if not death—permanent damage. (I remember my great relief one day when poison control told me that a lethal dose a woman on my other line had just ingested would not kill her after all, because of her heavy weight—she would be awfully sick, however, if she didn't get her stomach pumped.)

The Hemlock Society and the Samaritans seem to be working at cross purposes: both are manned by people who believe they are offering compassionate assistance; the difference is that one will try to help you get through suffering to the next day, and the other will encourage you to make that day your last.

Again, the Hemlock Society officially exists only for the terminally ill. But for the suicidal person, the Hemlock Society's stand on the right-to-die can translate as "if they are doing it (for x), why can't I do it (for y)?" (And obviously the most dangerous thing about suicide isn't the method, but the *will*—anyone who really wants to do it can find a way, Hemlock or not.) Arguments for the right-to-die may follow the other life issues down the slippery slope. At one time abortion was only to be for hard cases and infanticide was unthinkable; today, one can get an abortion for any reason and infanticide is common. Proponents of euthanasia argue that it can be legal if "very strictly controlled"; if euthanasia is legalized, the controls may quickly loosen. Thousands of Americans die each year from suicide, as they do from cancer and from heart disease, but if the right-to-die advocates are widely heard, there will be little effort to prevent or "cure" suicide. A society obsessed with health seems really to be a society obsessed with death.

It is paradoxical that recognizing the value of life does sometimes involve death: if I give up my life in a war fighting for my country I am a hero—because I have sacrificed something of great value. Liberals are supposedly against capital punishment because of the value of life. But most liberals are for abortion. Perhaps it is not the value of life that matters so much as who makes the decision. Liberals choose to believe that a woman's right to abort is more important than her baby's right to life. The "politically correct" believe that the state should not choose to give a prisoner a lethal injection, even if he wants it, because death is too cruel a punishment for the product of an ill society who might be reformed. Janet Adkins chose a lethal injection for herself and Dr. Kevorkian chose to help her and *they* are praised for their insight and their courage. As Amy Pagnozzi (in the *New York Post*) wrote: "Mrs. Adkins looked Kevorkian

'right in the eye' and said 'I want to die. Please help me,' according to Kevorkian's lawyer, Geoff Fieger. This is not about dying with dignity. *It's about saying when—and who says it.*" [emphasis mine] The value of life becomes more and more arbitrary, depending completely on a choice and who is making it.

This glorification of the "choice ethic" ignores the obvious fact that people often make choices harmful to themselves, others, or to society. Protecting "choice" at all costs does not offer much protection for the individual himself. Restricting people's choices is one of the most obvious necessities for any society—I may not choose to shoot you, I may not choose to drive 100 miles an hour on the highway. Perhaps what has changed, then, is not the importance of choice over non-choice. We have seldom allowed people to make "bad" choices. What has changed is our perception of the choices: in other words, pro-choicers are willing to allow abortion because they really do not see it as an evil, but a positive good, and those who promote euthanasia and assisted suicide see mercy-killing and self-inflicted death as good—at least for others, if not for themselves. We don't have a "pro-choice" movement for child-abuse, incest, or smoking on airplanes, because society thinks these choices are bad and hurt others. Some of us believe abortion is bad and hurts—kills—others, but we are supposed to be "personally opposed" to it and publicly in favor of "choice."

Man has always had "choice": the ability to exercise his free will in choosing good or evil. Today, when we talk about choices involving life and death and good and evil, we tend to use the same language we use when describing a choice about a car, a house, or a job. We picture a calm and objective individual making a rational choice among several alternatives, and the morality involved is usually based on the individual's understanding of the good. But we humans are always vulnerable to outside pressures—even someone choosing a laundry detergent is vulnerable to marketing strategies designed to influence him, that is how advertising works. Suicide, and abortion, involve people who make a choice in a time of crisis. People in crisis are extremely vulnerable and subjective, and they are often apt to make the wrong choice, and if I can't say "wrong," maybe I can say a choice they will regret later? But of course, suicide is the one choice humans will never have time on earth to regret.

When *we* see someone we love in crisis, we try to help them reach out for the right choice. If society acted as an entity concerned for

the welfare of its citizens, it would watch out for people making choices in crisis. Instead, our society is moving toward legalization of choices once thought to be acts of desperation. Why? Is it selfishness? Would we rather not have the ill, the depressed, and the deformed around? Is it despair? Have we so completely lost the idea and the conviction that life is sacred, that we all join in an existential relativity? I think there *is* despair, but we are unable to admit that and so we have posited a new good, choice. I wonder how one can get satisfaction out of this higher good, higher even then life? Even some of the most burdened of humans have gotten satisfaction out of life, just life itself (how good it is to be alive), and even some of the most doubting humans have allowed for the existence of a Divine plan. Do we really believe that people feel the same way about choice? Can we imagine seeing a beautiful sunset and saying, "how good it is to have a choice, whether to be here or not?"

"I believe every person ought to have the right to choose when he or she wants to die." This quote is from a *Newsweek* letter to the editor in response to a "My Turn" column by Geri Coppernoll Couchman, whose husband committed suicide. The letter writer, Robert Stepan, goes on to say: "If society had a more accepting view of suicide, those considering ending their lives might even be more willing to seek help. For those who choose death, however, such inelegant tactics as shotguns under the chin [Couchman's husband used this method] shouldn't be necessary; euthanasia ought to be available." In the column Stepan read, Couchman writes of her incredible pain; her grief, depression, and guilt. She has also found that society's reaction to a survivor can be harsh, responding with silence and suspicion instead of compassion. She has experienced explicit and implicit blame for her husband's death, and she feels the judgment from religious prejudice against the act. She wrote her column so that others would know what it is like to be a survivor and the kind of anguish society can put survivors through.

Our hearts go out to Couchman and others like her; I can't even imagine the extra pain involved in being blamed for the death of a loved one. May she find more compassionate and supportive friends. But if we accept the points in Stepan's letter, if suicide were an accepted choice, then are we to believe that this woman and others like her would not be suffering so? Perhaps Couchman's husband would have informed her of his choice, and maybe even given her a kiss goodbye. Perhaps he would have chosen a less "inelegant,"

messy method. Maybe then she would be able to tell her children about their brave father who chose to leave them all, maybe then she would be able to hold her head high among her neighbors.

What I find most chilling is that opinions like Stepan's no longer seem shocking in a widely-read American magazine. Yet a statement like "I believe every person ought to have the right to choose when he or she wants to die," ought to be a blockbuster, as it calls our entire ethical system into question.

In his famous essay, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Albert Camus wrote: "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy." Camus concludes that suicide is not legitimate, not because there is a God, but because there isn't. For Camus, if one accepted the fact that life was indeed absurd, then one could accept that it had no meaning. Hope is an escape, hoping that life has meaning; despair is the opposite of hope, and also in a way demands meaning from life by being an anguished reaction to life's consequences; but if one truly accepts absurdity, then that in itself can make life livable, until death naturally occurs. Death from despair makes no sense if one hadn't expected any meaning from life. I think Camus recognized man's innate desire for life, but found his own meaning in absurdist philosophy, so he had to come up with an existential explanation for sticking around. But even in his (I would say warped) view, there is an acknowledgement that suicide is the all-important question. What we do with the life God or no-god gave us is crucial to how we define ourselves as humans.

I prefer to look at another writer and thinker, Malcolm Muggeridge, who attempted suicide in the 1940's. At the time he was with British Intelligence and posted in Mozambique. In his autobiography, *Chronicles of Wasted Time*, Muggeridge writes:

> It was now that the absurdity, the futility, the degradation of how I had been living seized me with irresistible force . . . here in this remote forgotten corner of the world, I fell into the final abyss of despair . . . it came into my mind that there was, after all, one death I could still procure. My own. I decided to kill myself.
>
> It was before the days of barbiturates; otherwise I should have certainly swallowed a bottle of them then and there, and not be writing these words.

Malcolm, balking at the prospect of shooting himself, decided to drown. He was stationed at Lourenço Marques, on the coast. He

drove to the farthest point along the beach at night, and set out to swim until he was too exhausted to move, so he could quietly drown:

> I started swimming, the dark water churning white as my arms beat through it. Soon I was out of my depth, and still swam on. Now I felt easy, now it was settled. Looking back I could scarcely see the shore . . . I began to tremble, all my body trembled; I went under the water, trembling, came up again and reposed myself as though on a bed. I could sleep on this watery mattress, sleep. Then, suddenly, without thinking or deciding, I started swimming back to shore . . . I shouted foolishly for help, and kept my eyes fixed on the lights of Peter's Cafe and the Costa da Sol.
>
> They were the lights of the world; they were the lights of my home, my habitat, where I belonged. I must reach them. There followed an overwhelming joy such as I had never experienced before; an ecstasy. In some mysterious way it became clear to me that there was no darkness, only the possibility of losing sight of a light which shone eternally; . . . that our sufferings, our affliction, are part of a drama—an essential, even an ecstatic part—endlessly revolving around the two great propositions of good and evil, of light and darkness.

Muggeridge writes that this episode, though he hardly realized it at the time, represented a deep change in his life. It was the beginning of a religious conversion. "In a tiny dark dungeon of the ego, chained and manacled, I had glimpsed a glimmer of light coming in through a barred window high above me . . . The bars of the window, as I looked more closely, took on the form of the Cross."

Muggeridge's resolution of a suicidal crisis was for him the beginning of a new life of hope. He reached rock-bottom, but not quite literally, and because he did not succeed in his attempt he went on not only to become a better husband and father but to find peace in a religious conversion and to influence and inspire millions by his writings. As he says, these were the days before barbiturates—what would have happened if he had them, or if he had been "prudent" and politically-correct enough to be a member of the Hemlock society, and had had its literature handy?

In an article in *Commentary* (November, 1990), Margaret Liu McConnell writes about life post *Roe v. Wade*. The fact that abortion is legal and available, she says, has had the effect of making something that seemed only a desperate last resort seem normal, acceptable, and even casual—no longer something done only for the most serious reasons. And the "constitutional right" of women to terminate pregnancies so efficiently has led to more casual sex, and has contributed, she argues, to crime and abuse in the underclass, by making life's

value cheap. (In New York City, nine people have been shot in the last weeks for their coats; a boy has shot three people for money to apply to college; another youth killed a man "who looked at him funny"—how much cheaper can life get?) Removing the taboo against suicide and making *that* an acceptable choice, it seems to me, is about as far as we can go down the slippery slope. It relegates life's objective value to the subjective opinion of one individual; this used to be the domain of criminals.

Are the burning moral issues of our day the treatment of the environment and furry animals, but not whether or not we are answerable to a "Higher Power" for our lives? We worry about animals' pain, and yet we brush off human pain with the convenient solution of death. Are we so morally impoverished that the questions have little meaning and so we distract ourselves from our own angst by shedding tears for the baby seal? And why has it become so easy for us to accept the responsibility for life and death decisions?

Devaluing the conviction that life is worth living is as harmful to our psychic environment as pouring pollutants into our waters or killing our beautiful animals is harmful to our physical environment. Even if we can't expect a belief in God to prevent people from playing god, we should be able to see that making it easy for people to opt out of the only life they know will make it harder for people to give their lives meaning.

We live in an age in which, ironically, we are well-equipped to combat suicide. The subject used to be met with silence and shame often until it was too late; now the suicidal can find immediate help, and even empathy and understanding. We can help others in despair more than we realize by simple reasserting that their life, because they are human, has intrinsic worth and dignity, no matter how difficult or hopeless the circumstances. Those who offer the choice of death out of compassion for the suffering do not see that death from despair is the ultimate denial of the very dignity "choice" is supposed to promote.

The Mountain and the Plain

Chilton Williamson, Jr.

RECENTLY IN THESE PAGES, (*"The Environmentalism of Abortion," Fall, 1990)* I argued that a respect for natural life—for which environmentalists are concerned—is an aspect of the universal sanity that reverences also the improbable combination of natural and supernatural life which enters existence as a human fetus—and for which anti-abortionists have concern. My point was that "conservatives" are as wrong to separate the creation from man as "liberals" are to separate man from the creation, both sides presuming a fundamental antagonism between man and nature that is relegated in fact to the mutual ill-feeling between the opposing human parties.

There is no reason why someone who loves the natural world should on that account feel antipathy toward human beings and those who love them; no reason why someone who loves human beings should imagine an obligational destiny to subdue and californicate the earth. In the earlier piece, I said that the anti-environmentalists are too often "more man-centered than they ought to be—not that a man can have too much charity, but simply that he can have too little appreciation of all that God made that is not human." Now, I want to consider the obverse claim: that the wilderness-lovers are more nature-centered than *they* ought to be, and that they have too little appreciation of all that God made that is not wholly natural.

When the famous nature photographer Ansel Adams died several years ago, Richard Brookhiser, writing the obituary for *National Review,* dismissed him with these words, or something like them: "Ansel Adams never took a picture of a human being in his life." By that sentence, so it seemed to me at the time, Brookhiser had drawn a line in the sand and dared somebody to step across it. Unfortunately, to my knowledge nobody ever did, including Richard Brookhiser. When environmentalists and their adversaries square off, they nearly always restrict the debate to economic and scientific arguments, perhaps because both sides assume that, far apart as they may be at the secondary level of the dispute, at the ontological one they have nothing at all to say to each other. How Ansel Adams,

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from beyond the grave, might have answered Brookhiser's dismissal of his life's work is nevertheless a matter of importance to those people who, like myself, prefer to keep our residence in the mountains, so to speak, rather than in the plain. "Ansel Adams never took a picture of a human being in his life." That statement is the declarative echo of the question asked of me a few years ago by my friend the neoconservative author and editor: "Why would you want to live in *Wyoming?*" Though this man plainly did not expect an answer, his was more than a rhetorical query, deserving a deeper and more extensive explanation than I had space to give to it in my earlier piece.

What—to begin with—did this native New York intellectual fully intend by his remark? I can't be certain of course, but the following were probably subsumed: Why would you want to live outside New York City, which you know very well is the cultural and intellectual center of the United States of America? Why would you choose to live among cowboys and red Indians when you can live comfortably here among artists, intellectuals, and other brilliant, interesting, and important people? How could you, as a writer, expect to have any sort of career in a place like Wyoming? How could you trade Manhattan Island for mountains and desert waste? Finally, I believe, he also implied a criticism that coincides gently with Brookhiser's forthrightness: *Making one's life in the wilderness is a putting away of humanity, and therefore an act of irresponsibility amounting to misanthropy.*

While familiar with the photography of Ansel Adams, I know too little about the man himself to be able to judge whether he would have qualified as a misanthrope or not. Unquestionably he was the darling of the Sierra Club and other environmental groups, among whom what might fairly be described as misanthropy is rife. As our Christian intellectual tradition continues to unravel and to dissipate, American culture becomes increasingly fragmented, each of the parts tending to develop its polar center to which all of the surrounding unattached particles are drawn, so that subsidiary truths which once had validity in the context of an holistic structure of meaning are now regarded as primary truths to which all other values, both large and small, are made subordinate.

Environmentalism, obviously, is one such truth, disproportionately honored and therefore made a fetish for fanatics. Out in the Rocky Mountain states, the crusade of the decade promises to be the anti-

grazing movement which has taken for its slogan the motto "Cattle Free in '93," signifying that by 1993 Western stockgrowers must be forced to remove their animals from the public lands, leased by them for generations from the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management in Washington. During the past century, a way of life amounting to a civilization has established itself upon this complex system of federal leasing procedures, but this fact counts as nothing for the cattle-free people who have a single interest at heart—wilderness and more wilderness—and will not leave in peace before they have driven every sheep and every cow from the public range as well as, incidentally, ruined every ranching family and all of the little communities which those families help to support. Evidence has come to light recently, showing that the condition of the range lands of the American West has been *improving* during the past decade or so, and that properly grazed lands actually benefit by the practice.

Faced with this evidence, Earth First! types say Yes, well, sheep and cattle are a terrible offense to the eye and provide many unpleasant and unexpected occurrences underfoot; that backpacking and stockgrowing are fundamentally incompatible activities, and that therefore stockgrowing must go. If that kind of thinking isn't misanthropy with a capital M, then I can't imagine what is, or could be.

The splitting apart of sense, thought, and emotion in modern times is the chief cause of the zealotry which prevents the environmentalist movement from understanding that wilderness and the values that human beings find in wilderness are important only when they are connected with the other values and goods intended for men and with which men are meant to live. Similarly, anti-environmentalists, in their passionate and exclusive attachments to the idea of *Homo economicus*, are blind to the truth that economic freedom, progress, and abundance—Franklin Roosevelt's "more abundant life"—are not ends in themselves, and certainly not the highest ends.

Both of these armed opposing camps are equally to be blamed for their failure to comprehend that nature, while designed for man's good, was created for God's end. Better than any other American fiction writer of this century, with the exception of the Southern Agrarian and Christian Andrew Lytle, Flannery O'Connor dramatized the post-Christian world succumbing to metaphysical fragmentation, and the degree in which pride and self-will have driven and directed the process. Her story "A Circle in the Fire," about a prosperous

dairy-farm owner whose pride of ownership encloses her property like a Chinese wall, is balanced by another of hers, "A View of the Woods," in which a covetous old man is eager to degrade the land of which he ought to be the steward in the name and hope of economic profit and of "progress." Viewed outside the holistic context, any value or any thing easily becomes an object of that inflamed desire we call lust. Frank Sheed thought that for fallen man sex is simply too exciting; and indeed men have always placed sex and nature very close to one another, and both of these very close to God. For early man, nature was the primitive temptation, to which a vocal portion of contemporary mankind is apparently reverting. Those who have fallen promiscuously in love with Mother Nature are another kind of Don Juan, abandoning first their hearts and finally their souls to her profligate charms. For them, as for D.H. Lawrence, nature, sex, and God are all mixed together in a bubbling aromatic stew like the one prepared for the cannibal feast in Evelyn Waugh's novel, *Black Mischief.*

As recently as a century ago, the Christian worldview was still sufficiently intact to accommodate satisfactorily the libido for wild places—and for the wild peoples inhabiting them—that seems to have been particularly strong among the English and the Scots. Charles Montagu Doughty and General Charles George Gordon were two extremely different personalities having in common their Christian devotion and their experiences of something basic to their faith in the wilderness. Doughty, a geologist and biblical scholar of gentle demeanor concealing an iron interior strength, disguised himself as a Muslim pilgrim and rode with the *Haj* on its way to Mecca as far as the ancient abandoned city of Medáin Sâlih, whose enigmatic inscriptions were rumored to have biblical significance. Doughty discovered in them no such value, but instead of traveling back to Damascus with the returning *Haj* he lived with the Bedouin for two years, accompanying them as they made the annual circuit with their flocks about their *dîras.*

The geologist in Doughty was attentive to the topography of the Arabian desert, of which he made numerous careful sketches, but obviously life in the wilderness appealed to him at a level deeper than the scientific one. Frequently repelled by this harsh and solitary existence, never quite embracing it, he nevertheless was unable to ignore it and incapable of failing to appreciate it. The black worsted

tents of the Bedouin reminded him of the tents of Abraham, of that few and primitive people called by God to be His own; while the harsh and often terrible simplicity of the environment, as well as the vexed and impatient affection he felt for his hosts, evoked and inspired in him a more grand simplicity and a fierce honesty which at times suggests a Christlike demeanor. In the vast desolation of the Arabian peninsula, Charles Doughty was perhaps more completely alive in human society than he was back home in England where, after composing his masterpiece *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, he spent the rest of his life in a remote cottage in the country writing bad epic poetry. Years later, when Colonel T.E. Lawrence arrived in the Peninsula to organize a united Arab army, he spoke with the grandsons of the men among whom his predecessor had sojourned and found that the name *Khalîl* (literally "stranger") was legendary, a byword for physical bravery and for truthfulness at whatever risk to its quiet possessor.

General Gordon, a professional military man and often troublesome trouble-shooter for Imperial England, was a fervent but exceedingly eccentric Christian who remained throughout his life uncomfortable and un-at-home in Christendom. For civilization in its external manifestations, such as dinner parties and evening dress, salon society and marriageable maidens, and particularly for Whitehall and the elaborate hierarchy of the British Army, he seems to have felt an impatience amounting nearly to loathing. The African wilderness and the tribes of the Sudan eased and soothed that impatience, even as Gordon was attempting to impose a measure of civilization upon them by ending the slave trade and replacing corrupt and savage governors with humane and responsible ones.

Yet Gordon's intention appears never to have been to transform the peoples of Northeast Africa into darker replicas of European societies; rather, he discovered among them irreducible qualities of circumstance and environment that were a kind of earthly reflection of his spartan Protestant theology, his own materially untrammeled life, and his sense of man's spiritual condition in his world. For the Christian Gordon, the Sudan was not the Heart of Darkness; instead it was a source of light. Strangely, when one considers his many philanthropic works when he was at home in England, he had no interest in missionizing the Africans and he regarded his fatal commission to supress the Mahdi as an imperial task, not a religious crusade or counter-*jihad*.

One of the most philosophically whole and sane, as well as one of the most enjoyable, accounts of civilized man's existence in the wilderness is to be found in the letters of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, S.J., the Belgian-born priest who served for nearly forty years as missionary to the Indians of the American West (and whom, incidentally, John Cardinal O'Connor, in a homily delivered in Daniel, Wyoming last summer in a mass said in celebration of the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the territory's first eucharistic service, recommended for canonization). Like Charles Doughty among the Bedouin, Father De Smet was known to the Indian tribes as one who never spoke to them with a forked tongue; like Doughty also, he was protected by his Faith from the Romantic temptation. Much as he loved the people to whom he preached the word—the Snakes, the Flatheads, the Osages, the Crows—he was never blind to the faults and failing that rose directly from their fundamental savagery. And though he truly feared the depredation that encroaching civilization would make upon the aboriginal nomads, he nevertheless looked for that civilization and welcomed its coming on the Great Plains and in the Rocky Mountain West. Even so, his anticipation was mixed. Deep in the Northern Rockies, a few miles west of what is today the town of West Yellowstone, Montana, Father De Smet gathered the Flatlands and the Pend d'Oreilles about him. "I said a mass," he wrote,

> of thanksgiving at the foot of this mountain, surrounded by my savages, who intoned chants to the praise of God, and installed myself in the land in the name of our holy founder. Let us implore his aid, that through his intercession in heaven, this immense desert, which offers such great hopes, may speedily be filled with worthy and unwearying laborers. To-day is the accepted time to preach the gospel to these different nations. The apostles of Protestantism are beginning to crowd in and pick out the best places, and soon the cupidity and avarice of civilized man will make the same inroads here as in the east, and the abominable influence of the vices of the frontier will interpose the same barrier to the introduction of the gospel, which all the savages seem to have a great desire to know, and which they will follow with fidelity, like the Flatheads and the Pend d'Oreilles.

Its absolutely uninhabitable wastes—and there are relatively few of these—apart, the earth contains no wilderness so wild that the human presence remains completely absent from it, let alone the Divine one. God is present in the wilderness, unlike the sound of the proverbial tree falling unapprehended by human or other creaturely ears. The only people who, going into the mountains in search of

a world that no man has made, do not find instead the one that God created, are those who neither expect nor wish to do so. But He is not present in it the way in which the Great Spirit worshipped by the American Indians was present in the wilderness as it was known to the aborigines. In Andrew Lytle's novel of the De Soto expedition, *At the Moon's Inn*, Juan Ortiz, the Spaniard who lived for twelve years among the Florida tribes before his rescue by Hernando DeSoto's men, reflects that, "He would never discover the mystery of this absolute oneness between the Indians and their world." He could not, because he was a part of Christendom which had forced a wedge between nature and spirit, thus creating a divide that paganism could never again fill in. As I once heard a Lutheran pastor, discoursing on his congregation's duty to be in church on Sunday instead of in the mountains, say, "If it were true that we could find God in the wilderness then the Indians would all have been Christians."

I remember thinking at the time that here was an unexceptionable statement, until I recalled that finding God is not the same thing as finding Christ; that God may be apprehended in some degree by the solitary individual, while it is through our fellow men—so we are told—that we must come to Christ, and only then satisfactorily to God. Of course, in order to attain Christ through men we must be where other men are; which is not, to borrow Henry David Thoreau's terms, amid the "grandeur" of the mountains but instead in the "desultory life" of the plain, where at nightfall the people go into their houses and shut their doors (Thoreau, "Wachussett"). Although according to Thoreau it is "[i]n passing over these heights of land, through their thin atmosphere, [that] the follies of the plains are refined and purified," the majority of men have no desire to visit what (in his description of Mt. Katahdin in Maine) he called "that Earth of which we have heard, made out of Chaos and Old Night . . . no man's garden, but the unhandselled globe." (Interestingly, he also described Katahdin as "a place for heathenism and superstitious rites,—to be inhabited by men nearer of kin to the rocks and to wild animals than we.")

Even Thoreau—who, partly as a result of his posthumous cooptation by the environmentalist movement, today enjoys a reputation as an hermetic misanthrope—recognized upon his return to Concord following his epiphany atop Wachussett hill that "this level life too has its summit . . . that there is elevation in every hour, as no part of the earth is so low that the heavens may not be seen

from it, and we have only to stand on the summit of our hour to command an uninterrupted horizon." And he concluded his essay by paying warm tribute to "the brave hospitality of a farmer and his wife, who generously entertained him at their board, though the poor wayfarer could only congratulate the one on the continuance of hay weather, and silently accept the kindness of the other."

Nowadays the preferred model for Christian spirituality is less people like Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk, or even Father De Smet, than it is Mother Teresa, living and working and praying in a city of the Third World where millions of people lie rotting on top of one another. It is now an urban world most of us inhabit, and the prevailing attitude worldwide seems to be that modern man's duty is tied to the metropolis, that his destiny is to be found there, and that to live and work outside of it is to shirk that destiny and indulge oneself in a form of escapism. According to Paul Johnson in his *A History of Christianity*, the first Christian monks settled in the Egyptian desert close by the Nile.

Here, St. Jerome says, St. Paul of Thebes lived for a hundred and thirteen years near the city of the same name, clothed only in palm leaves and fed daily by a crow; at his death, a pair of lions were his grave-diggers before turning to welcome his successor, St. Anthony, who spent ninety years as a solitary, never learned to read and write, never washed, and never changed his clothes. Such lives are not widely considered these days to be worth much to anyone; particularly since the object of the saints' contemplation was not nature itself but rather God, the desert being thought by them desirable for its inability to offer temptations and other distractions from the spiritual life, and not for any special value it might of its own right possess.

Still, Christ Himself retired to the desert when He wished to address His Father, and the Gospels suggest that it either added to the consolation He received from prayer or that poetically it was the appropriate setting for it. He was born in a cave on the edge of a small desert town; and His way was prepared for Him by a man who lived in the wilderness, dressed in skins, and ate locusts and wild honey when he was hungry. He was many times on the point of retiring into the desert, when the pity that He felt for the importunate crowds at His back caused Him to turn and give them His teaching in the form of parables. He could have enjoyed a wider audience had He spent more of His time in Jerusalem and either hired scribes to take

down His words or else ordered His disciples to do so; and He left it to St. Paul of Tarsus to travel, after His death, to the great metropolises of the Gentiles, Athens and Rome, the seat of the world's greatest empire.

Christ's immediate concern, while He was on earth, was not for scale but for completeness; not for numbers but for the few who were with Him; not for the race but for His sheep, the Jewish nation. The rest He left for His Church, which was to follow later. I do not mean to detract from the sanctity of Mother Teresa when I suggest that George Bernanos' (fictional) country priest is poetically as close an analogue of Jesus Christ as is this great woman of the teeming Calcutta slums.

Really, environmentalists in general and wilderness advocates in particular exaggerate the extent to which they are willing to exchange the values of the mountains for those of the "desultory plain." Most of these people after all do not make their homes in the wilderness or anywhere close to it, but live in cities like Boulder, San Francisco, and Albuquerque. Edward Abbey, the late dean of environmentalist writers, lived in Tucson, where he taught a writing class at the University of Arizona and where he could visit daily with a wide circle of his friends and fellow authors. The majority of environmental activists and their sympathizers probably spend no more than one or two weeks a year in the wilderness with which—unlike Lytle's Juan Ortiz—they claim an "absolute oneness." The trouble is not that environmentalists lead misanthropic lives but that they have a misanthropic metaphysic, speak a misanthropic language, and hold on to a misanthropic agenda. One suspects that if they could only—just for once—hear themselves speak and watch themselves in action, they would be abashed; perhaps even appalled. Although they claim to be tough-minded and un-sentimental people, in fact they are guilty in the highest degree of sentimentality, which R. H. Blythe defined as loving something more than God does, as well as of what C.S. Lewis, in his discussion of Henri Bergson, calls "biolatry."

In his lovely and wise book *The Desert Year,* about the Lower Sonoran Desert in Arizona, Joseph Wood Krutch wrote the following passage:

> Not to have known—as most men have not—either the mountain or the desert is not to have known one's self. Not to have known one's self is to have known no one, and to have known no one makes it relatively easy to suppose, as sociology commonly does, that the central problems are the

> problems of technology and politics. . . . No man in the middle of a desert or on top of a mountain has ever fell victim to the delusion that he himself was nothing except the product of social forces, that all he needed was a proper orientation in his economic group, or that production per man hour was a true index of happiness. No such man, if he permitted himself to think at all, ever thought anything except that consciousness was the greatest of all facts and that no good life for either the individual or a group was possible on any other assumption. No man in such a position ever doubted that he himself was a primary particle, an ultimate reality.

Or, Krutch might have added, that every one of his fellow men was, either.

Who knows what men find in the mountains, beyond such a truth? For myself, I can truly say that the two greatest experiences of my life are hearing the celebration of the Sunday mass and those moments when, sitting astride a good horse, I gaze from a high mountain pass into some majestic alpine basin—hitherto undiscovered by me—and across that bowl of pale supernatural grass, summer flowers, and twisted Krumholz pine to the granite peaks beyond.

Perhaps, instead of being seated there, I ought to be in Miami writing an in-depth research story about a detoxification center for impoverished inner city black youths, newly established by a pair of left-wing Catholic refugees from El Salvador. If so, I can plead only that, like Mr. Krutch, I am one of those unfortunate people for whom "it is easier to love both man and men when there are not too many (or even not too obviously enough) of the last." And suggest that were it not for my ability to live at a remove where and as I choose, I might be a still more misanthropic person than it is possible I really am.

Abortion in the News

Phyllis Zagano

THE NEW YORK OF THE MID-1800's was in many respects a wide-open town. One of its most infamous personages was Ann Lohman. The fame and fortune of Caroline Ann Trow Lohman (1812-1878) depended in large part on newspapers—on newspaper advertisements, on newspaper coverage of trials, on newspaper arguments regarding the propriety or impropriety of her various activities. Her past and path are both curious and star-crossed, and her story piques interest even today. For Caroline Ann Trow Lohman, known at least since 1839 as Madame Restell, female physician, was an abortionist.

By all accounts, she seems to have been born in England about 1812 where, sixteen years later, she married the widowed Henry Somers.[1] She emigrated with him and his daughter to the United States in 1831; he died in New York City in 1833. Three years later she married Charles R. Lohman, and by 1839 she had taken advertising space in *Longworth's American Almanac, New York Register and City Directory.* Caroline Restell, physician, with offices located at 160 Greenwich Street.[2] This listing continued through 1843.

While the nature of her business was admittedly clandestine, she was, at the start, no more notorious than any of the other mid-century purveyors of "French Cures" and female potions. In 1839, for example, James Gordon Bennett's New York *Herald*[3] carried advertisements for a Mrs. Bird, who sold Dr. Vanderburgh's Female Renovating Pills, and for James H. Hart, M.D., who recommended (and sold) Baudelocque's Feminine and Tonic Pills. One of Mrs. Bird's advertisements is a typical example:

> Dr. Vanderburgh's Female Renovating Pills, from Germany, an effectual remedy for suppression, irregularity, and all cases where nature does not have her regular and proper course. NB. Not to be taken during pregnancy. The sale of 1400 boxes during the last nine months is sufficient guarantee of their efficacy. Sold only by Mrs. Bird, Midwife and Female Physician, 22 Bowery, New York. Likewise, her celebrated Soothing Syrup, for children teething, a safe, sure and effectual remedy. Also, an excellent remedy for sore nipples, prepared and sold as above. Mrs. Bird continues to be consulted on all diseases incident to females.[4]

In the event that the feminine reader of her advertisements did not

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understand what precisely was meant by "nature does not have her regular and proper course," Mrs. Bird notes that her pills are "Not to be taken during pregnancy," a signal no woman could fail to pick up.

By 1840, Madame Restell had joined the ranks of advertising female physicians. Her new address, 148 Greenwich Street, appears to have been her place of business at least until 1847.[5] Her advertisements, often as not inserted among those for "Lemon Syrup" and opthalmic surgery, included interesting claims for her services:

> MADAME RESTELL, Female Physician, principal office 148 Greenwich Street, between Courtland and Liberty streets, New York, where her celebrated "Preventive Powders" for married ladies can be obtained. Price five dollars a package. "Circulars," more fully explanatory, can be obtained at the office, as well as sent to any part of the United States free of expense (postage excepted). All communications must be post-paid and addressed to MADAME RESTELL, Female Physician, principal office, 148 Greenwich street, New York.[6]

An advertisement some months later for her "Preventive Powders" asks "is it not wise and virtuous to prevent evils to which we are subject?[7]

In the event the "evils" to which women were subject were not avoided, that is, pregnancy did begin, Madame Restell also sold what were advertised as "Madame Restell's Female Monthly Pills, long well known in Europe for their efficiency and safety . . ."[8] These, as with the other powders she sold, were reportedly developed by her brother, Joseph F. Trow, who worked in a pharmacy. Their efficacy was and remains questionable; one pamphlet writer has deducted that they were a concoction of alum and other salts, all relatively harmless, but ineffective nonetheless.[9] Despite their doubtful efficacy, they were on sale in 1840 at four New York City locations, including her Greenwich Street office, and in Newark, New Jersey and Providence, Rhode Island as well. This "medicine specially adapted to produce those regular actions so indispensable to health"[10] was not unlike the "French Lunar Pills" of Louis Drouett, or the remedies of Mrs. Mott, "the celebrated female physician"[11] both of which were also regularly advertised in Bennett's *Herald.* The principal competing New York "penny press" newspaper, the *Sun,* carried Madame Restell's advertisements as well, some of which more clearly explained her powders without naming them directly. A long front-page advertisement in the *Sun* directed "To Married Women," presents

her argument for contraception:

> Much of the suffering, misery, wretchedness and vice existing around us can be attributable to our ignorance of the capacity granted to us for a wise end, to control, in no small degree, our own destinies; but for this, many who now pine in poverty, toiling but to live, and living but to toil, may, in a few years, acquire a comfortable competence, and extend to their offspring those advantages of education and acquirements which their present pecuniary circumstances deprive them of bestowing . . .[12]

The notice goes on to argue that there were children deprived of their mother's love by her early and untimely death in childbirth. These living children, Restell argued, could have been better served by her self-protection from pregnancy, and their reluctant better care. It is clearly abortion which is the preferred curative in this advertisement, and Madame Restell's long office hours of 9 A.M. to 7 P.M. invite women of all circumstances to visit, clandestine or otherwise .

Soon Madame Restell's actions, coupled with her advertisements, began to attract public scrutiny and create a public feud between Horace Greeley, then about to begin his *Tribune* in New York and James Gordon Bennett, who carried the preponderance of Restell's advertisements in his *Herald.* As others have noted, Greeley attacked all manner of what he viewed as journalistic low-life (especially in the penny press), from scandalous police reporting to Madame Restell's advertisements in the *Sun* and the *Herald.*[13] While he objected to all manner of vulgarity, sensationalism, and spuriousness in the press, Greeley's interest in Madame Restell was no doubt aroused by the wide newspaper coverage of her indictment for murder and abortion. Indicted as Ann Trow Lohman, Madame Restell was charged with the death of a Mrs. Purdy resulting from a failed abortion she performed. This trial resulted in conviction on two counts of abortion with instruments, but not conviction for the murder of Mrs. Purdy. That she evaded ultimate conviction on any charge is clear testimony to her financial security, for her lawyers eventually had the possibility of any further trial eliminated because of the death of the principal witness, Mrs. Purdy. Still, she was convicted by the opinion of the public which followed the scandals in the *National Police Gazette*, or in pamphlets.

Meanwhile, Greeley argued loudly against her advertisements and those like them, calling the publishers who printed them accomplices to abortion. No doubt he hoped to skim the high-minded readers

away from the *Sun* and the *Herald.*[14] For his part, James Gordon Bennett reminded his readers that the press did not force anyone to make use of the items advertised within, it was their choice to pursue their personal lives as they wished. But Greeley answered Bennett's *caveat emptor* argument:

> The man who shoots his neighbor from enmity may possibly plead palliation; but should he plead—'I bear him no malice—I was paid to do it'—how would that excuse him?—we fearlessly leave the whole matter to the deliberate judgement of the public.[15]

Clearly, for Greeley, the publisher should not merely rent space within the public eye of the newspaper, he ought to guard the public against offense. His attack, directly against the *Sun* and implicitly against the *Herald,* was joined the following day by even more vituperation:

> The *Sun* . . . that paper which has built its fortune upon publishing trials for procuring abortion, loathsome details of obscure vice, and everything calculated to stimulate the most prurient cravings for garbage . . .
>
> We are curious to know whether the Sunday Schools and Bible Societies, which are so graciously admitted to the position of humble but useful auxiliaries of the *Sun* in the great work of moral reformation, are to take a share in the credit of introducing Madame Restell so favorably and so thoroughly to the public as the *Sun* through the last two years has done, and of the fearfully demoralizing advertisements and puffs which it has so constantly and profusely vomited upon the community.
>
> According to the *Sun's* published code of morality, the Editors and Publisher of that sheet are no whit responsible for the indecency or depravity of any article in their columns, if they are only *paid for* inserting it; so we presume the credit of this portion for their missionary labors will not be worth saving.[16]

Madame Restell had become quite the celebrity, although hardly the celebrity she would become some years hence. For her own part, she defended her work and her powders and her pills, advertising in June, 1841 in the *Sun*:

> MADAME RESTELL deems it but justice to herself to invite the public to a perusal of her pamphlet entitled "Suggestions to the Married," from which it will abundantly appear that the abuse, vituperation and scurrility heaped upon her is founded either in misapprehension or misrepresentation. Those, therefore, who are ever ready to pronounce an opinion should first acquaint themselves with the facts, that they may pronounce understandingly. The pamphlet can be obtained free of expenses at Madame Restell's Principal Office, 148 Greenwich St., where she can be consulted on complaints incident to the female frame.[17]

In the 1841 Purdy trial, Lohman-Restell was convicted on two counts

of abortion with instruments, but the conviction was overturned on a technicality and a new trial ordered. While the advertisements she placed in self-defense did not save her from her appointment with the court, or from notorious publicity resultant from the trial, some joined Greeley in suggesting that Restell and others advertised widely (and expensively) in order to buy protection from editorial tirades.[18] This tack may have been partly successful. While Greeley's complaints were against all the symptoms of a scandalous press, his arguments against abortion advertising may have swayed his competitors slightly. Interestingly, members of the American Female Guardian Society and Home for the Friendless testified against Madame Restell in 1841[19]; two benefactors of said Society were Horace Greeley and James Gordon Bennett.[20] The 1841 court decision was front-page news in the *Daily Tribune*; her guilt is asserted and her ultimate luck at avoiding a new trial because of the death of the main witness decried.[21]

In 1847 Madame Restell was once again indicted for abortion. While she had had other legal troubles since 1841, including a charge of child-selling in February, 1846, it was the testing of the 1846 New York State abortion law which gained her the greatest notoriety. The 1828-1835 New York law clarifies the methods of abortion which are included in the original statute, and calls abortion, variously, first and second degree manslaughter. The statute was revised in 1845, and again in 1846. It is the revised 1846 statute under which Madame Restell was once again tried, this time for abortion, then considered manslaughter in the second degree and punishable by imprisonment. The section in question stated:

> Every person who shall administer to any woman pregnant with quick child, or prescribe for any such woman, or advise or procure any such women to take any medicine, drug or substance whatever, or shall use or employ any instrument or other means, with intent thereby to destroy such child, unless the same have been necessary to preserve the life of such mother, shall in case the death of such child, or such of mother be thereby produced, be deemed guilty of manslaughter in the second degree.[22]

Madame Restell was arrested under this law in September, 1847, and went to trial the following month.

In the eyes of the court, the victim of Madame Restell's ministrations was the child of Maria Bodine of Walden, Orange County and of Bodine's widowed employer, Joseph P. Cook, a cotton manufacturer. According to the trial transcript, as reprinted in full in the *National*

Police Gazette and in a *National Police Gazette* pamphlet, as well as in part in the *Herald* and the *Sun*[23], Joseph Cook seduced Maria Bodine and, on learning of her pregnancy, sent her to New York City for the express purpose of her submitting to an abortion by Madame Restell.[24]

Throughout the three weeks during which the trial was in the news, only the *National Police Gazette* actually reprinted the often graphic direct testimony. Even the notorious *Sun* paraphrased parts of the testimony[25] and omitted others, especially the clinical details of examinations performed upon Maria Bodine, and her own vivid description of the abortion procedure itself. As the weeks wore on, the trial slipped from page one to page two or three in the *Herald,* in direct relation to the scandal rising as the result of publicity elsewhere.

As could be expected, the *Tribune* did not sensationalize the trial; only small notes on inside pages kept readers up-to-date on the court's proceedings, for example:

> Court of Sessions—Wednesday—Trial of Madame Restell—resumed. The trial of Madame Restell was resumed, and the cross-examination of Maria Bodine continued—but no new facts were elicited.[26]

The trial began with the calling of jurors, on Wednesday, October 20, 1847. The next day the *Sun* reported:

> Caroline Lohman, alias Madame Restell, indicted for manslaughter in the second degree, in having produced an abortion on Maria Bodine, was placed at the bar for trial.[27]

From that day onward, the *Sun* reported every moment of the trial, conveniently omitting the more gruesome details of the abortion itself. The newspaper paraphrased the courtroom proceedings, dropping the prosecutor's direct questions and creating sentences where there were none. The information was not substantially changed, and the reporting, while not verbatim, is accurate, if less graphic in its description of Madame Restell's abortion practice than it might have been.

Within a week, news of the trial had spread, and even the *Sun* was reporting its own success at publicity:

> The court of Sessions is just now one of the most attractive places in the City, and a large crowd of persons were assembled outside its doors yesterday . . . The trial will doubtless be prolonged to an inordinant length; for where there is a multitude of counselors, 'the law's delay' is always strikingly verified.[28]

In all, the *Sun* printed four day's worth of paraphrased testimony, approximately the same as the *Herald.* But Bennett's *Herald* printed

somewhat more testimony than the slightly more scabrous *Sun* on crucial points. For instance, the *Herald* printed some paraphrased testimony the very day the *Sun* ran this short note:

> The trial of Madame Restell was resumed, and several witnesses called, who testified to the general bad character of the prosecutrix.[29]

Madame Restell was convicted on a misdemeanor charge of procuring a miscarriage, and received the maximum sentence of one year's imprisonment at the Blackwell's Island[30] prison. There she apparently received such obvious special treatment—a feather bed instead of the regulation straw mattress, for example—that the resultant scandal caused the warden's dismissal (but not until after her stay there).[31]

While the warden lost his job, pamphleteers profited greatly from Madame Restell's fame and ill-fortune. Within a few days, the *Sun* was able to advertise a pamphlet which eventually went into at least three printings:

> Madame Restell's Trial—We have received from Messrs. Camp & Wilkies, the publishers of the Police Gazette, a prettily printed pamphlet, containing Madame Restell's trial complete. It can be obtained at the office corner of Centre and Reade streets, for six cents.[32]

Another pamphlet, "By a Physician of New York," (anonymous, but copyrighted at the Library of Congress by Charles Smith) was entitled "Madame Restell: An Account of Her Life and Horrible Practices together with Prostitution in New-York."[33] It gives a reasonable history of Madame Restell's activities in New York up to the date of its printing, in 1847, and argues that, while the practice of abortion is clearly despicable, ought not society look toward those ills which cause it? Beyond, it is the newspapers, according to the writer, which both carried her trade and her fame. "The fruit of our rigid virtue is infanticide, murder and of late, Restellism—a name now fittingly bestowed, in some of our public prints, upon the procurement of abortion."[34] While he is no supporter of abortion, the pamphleteer still finds that "Madame Restell has been black mailed and abused by papers . . . "[35] Futhermore, he has little use for the newspaper editors whom he finds interested in Madame Restell and abortion only for the increased revenues they bring:

> During the almost ten years of the professional career of Madame Restell, there have been occasional outbursts of public indignation. After a period of quiet slumber, the volcano of the public press would burst forth. Fiend—demon—wretch—monster—have been applied to her, by those gentlemen of indignant virtue, the editors of certain papers. Others have stood aloof,

> and have dignifiedly refrained from any mention of the woman, or her practices; and neither, in my opinion, have done their duty.[36]

Whatever the outlook of the "gentlemen of indignant virtue," it is clear that the pamphleteer does not claim the *Herald*'s James Gordon Bennett among them. Later in the pamphlet the writer recounts the story of one of his young, unmarried, suddenly pregnant patients who begs him for medicinal relief of her plight. He refused, yet was taken by her story and wanted to encourage her to share her troubles with her mother. On visiting the patient at home, he surmises that he is too late, and that she has already succumbed to one of Madame Restell's fellows:

> 'What will not the desperate dare?' she said bitterly. Then taking up a copy of the Morning Herald, which lay on the bed beside her, she pointed to an advertisement.
>
> A look passed between us, but not a word was ever spoken.[37]

He continued some pages later:

> The reader may imagine how eagerly such a woman as this reads an advertisement of preventive powders, and how readily she resorts to the use of the . . . Dose after dose of the pills, which cunningly worded advertisements say "must not be taken during pregnancy," are swallowed at great risk to the constitution, but without the wished for effect.[38]

The temper and the tone of this pamphlet also argue that falling into the hands of purveyors of preventive powders is the rueful state of the poor, who either do not know or cannot afford the work of the abortionist, whose primary business it would seem comes at the time from the idle rich of various descriptions, and especially from ladies of the theater.[39] The writer wishes that the

> . . . Magistrates try the suggestion of the Sunday Dispatch and arrest and punish a dozen of the most wealthy and aristocratic of the patrons of the abortionist.[40]

Whether the cause can be obviated, or the true victims avenged is part and parcel of the argument of this pamphlet. It alludes as well to the other patent medicines so well advertised in daily newspapers and so little regarded as to their efficacy. Pregnancy was not the only condition advertisers sought to "cure." Even the stately *Tribune* ran advertisements for a potion whose powders included the cure of syphilis:

> Sand's Sarsaparilla—For the removal and permanent cure of all diseases arising from an impure state of the blood, or habit of system, namely:—rheumatism, sciatica, or lumbago, scrofula, or king's evil, obstinate cutaneous

> eruptions, pimples, or pustules on the face, ringworm or tetter, scald head, enlargement and pain of bones and joints, stubborn ulcers, syphilitic symptoms, and diseases arising from an injudicious use of mercury, acites, or dropsy, exposure or imprudence in life.[41]

As common as these advertisements—and their concomitant claims—were, they continued to run in the daily press without anyone impinging on the right to run them. The sporadic hue and cry died down as quickly as it erupted.

As for Madame Restell, within a few years of her conviction and subsequent imprisonment as a result of the Bodine trial, she was back in business, listed at 162 Chambers street (from 1851 until 1866) as a female physician.[42] Others continued to advertise "lunar pills" and "preventive powders" without authority of any sort hindering their trade. By 1868 the New York *Evening News* was carrying advertisements such as this:

> A cure for Ladies in Trouble DR. FOLSOM'S "LUNAR MIXTURE" can be used by Ladies with the certainty of relief in 24 hours. It removes all obstructions, from whatever causes, at once, and without pain, always safe; it positively cannot fail in any case. No. 1 Price $2, No. 2, $5; at private office, or sent by mail. Dr. Folsome cures all female troubles very quickly and privately. Private Board, etc. Advice free. Office 173 Thompson Street (near Bleeker Street) New York. Confidential information sent free by letter.[43]

Such "medical" advertising formed the backbone of many an advertising agency's business, and little was done by means of public law to prevent many of the false claims of advertisers (surreptitious or otherwise) for abortive measures or methods.[44] Newspapers were understandably reticent to object to such lucrative accounts. And as newspaper scandal died down, so did legal objections to the work of abortionists.

The remainder of Madame Restell's career, to be sure, was relatively untrammeled by intrusions of law. She was arrested on charges of child stealing in 1856, but after extended procedural delays the matter was settled without trial. She remained, for the most part, out of the news during the remainder of the decade, but her business apparently flourished all the same.

Meanwhile, New York grew to meet its social needs. In 1851 the Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum Society built an orphanage on the east side of Fifth Avenue between 51st and 52nd Streets, the property of which extended to Fourth (Park) Avenue. (The cornerstone of the new St. Patrick's Cathedral was laid on August 15, 1858; it was completed some 21 years later.[45]) Meanwhile, as

her business flourished, Madame Restell had decided to move herself and her trade uptown in 1857. Although construction was delayed because of the financial Panic later that year, she eventually built a mansion for herself at No. 1 East 52nd Street, on the very plot New York Archbishop John Hughes had chosen for his residence, directly north of the orphanage.[46] It is said that Madame Restell forced bidding on the property on Fifth Avenue north of 52nd Street beyond what the Archdiocese was willing to pay for the new Archbishop's residence, perhaps in response to her having been denounced from the pulpit by Archbishop Hughes.[47]

In 1878 Anthony Comstock, famous for the laws later named after him, took on Madame Restell. Her business was so well known to those who wanted it that she no longer had to depend on advertising. By the last quarter of the century, she mainly plied her trade to the wealthy. Comstock, in disguise, purchased either "preventive powders" or some sort of birth control device from Madame Restell, and later pressed charges. Less than two months later, on the morning of her scheduled trial, she was found in her bathtub at her Fifth Avenue house, dead. Her throat slit, she had apparently committed suicide. As *The New York Times* reported the story, it was the "END OF A CRIMINAL LIFE." The *Times'* front page coverage ran prominently along the entire length of the far right column and then jumped to the entire length of column one on page 2. It began:

> The notorious Mme. Restell is dead. Having for nearly 40 years been before the public as a woman who was growing rich by the practice of a nefarious business; having once served an imprisonment for criminal malpractice; having ostentatiously flaunted her wealth before the community and made an attractive part of the finest avenue in the City odious by her constant presence, she yesterday, driven to desperation at last by the public opinion she had so long denied, came to a violent end by cutting her throat from ear to ear.[48]

The next day's *Times* ran the story of "A HURRIED FUNERAL" on page 3, describing her last departure from Fifth Avenue, this in a rosewood casket with silver plated handles. There were no religious services; the body was transported by train to Tarrytown, where it was transferred to Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.[49] Directly beneath that story ran what perhaps could have been predicted as the final word on Madame Restell:

> Some wild stories were circulated in the City yesterday in regard to Mme. Restell. One was to the effect that the woman was not dead, but in Canada, or on her way to Europe. It was said that the dead woman found in Mme.

> Restell's bath-tub on Monday morning was one of her patients who had died at her hands.[50]

But the abortionist was buried with her second husband, Charles R. Lohman, and the infant daughters—both called Annie—of Caroline Somers (the daughter of her first husband's first marriage) and Isaac L. Purdy of Tarrytown, who died a Civil War prisoner in Georgia. Madame Restell lies at Hudson Hill in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery to this day. Some hand-written notes in the Cemetery files state "that 'Madame Restell' (the name was her Mother's maiden name) could not have children."

NOTES

1. Clifford Browder notes her first husband's name as Henry Summers, but Sleepy Hollow Cemetery records and Restell's *New York Times* obituary spell his name Somers. C. Browder, *The Wickedest Woman in New York,* Hamden, Ct: The Shoe String Press, Inc., 1988, pp. 3-4, 202, and "Mrs. Lohman's History" *The New York Times,* April 2, 1878, p. 2, col. 1: "Early in life she was married to a tailor named Henry Somers. Coming to New York, she lived with her husband in Oliver Street. Somers was a habitual drunkard, and having died from extreme drinking his widow, who had a daughter to support, earned her living for a time as a seamstress."
2. *Longworth's American Almanac, New York Register and City Directory.* New York: Thomas Longworth, 1839-40.
3. The *Herald* was founded in 1835, two years after Benjamin F. Day's *New York Sun,* and rivaled the *Sun* in presenting trivial, sensational, and often flippant material.
4. *Herald.* January 1, 1839. Nearly identical advertisements had appeared as early as two years before, for "Dr. Van Humbert's Female Renovating Pills." New York *Sun,* July 4, 1837, p. 1.
5. Longworth: 1839-40, 1840-41, 1841-42, 1842-43 editions and *The New York City Directory.* New York: John Doggett, Jr., 1842-43, 1843-44, 1844-45, 1845-46, 1846-47 editions. She has no listings from 1847 until the 1851-52 edition, where her offices are listed at 162 Chambers Street.
6. *Herald.* July 2, 1840, p.1.
7. *Herald.* November 11, 1840, p.1.
8. *Herald,* July 4, 1840, p.1.
9. Charles Smith, "Madame Restell: An Account of Her Life and Horrible Practices together with Prostitution in New York, by a Physician in New-York," 1847. Clifford Browder contends that Madame Restell concocted her own potions and powders. *The Wickedest Woman in New York,* p. 202.
10. *Herald,* July 4, 1840, p. 1.
11. *Herald,* November 11, 1840, p. 1.
12. *Sun,* January 3, 1840, p.1.
13. J.H. Young, *The Toadstill Millionaires.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961, pp. 83-84.
14. Clifford Browder, *The Wickedest Woman in New York,* p. 41.
15. *Tribune.* May 21, 1841, p.2.
16. *Tribune.* May 22, 1841, p.2.
17. *Sun,* June 6, 1841, p.1.
18. Marvin Olasky, "Advertising Abortion During the 1830's and 1840's: Madame Restell Builds a Business,"*Journalism History* 13:2 (Summer 1986) 49-55. This article forms the nucleus of his chapter on Restell in Marvin Olasky, *The Press and Abortion: 1838-1988,* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum, 1988.
19. F.L. Northrup, *The Record of a Century: 1834-1934.* NY: American Female Guardian Society and Home for the Friendless, 1934, p. 25-26.
20. *Ibid.,*p. 31.
21. *Tribune.* August 24, 1842, p.1.
22. N.Y. Laws ch. 22 para. 1, at 19 (1846). *The Georgetown Law Journal.* Vol. 49, p. 395, 1961.

See also C. C. Means, Jr., "The law of New York concerning abortion and the Status of the Foetus, 1664-1968: A case of Cessation of Constitutionality,"*New York Law Forum* 14 (Fall 1968), 411-515.

23. *Herald,* October 27, 28, 29, 30, 1847 and November 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 1847. *Sun.* October 21, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 and November 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12. The *New York Weekly Sun* ran a recapitulation of the trial on November 20, 1847.

24. At the trial, Maria Bodine stated that "(Madame Restell) said she would rather not give me an abortion, and I had better come and stay and board at $5 a week for the time out . . . I said I was six months gone, and would rather stay and board the time out at $5 a week, but my beau would object to the charge." *Wonderful Trial of Caroline Lohman, Alias Restell, With Speeches of Counsel, Charge of Court and Verdict of Jury,* pamphlet, 1847, p.6.

25. "I gave Madame Restell the whole sum of $75 . . . We went upstairs; Madame Restell took the pillows off the bed and directed me to lay on the floor, right down; I did so; she said she wanted to make an examination, to see how far I was advanced; I lay down as directed, and for five or ten minutes with her hand, she made an examination; she inserted her hand up my body, in the vagina. She hurt me very much, and I made loud groans. The reason she was so long, she said, was that I was differently situated from any one else; she could not find the right direction; she turned her hand round in my body as if she was breaking something; the operation continued to from five to near ten minutes; I did not all the time lay on the floor; I got up then and sat on a chair; she told me to take a pill three times a day; she left five or six pills; I took them as she directed for two days; she left the room, but I don't recollect whether she turned the key; I was very much distressed indeed; I had my courses while she was in the room, and I noticed it on her leaving; I saw her again that afternoon, and told her what had occurred; I said to her I saw my courses; Madame Restell said it was nothing; I should see a little until I went through the operation; she came to me in the evening and brought me a glass of water and a light; she said she did not think I should need her that night, but if I did I must ring the bell; next morning, Monday, I saw Madame Restell about seven o'clock; she asked me how I was getting along; I said not first rate, as I am much distressed; I was much distressed, she said, the pills were taking effect; I felt getting worse and worse; she continued to visit me occasionally through the day; that evening, Monday night, Madame Restell slept with me; I was in great agony all night; in the morning, Tuesday, about daylight I took a great flooding; I had been very sick at the stomach and vomited; during the flooding she bad me get up out of bed, and she jumped out; she told me to sit down on a stool; an earthen chamber; narrow at the bottom and broad at the top; while seated there I suffered violent pain, and Madame Restell inserted her hand in my privates, and said it would make it easier for me; it gave me more pain; every pain I had I heard something fall from my body into the stool or chamber; I had told Madame Restell of it; she said be patient; one more pain and it would be through . . . I don't recollect exactly how long I might be on the stool, perhaps five minutes; I then got on the bed, as she bid me; Madame Restell again inserted her hand; she hurt me so, I hulloed out and gripped hold of her hand; she told me to have patience, and I would call her mother for it . . ."
Sworn testimony of Maria Bodine at the Trial of Caroline Lohman, Alias Madame Restell, for manslaughter in the second degree, Court of General Sessions of New York City, October, 1847. From *Wonderful Trial of Caroline Lohman, Alias Restell, With Speeches of Counsel, Charge of Court and Verdict of Jury,* 1847, p.7.

26. *Tribune,* October 28, 1847, p. 2, col. 5.

27. *Sun,* October 21, 1847.

28. *Sun,* October 27, 1847.

29. *Sun,* November 4, 1847.

30. Now Roosevelt Island.

31. C. Browder, *The Wickedest Woman In New York,* pp. 95-101.

32. *Sun,* November 9, 1847. The Third Edition of this pamphlet is in the collection of The New York Historical Society. By the Third Edition, the price of the Pamphlet had risen to 6 1/4 cents.

33. This pamphlet is held by the Rare Book Collection of the New York Public Library.

34. Charles Smith, *Madame Restell: An Account of Her Life . . . ,* p.7.

35. *Ibid.,* p. 8.

36. *Ibid.,* p. 9.

37. *Ibid.,* p. 11.

38. *Ibid.,* p. 14.

39. Madame Restell's 1847 prices, according to the trial transcript, were $5 for an examination, $100 for operating, and $1 and $5 for pills. *Wonderful Trial of Caroline Lohman, Alias Restell, With Speeches of Counsel, Charge of Court and Verdict of Jury,* 3rd edition, 1847, p.6.

40. Charles Smith, *Madame Restell, An Account of Her Life . . . ,*p. 23.

41. *Tribune,* August 28, 1848.

42. *The New York City Directory.* New York: Dogget & Rode, 1851-52 and 1852-53. *The Directory of the City of New York.* New York: John F. Trow, Publisher. 1852-53 and subsequent editions.

43. *N. Y. Evening News.* October 16, 1868.

44. Young, *The Toadstool Millionaires.* pp. 100-101.

45. See *The Iconography of Manhattan Island: 1498-1909,* compiled by I. N. Phelps Stokes, NY: Dodd Mead, 1926.

46. The Lohmans moved into the impressive four-story Fifth Avenue mansion in 1864, around the time of Archbishop Hughes' death. He had been Archbishop of New York from 1842-1864; he was succeeded by his Coadjutor Archbishop (later Cardinal) John McCloskey, who died in 1885.

47. The archbishop's residence was finally built in 1882, at 452 Madison Avenue, behind the Cathedral. The story, repeated in "That Was New York: The Notorious Madame Restell," *The New Yorker,* November 15, 1941, 43-47, p. 43, may be apocryphal. C. Browder contends that the Lohmans outbid Archbishop John Hughes for the property he wanted for his residence, at No.1 East 52nd Street, and cites the *World* of April 2, 1878. Others, however, contend that he wanted his residence directly north of the Cathedral, on the orphanage property, but then refused to live so close to her. While the popular belief is that he denounced her from the pulpit, there is no record of this in either the archives of the Archdiocese of New York or in any Catholic newspaper of the day.

48. *The New York Times,* April 2, 1878.

49. *The New York Times,* April 3, 1878.

50. *The New York Times,* April 3, 1878.

'St. Mugg' Revisited

Malcolm Muggeridge 1903-1990

(Photo: an oil portrait by Cyril Leeper, from the private collection of J. P. McFadden)

Muggeridge: unfortunately, these were scarce, the examiners preferring instead to test my shaky knowledge of close corporations and the remoter slopes of the Income Tax Act.

One autumn Saturday in 1968, I saw an announcement that Malcolm Muggeridge would be speaking the next night at the St. Lawrence Centre. I tried in vain to get tickets; all had been gone for weeks. After machinations of one sort or another, I did get hold of an out-of-town telephone number and placed a person-to-person call to Malcolm Muggeridge. When the phone started to ring I almost panicked and hung up. Malcolm could not have been kinder or more patient at this bumptious intrusion upon his privacy (his flight from England had only just arrived). We agreed to meet in advance of the St. Lawrence lecture. When we did, I asked him about some articles he had written in India in the twenties. At first, he barely remembered, then said: "Nobody has mentioned those articles to me in fifty years", and went on to tell me that Mahatma Gandhi had published the first article in his newspaper *Young India.* Conversation then truly began. Thereafter we fell into regular correspondence and on his frequent visits to Canada we met and talked, and often he stayed with us.

The same year we met, Muggeridge published *Jesus Rediscovered* which became an immediate, unlikely bestseller, planting unshakeably in the public mind the conviction that he had undergone some sort of latter-day Damascus Road conversion. That this was not so, that *Jesus Rediscovered* was only the expression of a lifelong and continuing pilgrimage, I knew from my reading of his early writings. Eventually I compiled and edited an anthology, *Things Past*, to provide the point. It scarcely mattered. Myth has greater staying power than reality, and the myth of a latter-day St. Mugg grew apace.

In 1978-79 Muggeridge and I swapped houses, he to fulfill a commitment he had made to his friend, Andrew MacFarlane, then Western's Dean of Journalism, to do a stint as a Distinguished Visitor (or as he preferred "old hack in residence"), I to live in his sixteenth century house in Robertsbridge, Sussex and write his biography. This we both duly did, Muggeridge at 75 picking up and leaving England to come to Canada and keep up a pace which I learned had left his youthful journalistic colleagues breathless.

Muggeridge's religious books (particularly *Jesus Rediscovered* and his book on Mother Teresa *Something Beautiful for God*) obscured, to some extent, his earlier work: *In a Valley of This Restless Mind*,

which I consider his masterpiece, originally published in 1938 and reissued in 1978; *Winter in Moscow*, published in 1932 which circulated for years in *samizdat* through the remote labour camps on the Gulag Archipelago; *The Thirties*, his ironic history of a low decade of betrayal; and the two volumes of his memoirs, *Chronicles of Wasted Time*, which the *Sunday Times* called "one of the greatest autobiographies of this century."

A consistent thread running through all Muggeridge's writing is humour, even (perhaps I should say especially) in his religious books. Laughter, after all, is a primitive language of transcendence; Mother Teresa and her Missionaries of Charity (like St. Francis and his friars)—are frequently to be found laughing; it is organizations like the World Council of Churches that are solemn and portentous, often funny but only by inadvertence. Malcolm's writing exemplified the hymn's exhortation: "Him serve with mirth/His praise forth tell."

At eighty Malcolm was as vigorous (and busy) as ever, at work on an eight-part BBC television series (*Muggeridge: Ancient and Modern*), writing book reviews and feature articles, lecturing here, there and everywhere. Only in the last years, as his eyesight and hearing failed, and his memory occasionally misfired, were there intimations of mortality. I realized he was aging in 1985 when, on a beautiful autumn sunny afternoon at Robertsbridge, I suggested that we set out on our usual walk—through the hop fields and up the hillside past the grazing sheep, over the rickety stile that leads into the apple orchard, along the crest of the hill to the dead oak tree struck by lighting, over another stile, this one sturdy, and into Deadman's Wood where the path turns leisurely home again, a five mile hike which we always called, for some incongruous reason, Australia—but Malcolm begged off saying he was cold. Later that evening, at my request, he played a cassette recording of his presidential address to the Samuel Johnson Society in Lichfield; when, at one point, his talk became momentarily confused, he leapt up and shut the machine off, muttering: "It's no good, it's not what I wanted to say."

A year later I was again in Robertsbridge and he gave me the manuscript of his latest book (*Conversion*) to look over; before I had read more than a few pages, he came and took it away again, saying something about making corrections. It was painfully evident that he was embarrassed by its limitations.

Malcolm will be buried in Whatlington Cemetery, in a plot next to his father's grave, on a slope overlooking the rolling Sussex countryside, close by where he has lived the last forty-five years. Malcolm chose the epitaph for his father's tombstone (after Joseph of Arimathea) "He was a good man and a just." I once asked Malcolm what inscription he wanted. "I leave that to others," he laughed, "I like to think one of our sons might put something pleasant up." When I pressed him, he conceded that "He used words well" would please him.

When I think of Malcolm, and I do often, I remember his kindness and generosity to me; a wiser mentor and a kindlier friend no aspiring writer ever had. I remember his courage in speaking his mind whatever the prevailing orhodoxy; his books, which more than any University or teacher taught me what life is about; his humility, a true humility of the spirit which embraced everyone as a creature created in the image of a loving God, and thus infinitely precious—at the same time, all trousered apes, derisory in their human self-importance, the butt of all jokes, even the fall of man being nothing more than the old banana skin pratfall played out on a cosmic stage; his wisdom which flamed from a quick and well-stocked mind rooted in the conviction that life is to be understood as a drama and not as a process; above all his laughter, building within, erupting outwards, so that sometimes out for a walk we had to stop and hold on to a post or a tree until the gale spent itself. Malcolm's humor was rooted in the disparity between human aspiration and human performance, which explains why sex, the funniest of human pursuits, was often his subject.

Ultimately I have come to think of Malcolm (in one of his own metaphors) as the gargoyle on the cathedral steeple, a grinning, gnome-like figure peering down at the antics of a world gone mad, at the same time drawing attention heavenwards. If I were required to summarize my feelings in a single sentence I would say what Maxim Gorky said of Tolstoy: "I am not an orphan on this earth so long as that man lives."

Malcolm once said that if ever, in fear and trembling, he approached the pearly gates and saw them begin to swing open and did not hear the sound of raucous laughter, he would ask to be sent to the other place. Such fond hopes are never disappointed; nor is it a fancy that, straining, amidst the celestial revelry I hear a distinctive chuckle.

Malcolm Muggeridge Remembered

Ian Hunter

DEATH LONG HELD A MYSTIC, though never a morbid, fascination for Malcolm Muggeridge. His first published fiction (a short story, *An Elderly Schoolteacher*, published in the New Statesman in 1928) concerned death; sixty years later, in his last book (*Conversion: A Spiritual Journey*) he wrote: "Like a prisoner awaiting his release, like a schoolboy when the end of term is near, like a migrant bird ready to fly south, like a patient in hospital anxiously scanning the doctor's face to see whether a discharge may be expected, I long to be gone. Extricating myself from the flesh I have too long inhabited, hearing the key turn in the lock of Time so that the great doors of Eternity swing open, disengaging my tired mind from its interminable conundrums and my tired ego from its worrisome insistencies. Such is the prospect of death."

On November 14, 1990 future prospect became present reality and Malcom Muggeridge at age 87 sloughed off what he liked to call "this decaying old husk" to become part of that immortality upon which his gaze had long been fixed.

In 1966, when I should have been immersed in statutes, regulations and cases at the University of Toronto Law School, I was often ensconced in the periodicals stacks at Central Library, then located at the corner of College and St. George Streets just south of my student digs, reading Malcolm Muggeridge's journalism. I had stumbled upon Muggeridge quite by chance and was struck first by his elegant, wry, effortlessly readable prose, so clear, pungent, and often devastating. His sceptical mind and loathing for cant were a welcome purgative to the academic conversations going on all around me. His writing reminded me of George Orwell's. I soon exhausted what Muggeridge was available on the shelves through Britnell's order desk. Through the *Index to Periodical Literature* I began systematically working my way backwards through the fifties, forties, thirties, even into the twenties via back numbers of the *New Statesman*, the *Guardian, Time and Tide* and dozens of other dusty periodicals. By my third year at law school I could have answered any exam question concerning

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The Story of the Bottle

Maria McFadden

When I was a freshman at Holy Cross College (in Massachusetts), visitors to my dorm room would often look at a black and white photograph prominently displayed on my wall and ask: "Who's that kissing Aaathuh Fiedluh?" I would explain that it was me, but that the man giving me a kiss was not Arthur Fiedler, of the Boston Pops, but Malcolm Muggeridge. "Who?" they'd ask. Finally Al, from Florida, knew who Malcolm Muggeridge was because his Jesuit highschool class had been assigned *Something Beautiful for God*, Malcolm's book about Mother Teresa.

That photo, which I treasure, is of Malcolm congratulating me after my speech at the testimonial dinner given by him, William F. Buckley, Jr. and Professor John T. Noonan in honor of my father and the work he was doing for the anti-abortion movement, especially with the founding of the *Human Life Review*. It was a great night, and it was on that trip to New York that I first met Malcolm.

My first impression was that anyone with eyes like his—a startling clear blue, and so friendly—must already be a saint. We were all holding our awe ready for his visit, but we were unprepared for how warm, unassuming and funny he was, and how quickly we felt close to him.

A few years later, as a college student studying in Paris, I went to visit Malcolm and Kitty at their lovely home in Robertsbridge, Sussex. I arrived exhausted from an all-night trip by bus and ferry from Dublin, and I was met with warmth and hospitality hard to imagine. It was the first time I had met Kitty. Something funny happened that first night. After a warming supper of fish, vegetables and homemade bread (the Muggeridges were by then vegetarians), Kitty sent me up to bed with a hot-water bottle. I was so tired I slept soundly, though I kept having strange dreams involving water: sailing, swimming, being in the rain . . . all sorts of things. Finally I dragged myself back to consciousness and found that all the water from the bottle had soaked the entire bed and mattress.

I was horrified and was sure I had ruined their bed, but as it was the middle of the night I simply switched to the other twin

Maria McFadden has already been introduced.

bed and went back to sleep dreading the morning. When I did tell Kitty the next morning, she giggled and said "You know, I realized after I gave you the bottle that I had given you the wrong top, but you were so tired I didn't want to bother you." And the three of us laughed about it for the rest of my stay, which included an amazingly energetic walk among sheep and cows in the nearby fields, a dinner at the Lord Longfords, who also took me to their Catholic church on Sunday, a visit with Kitty to Rye and to see Alec Vidler, Malcom's treasured friend, and most lovely of all, quiet times at home with Kitty and Malcolm.

There are so many people with wonderful memories of Malcolm and Kitty (and we must pray for Kitty now). I know how much Malcolm meant to my parents, and how excited my father was when they first started to correspond, and when the letters started coming to "Dear Jim." Dad approached a hero and ended up with a friend. I know for certain that the *Human Life Review* would not be what it is without Malcolm's contributions, and his inspiration.

Soon after Malcolm and Kitty were received into the Catholic Church, Malcolm and I were talking on the telephone, and he said "You *will* be a Catholic until you die, won't you?" I answered "Of course," while thinking at the time it was sort of a silly question. Now that I am older and wiser, that question and my answer have had no small significance for me. Malcolm wanted to be sure that what he and Kitty had entered into was something that we who were already there believed was beyond death, just as he thought of his and Kitty's love (he wrote that their first meeting was an encounter "belonging to Always rather than Now," and that love's true habitat is Eternity).

Malcolm's concern for the anti-abortion movement was also based on his belief in a value of life that transcended death.

His death is a great loss for us at the *Review*—we have lost a friend, and a great weaver of words. But I wouldn't be surprised if we have gained a patron saint.

When the Tea Was Strong

Faith Abbott

THE MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE many of us knew and loved did not spring forth from the obituary page of the New York *Times*. Malcolm died early in the morning of November 14th, in England: the next morning, the *Times* ran a small front-page headline "Malcolm Muggeridge Dies" over the description "The British journalist, social critic, lecturer and television personality with a lethal wit was 87" and listing the obituary page, B18. There the reader would indeed find a great deal about the earlier Muggeridge—the "caustic social critic" whose "caustic remarks nearly cost him his job as a popular television personality for the BBC," whose views, "never benign, seemed to grow more iconoclastic and controversial with the years" and who "lived in a world he didn't like."

Mr. Albin Krebs, who wrote the *Times*' obituary, spent a great many words on an incomplete biography. He also made factual errors, which somehow I felt duty-bound to report; so I phoned the newspaper and was asked what was my "account number"? I said I was "an outsider," and after more calls I was put through to the obituary *editor*, who asked How could he help me? Well, I said, there were some errors in the Malcolm Muggeridge obit: first, Malcolm's stroke happened three *months*, not three *years* ago; secondly (and more important) the title of his 1969 book was not "Jesus *Reconsidered*" but "Jesus *Rediscovered*." (There *is* a difference, I said.)

There was a silence on the other end of the phone, and suddenly I felt like I was in the *confessional*—especially when the voice asked: "Is there anything else?" I had this vision of a kindly old priest, ear to the grille, who—having heard sins of commission—was now asking about sins of *o*mission. I had to remind myself that these were not *my* sins, as I went on to confess that the obituary hadn't mentioned the fact that Malcolm Muggeridge became a Catholic when he was seventy-nine, in 1982, so your readers will think that when he died he was still practicing his "evolving, highly individualistic form of Christianity" and still considered himself "a Jesus Freak."

I half expected an absolution: I did get a "Thank-You-for-calling."

I forgot to check the *Times* to see if it ran anything about this

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in its daily "Corrections" box. But even if it did, the *Times* reader still wouldn't know Malcolm Muggeridge at all—or, as Malcolm would say, "a-*TALL*."

It was different, with the London *Times*: its November 15th obituary ran five long columns, with a photograph that spanned all, at the top: and in it there was this sentence: "Those who knew only his acerbic and gloomy public persona were surprised to find him in private warm-hearted, generous and unfailingly cheerful." That's more like it.

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It was the most bone-crushing bear-hug I'd ever got, and until that moment—in May of 1979—I hadn't realized that I might never see Malcolm Muggeridge again. Was he really going back to England the very next day, never to set foot in the U.S. again? I dissolved in tears, which is something I don't do very often.

My husband and I had first met Malcolm and Kitty in January, 1978, in Washington. Jim and I were staying at the Hay Adams hotel, across from the White House (Nellie Gray's annual March for Life was to be the next day) and were to have lunch with the Muggeridges, who were there for that and other reasons. When one o'clock came and we hadn't been notified of their arrival, we elevatored down to the lobby and there for the first time we laid eyes on Malcolm. Actually, what we first laid eyes on was his *back*, and there was no mistaking to whom it belonged. He was bending over the high-tech intercom phone, trying to call our room, and was saying—to the disinterested desk-person—"I never could get the hang of these things." My husband said, to Malcolm's back, "You don't have to—here we are." Malcolm then spun around and fixed us with his blue-eyed, white-haloed gaze, and introduced us to his lovely Kitty, and we proceeded into the dining room for a latish brunch. And after more than three conversation-filled hours we exited, amidst the waiters' red glare: we were the last to leave the dining room, and had delayed the dinner setting.

A year later we visited with Kitty and Malcolm in Florida, for three memorable days. We were en route to Fort Myers to see my mother, and detrained in Tampa, where Kitty and Malcolm were staying in a Canadian friend's condominium. Jim and I were booked in a motel which Malcolm gleefully reported, on the phone, was only "about five minutes from where *we* are . . . it's just a quick

walk," and they would come to fetch us. The quick walk (especially after the small tornado that had twisted through the area just before our train arrived) turned out to be a vigorous tramp through weeds and mud and fallen branches and it took a lot more than five minutes. But Kitty and Malcolm were impervious to the disarranged terrain, and forged ahead with their walking sticks. Now and then my husband would catch up with Malcolm, and Kitty would drop back with me, and we'd link arms; and conversation never ceased.

At their borrowed condominium we would have lunch and then hours of more intense conversation and, when weather permitted, more walks. On one of these we were stopped by a community resident who recognized Malcolm—a Canadian gentleman, who without so much as a "Don't I know you from somewhere?" launched into some political diatribe. Malcolm sighed and said this sort of thing happened all the time: it seemed he couldn't keep a low profile.

There were many things that endeared us to the Muggs during those afternoons of steady talk. One I remember most fondly was: the sock. Everything in that cozy cottage was neat and tidy, but there was this white athletic sock on the bedroom floor. I had noticed it on my way to the bathroom, that first day, and it made me feel at home. On the following afternoons the sock was still in the exact spot, and I felt not only *more* at home but *accepted*: my husband and I were united with the Muggs in a different hierarchy of values. It was rather as though we were all Marys, undisturbed by a Martha's scrupulosity.

As we parted that time, Malcolm apologized for not having given us a ride in the electrical cart that came with the condo. The community residents used these things to get to and from the market, or about on the golf course; somehow Malcolm hadn't got around to using it, during our stay. "*Next* time," he promised. "Good," we said—all of us knowing, of course, that there'd not likely be a "next time" in such pastoral settings, with a mechanized golf cart.

There *were* several next-times, though. In the spring of that year, Malcolm invited us to join him in Washington, as a kind of surrogate family: Kitty wasn't able to be with him for the long weekend of talks and lectures and appearances. So every afternoon, four-ish, we went up to Malcolm's room in the Mayflower Hotel—not for tea or cocktails but for gossip—of the friendly sort. There we would discuss the previous "performance" and anticipate the next one: we would exchange observations and anecdotes and Malcolm would

say, at top voice from the bedroom where he was changing into his evening attire, "I say, what did you think of so-and-so?" Then we would go with him to the next appearance where, with our drinks in our hands, we would make sure that Malcolm's glass never went dry. Had it, he would have been parched amidst the hordes of admirers. I felt especially privileged to be Malcolm's chief orange juice provider, and became adept at bludgeoning my way through the crowd. On the Sunday of that spring weekend, Malcolm insisted that we go along with him for lunch (on the other side of the Potomac) with a prominent family that had to do with Christendom College. We remonstrated, but as usual he won; and of course the family was nonplussed—certainly the *mother* was—and several children were deleted from the table so that Malcolm and his (uninvited) guests could be accomodated. St. Mugg just chuckled and held merry conversations. As we left even the banished children were smiling and taking pictures.

When we parted *that* time, Malcolm said he would see us soon in New York. My husband wasn't supposed to know about the testimonial dinner planned for him, but there were *other* reasons why Malcolm would be in New York—one being to meet Archbishop Fulton Sheen: the two of them had long hoped to meet before they both died. The meeting, at the Archbishop's apartment, was planned for late afternoon, and Malcolm came to our apartment for lunch. By this time of course I knew what Malcolm did and did not eat, so we had lots of cheese and bread and yogurt and fruit and a roll of those Crystal Lifesavers he loved. And I had bought a ceramic teapot and a matching mug, which naturally I dubbed "the St. Mugg mug." I had also got Earl Grey tea, which I steeped in the teapot, English-style. Or so I thought. Halfway through lunch, Malcolm interrupted the stream of conversation with: "I say, Faith, would you show me the way to your kitchen? I'd like to put just a bit more water into this teapot." I said No, you stay there: I'll take care of it, as I realized that I had grossly miscalculated the proportion of water to tea leaves. As I put the kettle on again I realized that whereas I felt *chagrined* I didn't feel "chastised"—Malcolm had made it seem that it was *his* fault I'd overdone the leaves.

Malcolm was a person in whose presence everyone seemed to expand, just as the tea leaves had expanded in my teapot. He made everyone feel special—because to him they *were* special, and unique. I remember how he beamed impishly at two of our daughters, when

they came in from school: "How do you like my *braces*?" he asked them. He was wearing some splendid new *suspenders*: my startled daughters looked at his *teeth*; and then laughed as they learned something new about Britishisms, and as they laughed and learned, they *loved*.

And then there came that bear-hug parting, at the Union League Club, in New York, when we thought we'd never see Malcolm again. But we did, and *that* "next-time" would be the last. (For *us*, but not for two of our daughters who would later visit Malcolm and Kitty in England.) Malcolm had been invited to give a talk for a prominent group of doctors, in Alberta, Canada: this he couldn't resist, because it would allow him and Kitty to go, afterwards, to Welland, Ontario, where their son John and his wife Anne live with their five children. My husband and I had got to know Anne and John, and they asked us to come up to visit with them and "Mum & Dad." So we shuffled up to Buffalo, and at the train station there to collect us was not only John but also Malcolm. His bear-hug this time was, if not quite as bone-crushing, still intense. As John drove us over the border into Canada there was the usual steady conversation, but it wasn't quite as rapid-fire: by this time Malcolm was 82 and had got a bit hard of hearing. His wits were sharp as ever, though, and we had many meals full of fascinating chat... Was Tolstoy really evil, and who was the greater—Tolstoy or Dostoyevsky?—etc. Kitty more than kept up her end of the discussions, and they both basked in the presence of their grandchildren. On the day Anne and John took my husband and me to see Niagara Falls (along with their youngest child, their daughter Ros, who we collected from school) Malcolm declined to go because his grandsons had invited him to *Wendy's*. I had only vaguely heard of Wendy's: now whenever I see one of those fast-food places I think of Malcolm, and that time in Canada. And I wonder what he could possibly have eaten at Wendy's—perhaps a slice of tomato? Nevermind—the point was that he was going to Wendy's with his grandsons: they were taking him there. He announced this with twinkling eyes and broad smile: as though he were Cinderella, invited to the ball.

That Canadian visit was in May 1985, by which time Malcolm and Kitty had become Catholics. When they were received into the Church in 1982, it was Big News here and abroad: there were articles and interviews and reports in everything from the *London Times* to *Time* magazine. There was no such media barrage *here*, when he died, but there was in England. As for the New York *Times*'

sin of omission, well—perhaps the conversion just didn't fit into the *Times*' slogan: All the News that's Fit to Print. But I don't think this would bother Malcolm—quite possibly he would think it fitting that some of the media considered his life complete when he and Kitty entered what he wrote us was "our last and most wonderful sanctuary."

In a letter Malcolm sent us on November 26, 1982, he wrote: "Tomorrow is the great day; I don't suppose you know how much you've helped me along, but actually your indomitable spirit in going on fighting for, in worldly terms, lost causes like pro-life . . . has been a great inspiration. Without your example, I'm pretty sure we should never have reached a point when quite suddenly everything sorted itself out and the way was clear before us. The *Times* is publishing an article by me on becoming a Catholic tomorrow—Nov. 27. I don't know if you get the *Times* in New York, but anyway I'll send you a zerox; also of Mother Teresa's letter, and Graham's . . ." [Graham Greene.] *December 2, 1982*: "Herewith the *Times* piece. We've been absolutely deluged with mail since it appeared; almost all of it well-disposed. We both feel wonderfully at peace; in a *Nunc Dimittis* state of mind . . ." *February 8, 1983*: ". . . Your friendship has been such a great boon to Kitty and me, especially in helping us along the road to our last and most wonderful sanctuary."

I must admit that these letters (and there were many more of them) made me feel guilty. Or undeserving. There is this about born-Catholics and converts (like me): of which I am the latter: the "born" are not satisfied until someone they love has "poped" whereas converts tend to think that someone very close to God has already "made it" whether or not he or she knows it. Anyway, I felt sorry that I had prayed only peremptorily for Kitty and Malcolm's final "sanctuary" (I considered them already saints) but it was a further deepening of *my* faith that the Holy Spirit had taken things in hand—that Malcolm had, as *Time* magazine put it (Dec. 13, 1982), "marched his fervent bundle of contradictions down to a tiny white chapel in Hurst Green, Sussex, and with his wife became a member of the Roman Catholic Church." *Time* quoted Malcolm as saying that he had "a sense of homecoming, of picking up the threads of a lost life, of responding to a bell that has long been ringing, of finding a place at a table that has long been vacant."

Malcolm's friends knew, and always teased him about, his fascination with death. A 1985 *Wall Street Journal* article began: "Malcolm

Muggeridge has been dying for the past 20 years," and quotes him saying: "I've always been rather pro-death, and now that I'm old I allow myself to luxuriate in it." And so he did, for five more years—while he continued to enjoy *life.*

But I think his feelings about death were more aptly put in the London *Times* profile a decade ago (March, 1981):

> I have always looked forward to death. It is the most blessed thing of life that it will come to an end. It would be a terrible prospect, wouldn't it, to go on and on and on. Everything is bearable because we die. The idea that one exists solely in order to spend one's three score years and 10 here isn't a tenable proposition. But I take Pascal's wager. If you have to bet on there being a Heaven or not, you should presume there is, because otherwise, if you lost, you would never know.

Now he knows.

The Brief Encounter

J.P. McFadden

ANYONE WHO MET Malcolm Muggeridge even once surely has a favorite story about him: from the first time his indescribable eyes settled on you, you felt you *knew* him, and he knew you.

There is one story that has never been recorded—or, rather, *only* recorded, in part, on a scratchy tape. Malcolm himself never wrote about it, nor did the third party involved. I replayed those old tapes on New Year's Eve, and decided that, as the sole survivor, I'd better take the opportunity to describe what happened.

It was in May, 1979, that Malcolm and my old friend Bill Buckley held a testimonial dinner for me at New York's Union League Club. Two such hosts of course guaranteed that it would turn out to be the most memorable affair ever, which it did, but that is another story. The late Archbishop Fulton Sheen, who had become an enthusiastic reader (and supporter) of the *Human Life Review*, had been invited to the dinner. But he had never fully recovered from open-heart surgery two years before, and called to give his regrets. Then he said: "Jim, there is one thing I wish you would do for me. I would like to meet Malcolm Muggeridge before I die. Could you arrange it?"

Muggeridge was then in Canada; I called him and repeated Sheen's exact words. Malcolm was of course delighted by the prospect, but the first thing he said had an unmistakably pained tone: "But Jim," his rising voice quivered, "I've always wanted to meet him before *I* died." The good bishop had poached on St. Mugg's famous longing for the hereafter!

The meeting was duly arranged: Malcolm and I went to the bishop's Manhattan apartment after lunch for what Sheen said would have to be "a brief visit" given his health—he was then 84 (Malcolm was 76)—but as expected the two of them "knew" each other instantly, and settled down for a very longish afternoon of uninterrupted talk as memorable as this delighted observer ever heard. (I kept forgetting to change the tapes.)

It was *too* good: I cannot adequately report it. But it began as I *should* have expected. *M*: "Do you think it's legitimate to pray

J.P. McFadden is the editor of this review.

for one's death?" *S*: "Well *I* did, to Our Lady." They were off.

Sheen elaborated: it had not been the "veritable crucifixation" of his open-heart surgery that made him pray for death—although he was tempted—no, he had feared that "my usefulness was at an end," and he prayed to be summoned on a feast day of the Virgin, which he hoped was not too presumptuous—perhaps it *was*, he mused. "Yet you've made clear what you want," Muggeridge said gleefully, beginning the peals of laughter that punctuated virtually every exchange thereafter, however serious (a dozen times, Sheen had to press his hand hard over his heart to interrupt his over-enjoyment).

Much of it *was* very serious. They spoke at length of Cardinal Newman who, Sheen said, "suffered in the Church, and from the Church"—"So did Ronnie Knox," answered Mugg. It turned out that they had both known the once-famous Monsignor Knox, but Sheen was not merely reminiscing: he was obviously angling for yet *another* convert; he pressed Mugg on the state of his own refound Christianity ("It irritates people, actually" Mugg laughed), but Malcolm was obviously avoiding the hook, and Sheen abruptly switched the conversation back to—What else?—death.

Mugg said he loved St. Teresa of Avila's description of our earthly life as "Like a night in a second-class hotel"—imagine what hotels must have been like in her time, he chuckled, and how wonderfully devastating that "second-class" touch was. Whereas today people think only of this life—"It's all they've got"—and would be indignant, and would say "Not a-TALL, it's a very *good* hotel" (more peals of laughter all around).

Sheen said "It used to be that we alone believed in the Immaculate Conception" but "now everybody is immaculately conceived"—there are no sinners.

"That was Graham Greene's great grievance," Mugg countered, "he couldn't sin"—no matter how he tried, something always intervened. "When we talked once about the changes in your church, he said there was no more pleasure in breaking the rules because there aren't any rules."

Evelyn Waugh was next: "Waugh tried desperately hard to be utterly vicious," *M* said, "but he was unable to succeed, he had this goodness in him."

Then Mother Teresa, *M* again: "She doesn't believe in abusing people, which I always enjoyed doing"—she always describes awful people as "Christ in a most distressing disguise."

On to St. Paul, and his "only flop" when, in Athens, he tried to *reason* with the Greeks rather than "preach only Christ crucified," as Paul ruefully swore to do thereafter. Mugg told the tale of his BBC-TV series on Paul: when filming in Athens, he told his co-host that he was sure those cynical non-hearers were like "Oxford dons"—"No no no," his friend answered, "they were journalists"! Mugg howled: "They don't know about *anything*, they couldn't possibly know about all these things Paul was saying . . ."

Back to Mother Teresa: Mugg said she was the perfect TV "personality" to promote Christianity because although "she never says anything very original" nor intellectual, "it's not *what* she says but that she *believes*" and "people can tell."

In high glee, Mugg described how the BBC "sets up these terrible panels" with, you know, "a nebulous clergyman, a sociologist" and so on, and the moderator will ask "Do the panel think there is a God?" He described one he'd arranged to include Mother Teresa, who said virtually nothing—she just sat there praying—until after the French geneticist had expounded on the utter hopelessness of life (Mugg mocked him: "These are your genes, you can do nothing about them"), whereupon Mother said "I believe in love and compassion" and went back to her prayers.

As the geneticist bolted from the studio Mugg heard him say: "If I spent much time with that woman I'd be in bad trouble."

Sheen praised Mugg's book on Mother Teresa (*Something Beautiful for God*), saying it had had an enormous impact. Yes, Mugg agreed, it had sold all over the world, contributions had poured in [Muggeridge also signed over his royalties to her—Ed.], but it was all because "It was her book, not mine."

Muggeridge then told of a priest friend, "a very good man, who had the idea of setting up a sort of school for clerics" so they would perform better "on the tube . . . imagine someone attempting to teach you how to *pretend* to tell the truth." This time *I* howled "Father, this is how you tell the truth"—"That's exactly it," hooted Mugg, "and it's absolutely disastrous."

That led to Sheen's recounting of the different ways he had to explain truth to converts, including such famous ones as Henry Ford II and—of course—his beloved Clare Boothe Luce: "One of the most brilliant minds I ever knew," he said, shaking his head slowly and rather sadly. But the laughter flooded back when he regaled us with the story of riding in a limousine with Clare and husband

Henry Luce—the son of a Presbyterian missionary (to China): "Harry" explained to Sheen that he considered himself a Christian, of course, but he really couldn't accept Christ's divinity, He was "just a Jew of his time" and so on—Clare cut in "I *know*, but only on His *Mother*'s side"—that drew probably the longest laughter of the afternoon.

The bishop got into his TV career (only the ageing now remember that in the fifties Sheen dominated prime-time ratings). He had done a 1953 show "announcing" the death of Stalin—just another of his trademark dramas—but Stalin *did* die a week later! Sheen was deluged with mail demanding "How did you know!?" He chuckled "Of course I didn't know, I only knew he was mortal"—more laughs.

This led naturally to Communism. Sheen said the Soviet *regime* was "the first in history dedicatd to atheism" but—despite achieving "total power"—it had failed. (This was May 1979, remember, more than a decade before the collapse of the Evil Empire.)

Muggeridge cut in: "Do you know that they never banned the works of Tolstoy?" Mugg considered this a *fatal* mistake that would in due course bring the *regime* down, but "They couldn't, you see" because Tolstoy was too great a Russian treasure. And now, he said, they were allowing some of Dostoyevsky's works to be reprinted as well.

Mugg gloated: "They give them these dreary books called *Slag* or *Cement* or something like that, so of course Dostoyevsky is snapped up, snatched out of the shops instantly."

I interjected: "They made another mistake in not killing Solzhenitsyn."

"I'm certain you're right," *M* boomed, and we were off on a long discussion of Solzhenitsyn's point that Christianity not only survived in the Gulag but also restored itself there. *M* told us about Solzhenitsyn's BBC interview soon after he was deported: "He said there are *no* Marxists in the U.S.S.R., and I'm absolutely certain that's true too."

Then he expounded a typically Muggish view: that they were all so bored under Communism that "therefore the temptation of the regime" will be to "take over Christianity, to use it for their ideology . . . it's a great danger." [It's hard not to think of that now as something Mr. Gorbachev has thought of as well?]

Supplying his own derisory-laughter background, Mugg launched into a hilarious description of how the only Marxists were in the West, where sociologists and "all these Jesuits and ex-nuns want to dialogue with the Soviets—they're the only ones who take it seriously"—even Rome, he said, was anxious for dialogue [he meant

Pope Paul VI's *Ostpolitik*], ending with another Muggish hoot: "I like irony to be complete. I want to see an encyclical *De Necessitate Marxism* and the collapse of the regime at the same time."

Sheen agreed that they were "beating a dead horse," that "60 years of half-baked liberalism has driven them to grovel before Marxism." But he was quick to add that "the present Pope [John Paul II was newly on the throne] is very hopeful." Sheen leaned forward, hand over heart: "He's the first philosopher in 700 years, since Peter the Logician," and he also "brings endurance, he's suffered, that's the kind of leader we need."

The reader will remember that, at that moment, John Paul was preparing for his first return to Poland. "It will be an extraordinary moment of the twentieth century, when a Polish Pope goes home as Pope," Sheen said.

"It really is a very historic event," Mugg agreed, "it could lead to all sorts of things." He did another funny monologue, elaborating on the theme that "the only way to put a stop to any kind of change is to have a revolution—revolutionaries *know* how easy it is" to pull down a regime, and so freeze everything once in power. "They can't have change. It becomes disastrous."

They went on speculating about how the Soviets would try to avoid Mugg's "all sorts of things" the Pope's visit would ignite. I was so absorbed that I must have forgot to change the tape—certainly much that I remember isn't there now—but it remains an amazing memory. How *right* they both were: what an incredible blunder it was for the Soviets to permit that return—they still retained the power to stop it then (or *thought* they did)—as everybody now knows, it was the beginning of the end for the Evil Empire. (Well, everybody but our media, which gave John Paul little credit for another decade!)

As it happens, I kept some of the news reports of the time. Looking through them as I write, I see the following, front-paged on the New York *Times* (June 4, 1979):

> Looking fresh and eager in heat that surpassed 90 degrees, the Pope plunged into the crowd at the meadow at Gebarzewo, about four miles from Gniezno, kissing children and clasping hands. Spectators fainted in the heat and ambulances became bogged down in attempts to offer assistance. But the gathering, as if at a political rally, applauded the Pontiff's every other phrase, arms held aloft.
>
> When the Pope left the meadow, the crowd, less reserved than those that welcomed him in Warsaw yesterday, cheered him with cries of "Long life!"

> Every bit of space along the four mile parade route from the meadow to the Cathedral of the Assumption was taken. Each house along the route displayed its own papal flags, photograph of John Paul II or small shrine.
>
> [Television viewers in the Soviet Union were given a brief glimpse of the Pope's arrival in Warsaw and were told by a commentator that some church leaders were trying to use the event for "antistate purposes." Page A10]

Shortly after the tape resumes, you can hear Muggeridge say "we're tiring you"—it was now well after four—Sheen sat bolt upright, the famous eyes flashing: "No! No! A thousand times *no*, I've been waiting for this, if you only knew what a privilege it is . . ." But he was visibly exhausted, and Mugg began to deploy another of his great skills, winding down the visit without a hint of hurry. Soon we were in the foyer (Sheen saw us out himself—he had long since told the cook-maid, his only attendant, "Don't wait, you just go on."). He seemed very frail as we shook hands all around. Suddenly he changed like Dorian Grey in reverse: "Oh! You must see my chapel before you go!" Whereupon he waltzed us into the adjoining room where, sure enough, there was an altar—and a tabernacle. He glowingly explained that he had the "special privilege" of reserving the Blessed Sacrament in his apartment, and abruptly fell (and I mean *fell*) to his knees before it. Sheen was of course famous for preaching the daily "Holy Hour," and I began to think we had just *begun* one—he moved not at all, while Mugg and I, kneeling behind him, wondered silently.

In fact, it was some fifteen minutes before we were in the foyer again, doing our second round of laughing goodbyes all around. Sheen "watched" us to the elevator, waving us on. Inside, we discovered that our "prayers" had been almost identical: "The man's stamina is little short of incredible," Mugg said softly, shaking his head.

I had arranged for St. Mugg to talk to a group of priests, collected by that great man Monsignor Eugene Clark (ask any Catholic New Yorker) at an uptown parish. But we were now in rush-hour traffic, and so arrived roughly two hours late (I'm sure some of the good fathers have never absolved me to this day!). But Mugg again marshalled his resources, and had them in good humor, however belated, in short order.

Sheen called me early the following morning, thanking me profusely for arranging the visit. I was to visit him again, of course, as soon as he "got his strength back." I didn't, and he didn't. We talked by phone a few more times before he died, on December 9—the

day *after* the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. But not before he had seen John Paul II on his first American tour, and dramatically fallen at his feet in St. Patrick's Cathedral. (You perhaps remember the famous pictures of the Pope raising him up and embracing him.)

That evening Mugg came to dinner. It had been a long day, but we talked and talked anyway, as was his wont—*his* stamina was also incredible. Something past eleven he "invited" me to walk him home to his hotel, the Pierre on Fifth Avenue, a good two miles away. Tired as I was, I wasn't going to miss the opportunity for more talk, and as we strode down Park Avenue—Mugg setting the furious pace, as always—he questioned me closely on the current abortion situation and related matters.

It seemed only moments later that we stood outside the hotel, and Mugg was saying "Let's have a drink, Jim!" (For him that meant more orange juice, for me another glass of wine I didn't need.) But it was now past midnight, and the hotel bar was closed. So we hot-footed it over to Central Park South, where a sidewalk cafe was still going strong, just like Mugg.

He resumed his hot pursuit of all the latest. I was expounding on the peculiar background to our abortion situation over here; just as I was explaining my objections to using euphemisms such as "pro-life" (What if the Abolitionists had tried "pro-freedom"? etc.) rather than "anti-abortion," which was what we *were*, he cut in: "Jim, you must do a book about it all!" I tried to explain that I never would, and why, but when Mugg fastened on an idea, his tenacity was legendary, and he was having none of my demurrals.

Then a happy inspiration hit me. I cut in and said "Malcolm, I'll never write the book, but I have the title." He looked thunderstruck: "What is it, dear boy?" Leaning into his face, I leered "When the Screwing Had to Stop."*

He jolted back in his metal chair, looked incredulous for a moment, then broke into the most impressive laughing fit of all the many I'd witnessed. Indeed, he began choking on his last gulp of juice. A waitress was taking an order at a table but one away. "My dear girl," Mugg gurgled, "would you get me some water?" She snapped "I'm *busy*, sir." (Typical New York.)

The visage of St. Mugg underwent a startling transformation; the

*There was a 1960 book by Constantine Fitzgibbon titled "When the Kissing Had to Stop," a fantasy of a Soviet takeover of Britain, which was well known to both of us, as indeed it was to most anti-Communists of that time.

bluest of eyes changed color, the voice recovered power: "You won't get an old man a drink of water!" She visibly decided that she *would*, on the double.

Like the visit to the bishop, our night wound down with all deliberate speed. I left him at the hotel door. My only further exercise was a sprint for the nearest cab.

The next night was the testimonial dinner, and the morning after (as I dimly remember) Mugg called to ask: "Would you and Faith have dinner with me tonight? It will be my last night in New York. I shall never return." We did. But it was hardly the sad parting we anticipated. Rather, another long evening of marvelous talk and laughter, then not-prolonged (emotional, yes) farewells.

It was indeed his last night in New York, but not our last with him. In May, 1985, Malcolm and Kitty came to Canada to visit son John and family—wife Anne, five children, now also our friends—they invited us to come up. So we enjoyed another few glorious days together.

We never did make the trip to Sussex, as we swore so often we would—our loss. After Malcolm's stroke, indomitable Anne asked Kitty if she would come to stay with them in Canada. "I can't leave," answered indomitable Kitty, "Malcolm is struggling with death, and I can't leave him until he's won."

He has. Kitty is now in Canada. I write this on Epiphany: we talked to her last Friday night, and of course said we'd visit her soon—a promise we'll *keep* this time—so we'll be ready for our next round of talk and laughter with both of them, in due season.

APPENDIX A

[*The following syndicated column was issued Nov. 22, 1990, and is reprinted here with permission. (©1990 by Universal Press Syndicate).*]

Malcolm Muggeridge, R.I.P.

William F. Buckley Jr.

Ten years ago Malcolm Muggeridge and I shared the job of commentator for two programs based on the Sistine Chapel. Two weeks before we got to Rome he telephoned. "Do you know," he said, "I have met, I suppose, all the important men and women in my lifetime, and on the whole I think them an awful bore . . . but I want to meet the present pope. Could you arrange it?"

I laughed. One always—inevitably—laughed in his company, which is one reason why one looked forward to it.

When Pope John Paul approached Muggeridge he looked over benevolently and said to him: "Ah. You are radio!" It is very difficult to answer that question coherently, so Muggeridge simply smiled a response. The pope turned to the next guest in line at the private audience and said to David Niven, "Ah, you were the great friend of my predecessor." David Niven mumbled something about having had great admiration for Pope Paul VI, whom he never knew, and probably hadn't given five minutes thought to. The pope, dear pope was confused about the composition of the audience he was giving.

After our blessing, Malcolm could not get over his amusement; but then, years later, visiting him in his little country house, I saw neatly framed in a corner of his living room a photograph. Him and the pope.

When he died a week ago the commentators listed his affiliation with Christianity rather as though it had been the next post, after editor of *Punch*. They did not seem to know that he had become the foremost evangelist of Christianity in the English language.

On a television program in 1980, at his invitation the hour was called, "Why I am not a Catholic." It was off to a wonderful start when he recounted his disillusion with a Catholic chaplain at the University of Edinburgh. Muggeridge had just been installed as chancellor (that is the habit in Great Britain: University chancellors are popularity contest winner of sort), and the administration came out for giving students free contraceptives; Chancellor Muggeridge objected; the Catholic chaplain denounced him as monstrous.

WFB: Excuse me, but why was it monstrous?

Muggeridge: It was monstrous, according to him, because it accused the students of wanting to be promiscuous. But in a letter I wrote in answer to it, I said I wondered what the Reverend Father thought they wanted the contraceptives for. Was it to save up for their wedding day?

That was Muggeridge *vital*, the mordant clairvoyance that taught him to see

through communism in the early '30's and brought him as high a reputation as a journalist as has been achieved by anyone in this century. He was everywhere, doing everything, but his odyssey was not without purpose. He was moving toward Christianity.

"Why did this longing for faith assail me? Insofar as I can point to anything it has to do with this profession which both you and I have followed of observing what's going on in the world and attempting to report and comment thereon, because that particular occupation gives one a very heightened sense of the sheer fantasy of human affairs—the sheer fantasy of power and of the structures that men construct out of power—and therefore gives one an intense, overwhelming longing to be in contact with reality. And so you look for reality and ultimately you arrive at the conclusion that reality is a mystery."

Why did he relish the mystery?

"Because it leads you to God. . . . It's exactly like—Bill, it's exactly like falling in love. You see another human being and for some extraordinary reason you're in a state of joy and ecstasy over that person, but the driving force which enables you to express that and to bring it into your life is love. Without love, it's nothing; it passes. It's the same with seeking reality, and there the driving force we call faith. It's a very difficult thing to define, actually."

He never did define grace, which is not definable, but in due course he and his wife joined the Catholic Church and he pursued his writing, and his lecturing, now as an explicit Christian, of the best kind, the kind whose second greatest pleasure in life is laughter. After his stroke three months ago his brother wrote to say that Malcolm still enjoyed hearing from his friends, but could on no account acknowledge his mail.

He yearned to die, and hoped only that his beloved Kitty would go first. She survives him, reinforcing his belief in what it is that teaches us most. "As an old man, Bill, looking back on one's life, it's one of the things that strikes you most forcibly—that the only thing that's taught one anything is suffering. Not success, not happiness, not anything like that. The only thing that really teaches one what life's about—the joy of understanding, the joy of coming in contact with what life really signifies—is suffering, affliction."

He suffered, even at the end. But throughout his lifetime, he diminished the suffering of others, at first simply by his wit and intelligence; finally, by his own serenity, which brought serene moments to those graced by his presence.

APPENDIX B

[*The following article is reprinted with permission of the author. It first appeared as a "My Turn" column in* Newsweek *(November 19, 1990), which described Miss Ebeling as "A single mother of a 2-year-old daughter and a freelance writer" living in California.*]

The Failure of Feminism

Kay Ebeling

The other day I had the world's fastest blind date. A Yuppie from Eureka penciled me in for 50 minutes on a Friday and met me at a watering hole in the rural northern California town of Arcata. He breezed in, threw his jammed daily planner on the table and shot questions at me, watching my reactions as if it were a job interview. He eyed how much I drank. Then he breezed out to his next appointment. He has given us 50 minutes to size each other up and see if there was any chance for romance. His exit was so fast that as we left he let the door slam back in my face. It was an interesting slam.

Most of our 50-minute conversation had covered the changing state of male-female relationships. My blind date was 40 years old, from the Experimental Generation. He is "actively pursuing new ways for men and women to interact now that old traditions no longer exist." That's a real quote. He really did say that, when I asked him what he liked to do. This was a man who'd read Ms. Magazine and believed every word of it. He'd been single for 16 years but had lived with a few women during that time. He was off that evening for a ski weekend, meeting someone who was paying her own way for the trip.

I too am from the Experimental Generation, but I couldn't even pay for my own drink. To me, feminism has backfired against women. In 1973 I left what could have been a perfectly good marriage, taking with me a child in diapers, a 10-year old Plymouth and Volume 1, Number One of Ms. Magazine. I was convinced I could make it on my own. In the last 15 years my ex has married or lived with a succession of women. As he gets older, his women stay in their 20s. Meanwhile, I've stayed unattached. He drives a BMW. I ride buses.

Today I see feminism as the Great Experiment That Failed, and women in my generation, its perpetrators, are the casualties. Many of us, myself included, are saddled with raising children alone. The resulting poverty makes us experts at cornmeal recipes and ways to find free recreation on weekends. At the same time, single men from our generation amass fortunes in CDs and real-estate ventures so they can breeze off on ski weekends. Feminism freed men, not women. Now men are spared the nuisance of a wife and family to support. After childbirth, if his wife's waist doesn't return to 20 inches, the husband can go out and get a more petite women. It's far more difficult for the wife, now tied down with a baby, to find a new man. My blind date that Friday

waved goodbye as he drove off in his RV. I walked home and paid the sitter with laundry quarters.

The main message of feminism was: woman, you don't need a man; remember, those of you around 40, the phrase: "A women without a man is like a fish without a bicycle?" That joke circulated through "consciousness raising" groups across the country in the '70s. It was a philosophy that made divorce and cohabitation casual amd routine. Feminism made women disposable. So today a lot of females are around 40 and single with a couple of kids to raise on their own. Child-support payments might pay for few pairs of shoes, but in general, feminism gave men all the financial and personal advantages over women.

What's worse, we asked for it. Many women decided: you don't need a family structure to raise your children. We packed them off to day-care centers where they could get their nurturing from professionals. Then we put on our suits and ties, packed our briefcases and took off on this Great Experiment, convinced that there was no difference between ourselves and the guys in other offices.

How wrong we were. Because like it or not, women have babies. It's this biological thing that's just there, these organs we're born with. The truth is, a women can't live the true feminist life unless she denies her childbearing biology. She has to live on the pill, or have her tubes tied at an early age. Then she can keep up with the guys with an uninterrupted career and then, when she's 30, she'll be paying her own way on ski weekends too.

The reality of feminism is a lot of frenzied and overworked women dropping kids off at day-care centers. If the child is sick, they just send along some children's Tylenol and then rush off to underpaid jobs that they don't even like. Two of my working-mother friends told me they were mopping floors and folding laundry after midnight last week. They live on five hours of sleep, and it shows in their faces. And they've got husbands! I'm not advocating that women retrogress to the brainless housewive's of the '50s who spent afternoons baking macaroni sculptures and keeping Betty Crocker files. Post-World War II women were the first to be left with a lot of free time, and they weren't too creative in filling it. Perhaps feminism was a reaction to that Brainless Betty, and in that respect, feminism has served a purpose.

Women should get educations so they can be brainy in the way they raise their children. Women can start small businesses, do consulting, write freelance out of the home. But women don't belong in 12-hour-a-day executive office positions, and I can't figure out today what ever made us think we would want to be there in the first place. As long as that biology is there, women can't compete equally with men. A ratio cannot be made using disproportionate parts. Women and men are not equal, we're different. The economy might even improve if women came home, opening up jobs for unemployed men, who could then support a wife and children, the way it was, pre-feminism.

Sometimes on Saturday nights I'll get dressed up and go out club-hopping

or to the theater, but the sight of all those other women my age, dressed a little too young, made up to hide encroaching wrinkles, looking hopefully into the crowds, usually depresses me. I end up coming home, to spend my Saturday night with my daughter asleep in her room nearby. At least the NBC Saturday-night lineup is geared demographically to women at home alone.

APPENDIX C

[The following column appeared as a "Commentary" in the Providence Journal-Bulletin *on July 16, 1990, and is reprinted here with permission. Michelle A. Cretella, who received a degree in biology from Wesleyan in June, is now studying at the University of Connecticut Medical School.]*

Abortion: Demanding and getting some real choices

Michelle A. Cretella

When it comes to abortion, the medical establishment is more concerned with maximizing profits than improving the health and status of women.

Abortion is the only medical procedure for which the surgeon is not obliged to inform the patient of possible risks, or the exact nature of the procedure, even when questioned directly. It is the only medical procedure that may be advertised. It is the only surgery which the federal government cannot regulate. It is the only surgery for which payment is routinely demanded in advance, which normally warrants the loss of surgical privileges. It is the only medical procedure for which clinics pay cash awards to those who bring them clients.

In a single year, the Los Angeles Planned Parenthood Clergy Consultation Service received $250,000 in kickbacks from clinics to which it referred women. In any other branch of medicine, a doctor's license would be revoked. It is not unusual for abortionists to earn eight times as much as other surgeons. Abortionist David Aberman, for example, once boasted that he made an extra $30,000 per year by moonlighting one day a week at an abortion clinic.

This is not to suggest that every abortionist is in it for the money. Many doctors support abortion on utilitarian grounds. However, after 17 years of legalization, years marked by increased poverty and violence, abortion is clearly not a solution to the social ills of our day.

Furthermore, it is a sad commentary on society when its doctors accept killing the poor as a way to end poverty. For abortion does not kill tissue; it kills an unborn person. Since when does "tissue" have a heartbeat after 18-21 days of growth, or brain waves between five and six weeks? At eight weeks' gestation, all organs are in place and the embryo is called a fetus (Latin for "little one"). Between the ninth and twelfth weeks, the "fetal tissue" can squint, swallow, hiccup, retract his or her tongue, and suck his or her thumb.

Human development is a continuous process from the moment of conception on. Seven-month-old fetuses can learn in the womb, but lateralization of the brain is not complete before 12 years of age. Human personhood is an innate quality, not something that is learned, proven or bestowed by society.

Nevertheless, many continue to argue against "turning back the clock" to the days when "5,000 to 10,000 women died each year at the hands of back-alley butchers." In reality, 84 to 87 percent of all illegal abortions were performed by doctors, and the 5,000 to 10,000 figures are demonstrably false.

According to *Vital Statistics of the United States*, published by the federal government, the number of women who died from illegal abortions in 1967 and 1972 was 160 and 48, respectively. Dr. Christopher Teitze, a leading pro-choice statistician, has concluded that any understatement of abortion-related deaths prior to *Roe* did not exceed 10 percent.

Yet legalization has not reduced the number of women dying from abortion. Before *Roe*, deaths were on the decline, owing to medical advances: Since 1973, some 15,000 criminal abortions have continued to occur each year, resulting in about 10 deaths per year. While deaths due to illegal abortions are falling, they have been replaced, almost one for one, by deaths due to legal abortions. Given the 10 to 15-fold increase in the number of annual abortions, this might mean that the percentage chance of survival has increased.

However, the Centers for Disease Control has admitted that the abortion mortality rate is deliberately kept low by selective undereporting. This is not surprising since the Supreme Court struck down all requirements for reporting abortion-related complications and deaths. Attempts to restrict abortions to obstetrician/gynecologists were also deemed unconstitutional.

These factors, combined with a profit-maximizing mentality, have led to assembly-line clinics and a host of unethical (but legal) practices in even the most "reputable" abortion clinics. Sanitation violations, abortions on non-pregnant women, gross miscalculation of gestational age, verbal abuse of clients, no use of anesthesia, or allowing insufficient time for it to take effect, incomplete abortions, unreported deaths, and sick jokes are among the most frequently cited abuses.

Abortion will never be "just another medical procedure." Abortion disrupts a normal physiologic process. The instruments are inserted without visual aid into a highly vascular region. Vacuum aspiration and dilation and curettage are used for first-trimester abortions. The immediate risks of these include: Tearing of the cervix, perforation of the uterus, hemorrhage, excessive bleeding, infection, convulsions, embolism, endotoxic shock and complications from anesthesia.

Long-term side-effects include an increased risk for breast cancer, sterility, ectopic pregnancy, Caesarean sections, miscarriages, premature births, complicated labor and birth defects in future children. Teenagers and women aborting their first pregnancies are at greatest risk for developing long-term complications.

If the situation is so grim, why don't we hear more about it? The primary reason is that abortion practitioners control the statistics. It is like trusting the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. to report on the ill effects of cigarette smoking. Few Americns are aware of groups such as Women Exploited by abortion (WEBA) and American Victims of Abortion (AVA). Both witnessed a burgeoning growth during the last half of the 1980s. Many women who once had abortions are now members of the National Right to Life Committee.

There are six times more women who, after their abortions, decided to work against abortion rights.

It is ironic that support for abortion has become the *sina qua non* of the feminist movement. The history of abortion reform and opinion polls show that legalization was, and is, most strongly supported by upper-class males. Judith Blake, who is pro-choice and head of the demography department at the University of California, Berkeley, and Nancyjo Mann, founder of WEBA, agree that this in part because abortion allows men to exploit women sexually more easily.

As a class, men are no longer held as financially or socially responsible for accidental pregnancies. All the "new" responsible man—read "selfish and uncommitted"—has to do is offer to pay for half the abortion, and move on. It is no accident that one of the greatest financial contributors to abortion rights is Hugh Hefner. Abortion reduces women to the status of sex machines that can be fixed and reused.

As long as support for abortion rights remains "politically correct," women will face difficult lives. Until women tear off the abortion band-aid, and demand the right to keep their lives, bodies and children intact, they will not achieve true social equality. It is time we demanded and received some real choices. Flexible education programs, fairness in hiring, more flextime, part-time and home-commute jobs, adequate maternity and paternity leaves, better access to prenatal and obstetric care, safe and effective non-abortifacient contraceptives, and reform of current adoption and AFDC policies.

Dr. Michelle Harrison, an abortionist and author of *A Woman in Residence* summarizes well the ultimate irony of almost 20 years of "choice." "Women and fetuses are victims in our society," she writes, "pitted against one another, without options." Without choice.

APPENDIX D

[*The following article appeared as an "On Society" column in the magazine* U.S. News and World Report *on November 5, 1990, and is reprinted here with permission of the author.*]

One watchdog missing in action

John Leo

Last summer, while I was investigating the astonishing violence inflicted on anti-abortion protesters in West Hartford, Conn., one question kept coming to mind: where was the American Civil Liberties Union during all this?

On June 17, 1989, after protesters occupied an abortion clinic, the police used prolonged "pain compliance holds" (i.e. torture) on invaders and legal protesters alike. Many arrestees were denied medical care, held incommunicado for two days and arraigned in a court closed to the public. Many protesters claim permanent nerve damage. One woman suffered police-induced damage to her uterus and had to have surgery. Some of those arrested were not allowed a single phone call for as long as five days. When permitted, these calls were monitored by authorities, which is unconstitutional.

Let us put this as mildly as possible: One might think that the facts listed above would be of some interest to a functioning civil-liberties union. But no, the ACLU's Connecticut affiliate, right next door in Hartford, sat on its hands during the whole sorry affair. Despite pleas for help, a spokeswoman repeatedly said that the affiliate was taking no position on the case. Nat Hentoff wrote angrily in the *Village Voice:* "Why do they still call it a civil-liberties union?"

After Hentoff's attack, the affiliate awoke briefly and tried to get a bill passed that would ban pain compliance in the state. But it went to sleep again when West Hartford filed an outrageous suit against the protesters under a federal antiracketeering law known as RICO. The suit named as a conspirator a newspaper editor in Upstate New York whose offense was writing an editorial denouncing the police brutality. Another alleged conspirator was an anti-abortion West Hartford woman (never even informally accused of any crime) who was named because she opened her home to relatives and friends of those arrested.

Wearing blinders. A federal appeals court, using the word "fanciful" to describe West Hartford's case, dismissed the RICO suit three weeks ago. But the ACLU looked the other way for more than a year, even though it was clearly one of the stupidest and most political RICO suits yet filed, accusing even the press of conspiracy for daring to complain about police abuses.

Why is that the ACLU, which happily defends the Nazi's and the Klan, has such trouble helping abused abortion protesters? Well, for one thing, the ACLU has an abortion lobby inside it (the Reproductive Freedom Project). For another, so much of its recent recruiting has been done around the abortion

issue that a large percentage of membership and staff are much less interested in civil liberties than in pro-abortion-rights activities.

This can be seen in the ACLU's attitude toward RICO, which it has been officially opposed to for years. But in practice, the affiliates usually look the other way when RICO suits are filed against anti-abortion protesters, or they covertly lend assistance to these RICO suits. ACLU lawyers regularly moonlight for the National Organization for Women and for abortion clinics pressing RICO cases against anti-abortion groups. This RICO schizophrenia seems to afflict the ACLU only in abortion cases. As Lynn Paltrow of the Reproductive Freedom Project told me, "It's ACLU policy to oppose application of RICO, but there are those on staff who feel that as long as RICO exists, this kind of behavior (Operation Rescue tactics) does fit." In other words, RICO is totally bad, but sort of useful.

RICO is a very disturbing law, and its use against political protesters is even more disturbing. Every civil libertarian that I know has agreed that it might have been used to destroy Martin Luther King's desegregation efforts just as it is being used now to destroy Operation Rescue. Tony Califa of the ACLU's Washington office, a strong opponent of RICO, says he expects it will be used one day against animal-rights advocates, anti-nuclear groups and other protesters. You might expect that a civil-liberties union would not tolerate, wink at or tacitly support abusive RICO applications. But the ACLU is not what it once was. It is so compromised by the abortion issue that it cannot focus clearly on the larger civil-liberties threat involved.

Another ominous pattern I have noticed is that whenever there is any danger of the ACLU's coming in to protect the civil liberties of anti-abortion protesters, the affiliate usually says it can't because it is already involved on the abortion clinic's side. Can it be that affiliates sometimes deliberately involved themselves early on one side so they will have an excuse not to help any victims on the other? I put this question to Harvard Law Prof. Alan Dershowitz. "Absolutely," he said. "They go to the pro-choice people and say, 'Get us in right away.'" That way, he said, they can cite conflict of interest when asked to help abortion opponents.

It seems clear that the influx of single-issue pro-choice money and members is bending the ACLU out of shape, making it more a part of the pro-choice movement and less committed to a civil-liberties agenda. Dershowitz says, "You can make more money supporting reproductive rights than you can supporting civil liberties. It's as simple as that." He thinks, as I do, that the existence of the Reproductive Freedom Project creates an inherent conflict in the ACLU and should be terminated. There are plenty of pro-choice groups, but there is only a single civil-liberties union and it really ought to try to function as one.

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

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