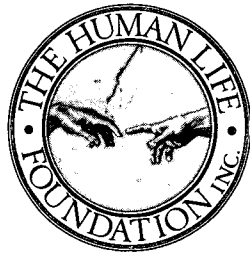


# the HUMAN LIFE REVIEW



SPRING 1993

Featured in this issue:

Joseph Sobran on ..... 'Evolving' Homosexuality  
Wm. B. Murchison on ..... Armageddon Revisited  
William McGurn on ..... Abortion & the GOP  
Faith Abbott on ..... A Tale of Two Women  
Frederica Mathewes-Green on ... Maryland Mourning  
Robert P. Casey on ..... Law without Honor  
Mary Kenny on ..... Lord William Rees-Mogg

---

Special Section: Ronald Reagan's 'Abortion and the Conscience  
of the Nation' Revisited with commentary by John Muggeridge

---

Also in this issue: Jessica Shaver • Beverly Beckham • Karen  
McCowan • *Caton* • *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* • Mark Shields  
Thomas Sowell • Patrick Buchanan • Stan Sinberg • Francis X. Maier

*Published by:*

**The Human Life Foundation, Inc.**  
New York, N.Y.

Vol. XIX, No. 2

\$5.00 a copy

... ABOUT THIS ISSUE

We welcome Spring with a record number of articles and columns (20 in all), many of which relate one way or another to the new Administration in Washington: it's already obvious that President Clinton's aggressively pro-abortion policies will provide plenty of new material for "pro-life" journalists, which may spark a much-needed revitalization of the anti-abortion movement itself (Spring is the time for hope).

You will notice a distinguished new name on our masthead: Mary Kenny, a well-known London journalist (she covers Ireland as well) and featured columnist for the *Sunday Telegraph*, is now our Consulting Editor for Europe; she also contributes a profile of Lord William Rees-Mogg to this issue (see page 65).

We thank *National Review* for permission to reprint William McGurn's article "Abortion and the GOP" (see page 27), which we think will be of considerable interest to all "pro-lifers"—as will the speech by Pennsylvania Gov. Robert P. Casey, which the Governor has kindly permitted us to print in full here (see page 54).

Thanks also to *Commonweal* magazine for permission to reprint Francis X. Maier's "Things Danny Taught Me" (see *Appendix K*); we found it a very moving story, and think you will too.

Regular readers will remember our in-depth report on euthanasia in Holland ("Dutch Treat," *Fall 1990*) by Rita Marker, who then predicted the legalization of "mercy killing" which has now been approved by the Dutch government. Mrs. Marker has authored a new book, *Deadly Compassion: The Death of Ann Humphry and the Truth about Euthanasia*, just published by William Morrow & Co.—if you don't find it in your local bookstore, we hope you will *order* it. It is a moving personal story about Rita and Ann's friendship, as well as an incisive history of the euthanasia movement and a powerful indictment of its guru, the terminally-charming Derek Humphry.

Finally, we hope you will enjoy the cartoons (all from the London *Spectator* this time), which remind us that a good sense of humor cannot but help us persevere.

MARIA MCFADDEN  
MANAGING EDITOR



# the HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

SPRING 1993

Vol. XIX, No. 2

## Editor

J. P. McFadden

## Contributing Editors

Faith Abbott

Joseph Sobran

## Consulting Editor, Europe

Mary Kenny, London

## Managing Editor

Maria McFadden

## Contributors

Kay Ebeling

Ellen Wilson Fielding

Elena Muller Garcia

James Hitchcock

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn

Rita Marker

Jo McGowan

Mary Meehan

William B. Murchison

John Wauck

Chilton Williamson, Jr.

## Assistant Managing Editor

Mary M. O'Connor

## Articles Editor

Robert M. Patrick

## Copy Editor

Harold Marsden

## Production Manager

Ray Lopez

## Circulation

Esther Burke

## Publishing Consultant

Edward A. Capano

## Introduction ..... 2

J. P. McFadden

## Evolving Standards: Liberalism,

## Hedonism and Homosexuality ..... 7

Joseph Sobran

## Armageddon Revisited ..... 17

William B. Murchison

## Abortion and the GOP ..... 27

William McGurn

## A Tale of Two Women ..... 35

Faith Abbott

## The Question of Question #6 ..... 44

Frederica Mathewes-Green

## A Law without Honor ..... 54

Robert P. Casey

## The Lord Speaks Good Sense ..... 65

Mary Kenny

## Abortion and the Conscience

## of the Nation ..... 71

Ronald Reagan

## Pricking the Conscience of the Nation .. 80

John Muggeridge

## Appendices ..... 87

Jessica Shaver

Beverly Beckham

Karen McCowan

Caton

Arkansas Democrat Gazette

Mark Shields

Thomas Sowell

Joseph Sobran

Patrick Buchanan

Stan Sinberg

Francis X. Maier

Published by THE HUMAN LIFE FOUNDATION, Inc. Editorial Office, Room 840, 150 E. 35th St., New York, N.Y. 10016. The editors will consider all manuscripts submitted, but assume no responsibility for unsolicited material. Editorial and subscription inquiries, and requests for reprint permission, should be sent directly to the editorial office. Subscription price: \$20 per year; Canada and foreign \$25 (U.S. currency).

©1993 by THE HUMAN LIFE FOUNDATION, Inc., New York, N.Y. Printed in the U.S.A.

## INTRODUCTION

**W**E RECENTLY READ this pithy dictum: “The essence of liberalism is the denial of what everybody knows is true.” That surely fits our overwhelmingly-liberal media, which have shamelessly promoted the fiction that abortion is nothing more than a matter of “choice”—a woman has a right to control her own body—when everybody knows that somebody *else’s* body is being “terminated” (Have you ever seen an ad for a “Roach Terminator”?). Call it *euphemasia*: the bogus terminology kills the reality.

In our lead article, Joseph Sobran puts it another way:

Liberalism, in our popular political culture, is intellectual success-worship. It entertains an endless sequence of fads, heralded by promoters and publicists, with enthusiasts fluttering from one to another like moths to light bulbs. A few years ago, when feminism reigned, good liberals belittled innate differences between the sexes and sneered at Freud’s dictum that “biology is destiny.” Today good liberals agree with equal unanimity and fervor that homosexuality is biologically predestined. And no doubt many liberals persist in believing both. The articles of the creed need not be consistent with each other; they need only be recent.

Put that way, it’s no surprise that our new President, immediately after his election (evidently the matter was too urgent to await his taking office), announced homosexual “rights” as his first priority—specifically, the right to serve in the military as “Gays” rather than as mere citizens. Once in the White House, abortion “rights” became Mr. Clinton’s priority: his first official act was to repeal all the abortion restrictions of the Reagan-Bush era. As we write, he is asking the Congress to repeal the Hyde Amendment, which has banned taxpayer funding of abortions for the past 16 years. Needless to add, Planned Parenthood is pleased.

That is also no surprise: there is a “natural” affinity between de-populators and homosexuals; sodomy is, after all, the ultimate contraceptive. The result has been the now-powerful—indeed, *in power*—political alliance between pro-abortion Feminists and the “Gay Rights” lobby. As Mr. Sobran makes clear, the liberal “mass media” have not only promoted such “rights” but also their ideological well-springs in the Sexual Revolution (during which Mr. Clinton came of age) and the pervasive anti-religious ethos we now live in. As Sobran

says, “liberalism turns every moral problem into a civil-rights issue” and then “gives civil rights top moral priority.” And now we have “for the first time, a president who, though nominally Christian, almost mechanically embodies” liberal attitudes; thus, Sobran fears, “America’s moral revolution” could become “complete and irreversible” in the Clinton Era, ending in “totalitarian hedonism.” We trust our friend Joe is *too* pessimistic.

Presumably William Murchison agrees. He here analyzes the initial acts of the new president (“First impressions, our mothers taught us, are the ones that count”), and like Sobran he finds much to be dismayed about: “Bill Clinton, with eyes and mouth wide open, has signaled that America will be a different place indeed if he and his wife have anything to do with it.” But Mr. Murchison remains reasonably optimistic: the “social issues” have not gone away—they’ll revive as the “new culture” challenges the old, and Americans are forced to answer the ageless question “Are some things right, in and of themselves, and are other things wrong?” Despite what the media tell us, he believes that a great many people remain on the traditional side of the great “cultural divide”—they still take their views from “Mount Sinai and the Gospels”—and he expects to have plenty of company when, à la Teddy Roosevelt, “We stand at Armageddon, and we battle for the Lord.”

Next William McGurn gets into the *politics* of morality. What dismays *him* is the rush to mis-judgment by fellow Republicans who have concluded that the abortion issue is an albatross—that the GOP must abandon *moral* commitments to regain the White House—Abraham Lincoln would hardly agree, McGurn argues, and “Lincoln’s party” needs to take a hard look at the political tactics he used in the “parallel” struggle against slavery. We expect that many “pro-lifers” will reject Mr. McGurn’s argument—a “states’ rights” solution would seem to *reverse* the slavery parallel?—but it may be the only way to sustain and *advance* the moral case against abortion, and to actually save some *lives* as well (something the anti-abortion movement has been unable to do *enough* of so far).

Alas, lives are saved—just as we all live and die—one at a time. The unborn baby has no choice; others decide for or against its life, primarily the mother, who is nowadays *encouraged* to give the proverbial “thumbs down” decision. Faith Abbott describes the tribulations of two women “faced” with unexpected motherhood. The younger one decided that “Simply because I was 34, happily married, financially comfortable, with a nice home, loving my children and surviving a history of infertility did not disqualify me from having an abortion”—an old friend who just happened to be a former abortion counselor told her so, thus providing “permission” to make her choice. The older woman chose life, even though the baby was due to arrive on her fortieth birthday; now she’s having a grand old time with her “Bonus Baby”—it’s a new life for them both. As usual, Faith tells a good story vividly: she also gives you

## INTRODUCTION

a brief but beautiful piece of literature by Whittaker Chambers, who once faced a trial-by-abortion himself—his testimony for the right choice is a classic.

Abortion forces choices on its opponents as well: for instance, which political battles should they fight? Frederica Mathewes-Green, a member of the small but vocal Feminists for Life group, had to decide whether or not to lead opposition to an abortion referendum in her home state. In fact, Maryland's "Question #6" would only have made a bad situation worse—it was by no means an anti-abortion bill—but it was so bad that Mrs. Mathewes-Green thought it should and *could* be defeated—it was worth a try anyway. Or *was* it? It turned out to be a frustrating battle that ended in a costly defeat, but she learned a great deal from it—you will too, it makes quite a story.

The result may well have been different in Pennsylvania, which can boast of a Governor so effectively "pro-life" that, as everybody knows, his own Democratic Party has ostracized him. But Robert P. Casey fights on (call him the "Democratic National Committee of One"?), as you will see. We reprint here his address to an abortion conference in St. Louis—fittingly, he delivered it in the very same room in which *Dred Scott* was first argued—Mr. Casey argues eloquently that *Roe v. Wade* dishonors America just as that "landmark" slavery case did—it "cannot command our respect" much less our allegiance. We wish we'd been there to cheer on his "*Roe* must go" manifesto in person.

**H**ereabouts we traditionally provide you with something a bit lighter than our usual heavy going. This time it comes from Mary Kenny, who writes from London about a remarkable personality: Lord William Rees-Mogg, despite his impeccable Establishment credentials, expounds opinions that are anything *but* "politically correct"—not least on abortion—yet he commands respect for his views by sheer force of argument—he speaks such good sense that Miss Kenny considers him a worthy successor to Malcolm Muggeridge, albeit without the wicked wit that made "St. Mugg" unique. Sit back and enjoy this one.

Next, we reprint a piece of history: a decade ago, Ronald Reagan sent us a reflection on the tenth anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*; few (if any?) presidents have ever written anything like it while in office, and we were of course proud that he chose this journal to publish it. Well, another decade has gone by, and it is safe to say that the president now sitting in the White House will not produce anything comparable—certainly not for *his* side of the great "single issue" Mr. Reagan addressed—so we thought it a fitting moment to repeat our most famous article which, we'd argue, makes stronger reading now than when we first ran it.

Then, Ronald Reagan was the only "world leader"—save the Pope of Rome—who defended the sanctity of human life. He remains the only one to have done that, with no challenger in sight. Back then, we wrote that Mr. Reagan's testament would remain memorable for evoking "the moral passion of Abraham Lincoln against slavery"—that also remains true.

## THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

Mr. Reagan's essay later appeared in a book that included "The Humane Holocaust" by the late great Malcolm Muggeridge (which also first appeared in this journal). So we asked our friend John Muggeridge if he would give us a "Ten Years After" commentary on the Reagan-Muggeridge collaboration, which he has done, actually meeting our deadline (a rare treat, that!) to the hour. You will find a lot of history in it too—plus the style that the honorable name of Muggeridge guarantees, and the humor as well. We had a good laugh at his description of the "anti-Reagan universe" he inhabits: liberal Canadians evidently insist on remembering Mr. Reagan only for "falling asleep at press conferences" and the like. Well, he managed to doze through two full terms—something his hyper-active successor *didn't* manage—there may be a lesson in that? We think you will find Mr. Muggeridge's ruminations an enjoyable wrap-up of what we consider an unusually good selection of articles.

\* \* \* \* \*

But there is yet more—a *lot* more. We can't recall having so many appendices (11) before, nor a more varied selection. All are short, and sharply pointed: we usually try to arrange the pieces in relation to our articles, but in this case we might easily have simply run them in alphabetical order—each one stands on its own, beginning with the flurry of questions raised by Miss Jessica Shaver (*Appendix A*) in response to President Clinton's scrapping of all federal anti-abortion regulations, for instance "Why is a fetus a nonperson if the mother doesn't want it, but it becomes a person if the mother does?" (We hope to hear more from Miss Shaver in due course!).

Then Columnist Beverly Beckham (*Appendix B*) wades in with more such questions, concluding that convicted murderers are allowed "dozens of appeals before they are executed" whereas "Choicers" bitterly oppose a 24-hour delay before the execution of unborn babies. Next you have Miss Karen McCowan (*Appendix C*), who as a reporter felt obliged to cover abortion stories "objectively"—now she too is a columnist, and can say what she really *thinks*, which she does here, movingly.

A reader sent us a clipping from a Mexican newspaper shortly after Mr. Clinton took office: "How do you like *this*?" We were duly impressed, and decided to let you read it too (*Appendix D*). As you will see, the editorialist is *not* pleased with "WC"—they don't call him Bill down there. Fact is, some people aren't pleased even back home in Little Rock, where Mr. Paul Greenberg, editorial-page editor of the Arkansas *Democrat Gazette*, wrote a blistering editorial (*Appendix E*) that deserves a place in our chronicle of the Great Abortion War, if only for this line: "If abortion is not wrong, then nothing is." (Mr. Greenberg later repeated his strong opinions, slightly adjusted for his national readership, in a column distributed by the Los Angeles *Times* Syndicate.)

## INTRODUCTION

We admit that certified liberals are rare in our pages, but we have always admired Columnist Mark Shields, despite his political views—not least because he has not allowed them to blind him to abortion realities. Here (*Appendix F*), he dares to say what everybody knows is true: for the media, “growth” on the abortion issue is in one direction only.

One of our favorite columnists is Thomas Sowell (*Appendix G*), whose acid-tipped barbs consistently inject common sense (again, what everybody *knows*) into the public debate. He too hits the “growth” theme—his particular target is the strange behavior of certain Supreme Court Justices when the issue is abortion—but he also gives *Roe* the kind of drubbing it richly deserves. In *Appendix H* you get more from the incredibly prolific Joseph Sobran, this time a stinging column on the recent, lamentable murder in Florida of a doctor—he was in fact an *abortionist*, but the media *reject* that kind of accuracy, as everybody knows. In person, our old friend Sobran is as funny as can be, but in print he can be devastating, certainly *re* abortion—this one is pure distilled wrath, 200-proof.

Amusingly, Joe is followed by that *other* ultra-proof devastator, Pat Buchanan (*Appendix I*), who terminates the pretensions of Jack “Dr. Death” Kevorkian, as well as the arrogance of New Age votaries who claim that “God does not exist” and even if He *does*, “He is not a party to the debate.” After Sobran and Buchanan in tandem, you may want to pause for a cold drink. Or you may find comic relief in *Appendix J*, which recounts the amazing “conversion” of Mr. Stan Sinberg after his own mother informed him that *he* just missed being aborted. Mr. Sinberg should try his hand at Soap Opera: his dialogue is in perfect pitch, which makes his *finale* (“Sure, I’m pro-choice. Now.”) a gem we’re delighted to display.

We wouldn’t want to say that we’ve saved the best for last, but you may find *Appendix K* a fitting conclusion to this issue, which has ranged perhaps too far over too many vexed questions. Mr. Francis Maier writes simply and movingly about his son Danny, who “suffers” from Down syndrome. But *does* he? Or is “imperfection” *our* problem, so difficult to understand and accept that we can’t hear Mother Teresa speaking to Malcolm Muggeridge when, having plucked a thrown-away baby from a Calcutta gutter, she said “Look! There’s *life* in her!” No, not our idea of the best possible life, but life that can neither disappoint nor be disappointed—in short, as Mr. Maier has concluded, a better life than a “normal” one, life itself is the *sine qua non*, Danny surely understands that, unquestioningly.

In the next issue we hope to give you even better stuff—but don’t hold us *to* that, please, we might not find it. Meanwhile, we hope you will enjoy this one, sorrows and all.

J.P. McFADDEN  
EDITOR



## Evolving Standards:

### Liberalism, Hedonism, and Homosexuality

*Joseph Sobran*

President Bill Clinton struck an odd note early in his presidency when he appealed to the nation to support his budget plan in the name of “patriotism.” Many Americans were taken aback. Since when is it unpatriotic to oppose a tax increase, or any other economic measure?

But the appeal was jarring for another reason. It seemed out of character for Mr. Clinton to speak of patriotism at all. In his radical youth he had gone to some lengths to avoid the national service—the subordination of the individual to the state—he now recommends to the rest of us. But even more to the point, he has already established himself as the political incarnation of a set of attitudes that has left America feeling cut off from its own past.

By invoking patriotism, Mr. Clinton was wrapping himself in a flag he has already burned. The theme of his candidacy was not continuity, or restoration, but change. Who can be loyal to a country that has severed its connection to history? Mr. Clinton’s America, unlike Ronald Reagan’s or even George Bush’s, is a country of doctrinaire abstraction, in which newfangled notions of rights—civil rights, gay rights, and abortion rights, all of them enforced by ubiquitous bureaucracies—displace our moral traditions.

Moreover, Mr. Clinton has put himself aggressively on the side of innovation, supporting not only abortion on demand but ghoulish experiments on human fetuses.

The first big controversy of his administration erupted when he tried to keep his campaign promise (one of the few promises he felt obliged to honor) to end the ban on homosexuals in the armed forces. Usually a shrewd judge of public opinion, he was amazed at the depth of revulsion this step encountered. Evidently he had assumed that most Americans had internalized the New Morality by now. They hadn’t.

Mr. Clinton was probably misled by opinion polls, which can usually be counted on to show public docility to the very latest liberal fashion. George Orwell observed that there are some things

---

Joseph Sobran, our long-time contributing editor, is also Critic at Large for *National Review*.

only an intellectual can believe; no ordinary man could be so foolish. But things have changed since Orwell wrote.

Today the ordinary man has been to college. So has the ordinary woman. This has not made everyone an intellectual, but at least everyone is now keenly *aware* of the intellectuals and their attitudes. And when the pollsters call, the temptation is strong to answer questions with answers that are felt to be prescribed “correct” (as in “politically correct”).

Mass higher education doesn’t merely educate. It has a dual effect. It teaches people a good deal about subjects they study closely; but it also gives them a fatal smattering of things they have hardly studied at all. As they become educated in one subject they become half-educated in twelve. And as we all know, a little learning is a dangerous thing. It makes one peculiarly susceptible to the *idée fausse et claire*.

The French theologian Jacques Ellul, in his book *Propaganda: The Formation of Men’s Attitudes*, observes that educated people are more receptive to propaganda than the uneducated. The modestly literate can find plausible an idea that would never even occur to a rude unlettered peasant.

Adolf Hitler, perhaps the most profoundly half-educated man of our century, voiced this century’s ruling idea when he remarked: “It goes without saying that only a planned economy can make full use of a nation’s resources.” To anyone with only “a little learning,” that sounds like common sense, if not tautology. And though no serious economist can now believe it, that idea haunts and tempts today’s political class, which persists in believing that the state can “invest” a nation’s wealth more wisely than private citizens.

Nothing is more to be dreaded than the clever half-baked mind seeking the power to impose its designs on society. And in both politics and journalism, such minds rise to the top. They have a special skill in seducing the semi-educated masses of today who want to feel properly progressive, and are afraid of seeming, even to themselves, reactionary and bigoted.

Today’s mass media give us a perpetual sense of being crowded, observed, scrutinized by strangers. And as Tom Bethell points out, when a pollster calls you all you know for sure is that a stranger, affiliated with the media, has your name and phone number. And the questions you are asked are framed in the language of liberalism. Under those conditions, people naturally tend to say what they think the media want to hear. Poll results are therefore skewed toward the perceived position of the media.

Whether or not the pollsters are honestly seeking the “real” views of the American people, those who are polled can’t help feeling subtle pressure to conform to the media consensus—the same pressure they encounter from many other directions. And it takes a certain amount of gumption to resist. The source of resistance may be anything from religious conviction to simple prejudice; but without some such source, most people capitulate to contemporary fashions in opinion.

At one time liberal views, right or wrong, were the mark of an independent mind. This is no longer true. Today those with no inner strength almost automatically succumb to liberalism. It has become the path of least resistance. When in doubt, the safest view to espouse on nearly any subject is the liberal one. Not only that, but by taking the safest position you may actually get credit for being slightly daring! What could be more tempting than risk-free audacity?

For this reason, liberalism has become peculiarly prone to ostentatious sanctimony. Many people use it to display their virtue, and to impeach the virtue of those who lack it. To be liberal is to be enlightened, advanced, compassionate; not to be liberal is to be bigoted, atavistic, callous. Liberalism proclaims itself—its virtue—even on bumper stickers that inform those of unraised consciousness that “arms are for hugging,” or exhort them to “visualize world peace,” or simply announce that the driver is simultaneously “pro-child/pro-choice” (leaving the simple-minded to wonder how you can favor both the fetus and the abortionist).

All of which might not matter much if liberalism really stood for virtue. But it stands for something rather different: ever-changing *definitions* of virtue. And the accent is on change rather than virtue. In fact, liberals are fond of the word “change” but embarrassed by the word “virtue.”

I was recently struck by a phrase I had read many times before without stopping to think about it. In an article on the Supreme Court, a reporter used the expression “evolving standards.” She said this with no sense of paradox. She hadn’t paused to reflect that anything that “evolves” can’t be a standard. If, say, the inch or the ounce “evolved,” it would be useless as a standard of measurement.

The liberal typically thinks he is defying fashion when he is only following it; at best he is trying to anticipate the next fashion. This is the cultural mischief the concept of evolution has committed. People usually mistake the new for the best, but liberalism has aggravated

this normal weakness and made it a kind of creed: whatever has just arrived must be the peak achievement of evolution.

Liberalism, in our popular political culture, is intellectual success-worship. It entertains an endless sequence of fads, heralded by promoters and publicists, with enthusiasts fluttering from one to another like moths to light bulbs. A few years ago, when feminism reigned, good liberals belittled innate differences between the sexes and sneered at Freud's dictum that "biology is destiny." Today good liberals agree with equal unanimity and fervor that homosexuality is biologically predestined. And no doubt many liberals persist in believing both. The articles of the creed need not be consistent with each other; they need only be recent.

Something in the American character makes us especially prone to faddism. I suspect it has a lot to do with the way anthropology always surprises us. In college we learn a little about Arab or Japanese or Latin culture, and we discover that each of these exotic races has a set of strange prejudices—about morality and the roles of the sexes, about "saving face" and "family honor." It rarely occurs to us to ask why these ideas are so widely prevalent; we automatically dismiss them as "primitive" and "old-fashioned."

This reaction is the modern West's strategy for denying human nature. We are taught from the time we enter school that our own modernity means that we are in every way more "advanced" than all the societies to whom we are merely technologically superior. And we carry this attitude with us in the teeth of both study and direct experience. If we are different from all other cultures, it is only because we have made more progress, not because we lack or have lost something vital and universal that they possess. They have nothing to teach us; but we have much to teach them, so we send them foreign aid, condoms, the secularizing missionaries of the Peace Corps. Our great national vanity is our supposition that we, uniquely, represent the future of all mankind.

Liberalism maintains the same attitude toward the West's own past. It is something to be improved on, transcended, disowned. And so liberal virtue consists in a series of repudiations, which are felt as duties. Whenever traditional morality conflicts with a New Morality, the choice is easy—whether the topic is sexual freedom, divorce, abortion, homosexuality, women's rights, suicide, or infanticide. Even pedophilia is making its bid to join the progressive roster of sacred causes. And why not?

From the panorama of cultural anthropology the liberal mind draws only the lesson it is determined to learn: moral relativism. It is true enough that moral codes differ greatly from one society to another, but there are nevertheless many intimations of a universal morality, beginning with the fact that morality itself is universal. An American reading the *Iliad* or watching a Japanese film like *The Seven Samurai* encounters an alien world in which no Christian had set foot, but a world whose moral code is completely and compellingly intelligible to him—even, strangely enough, when the characters fight over honor.

The ambition of transcending an old morality must sooner or later lead to absurdity. We can't disown everything. Some values must be kept; and they *will* be kept, in spite of all the efforts of propaganda and social engineering. Most shockingly of all, the residue of the reactionary past—that is to say, human nature—stubbornly subsists even in the hearts of liberals themselves.

The current furor over “gay rights” illustrates this. What *is* all the fuss? Homosexuals are not a race. Nobody denies that they have the same rights as other people; the law doesn't permit them to be murdered, robbed, or enslaved any more than anyone else. They are not, except in an abstract sense, a “group.” All that distinguishes them from the rest of us is a mode of behavior that is usually, and properly, private.

Even that is fluid. Some people have carnal relations (it seems odd to call it “sex” when only one sex may be involved) with men and women. We have the testimony of prisons, wartime, and other cultures that otherwise normal people can sometimes engage in homosexual acts; there is an Arab saying that goes “Women for breeding, boys for pleasure.” And man is notoriously polymorphous in his appetites; it would be ridiculous to speak of pedophiles, necrophiles, zoophiles, and so forth as discrete “groups.”

For that matter, what about solitary sex? It has made huge fortunes for masturbation moguls like Hugh Hefner and Larry Flynt. Should their subscribers step forward to claim their rights? And some people are simply asexual, with no carnal interest in either sex. Are they too a “group”? Is lack of desire another “sexual identity”? What's more, as readers of Ann Landers know, many people *become* asexual, losing their appetite for coitus with the years; while others become homosexual, or discover new tastes and thrills. Rigid categories are false to reality, as even liberals themselves admit in other contexts.

Evading the primary moral questions of aberrant behavior, liberalism turns every moral problem into a civil-rights issue. And having done this, it gives civil rights top moral priority. Thus the former chancellor of New York City's public schools, Joseph Fernandez, insisted that he was promoting only tolerance, not approval, when he mandated pro-homosexual propaganda for small children. Yet that kind of tolerance *is* approval, and Fernandez was trying aggressively to endow homosexuality itself with moral legitimacy. For once the angry parents proved stronger than the gay lobby, and Fernandez lost his job.

If there is no such thing as a universal human nature, there are no limits to the permissible. Nietzsche, who despised herd morality, has reached the mass market in spite of himself, and Commandments have yielded to "alternative lifestyles."

But liberalism is wrong about homosexuality; and not only wrong, but hypocritical in its denial of nature. The simplest proof, as I have said many times, is that parents never want their own children to be homosexual. Even the most liberal expectant parents don't say: "We don't care whether it's a girl or a boy, as long as it's gay or lesbian." Of course when a son or daughter turns out to be homosexual, most parents continue to love, but with deep pain; and those who offer "support" for the child's announced "lifestyle" at least tacitly admit that something is amiss. Nobody offers tearful "support" of this kind to a son who announces his plan to marry.

Such parents very naturally don't want to condemn their child. Nor should they. Nor, for that matter, should anyone, not because homosexuality is a "right," but for the same reason one doesn't condemn the alcoholic. Such abnormalities are weaknesses. In my opinion, most homosexuality is best understood as an addiction, whose real source is a sexual aversion to the opposite sex. Just as some people never overcome an early fear of water and so never learn to swim, others, as Freud theorized, never overcome their childhood discomfort with a sex different from their own. (This often seems to be the result of sexual abuse, another indication of its abnormality.) And when the subject's sex drive arrives, it becomes misdirected. Eventually the result is a compulsive and hard-to-break habit, reinforced by a circle of people with the same inclination and by the irresistible human instinct to justify oneself.

Those who think homosexuality's causes are biological, rather than social and psychological, have to explain why nature, in this case, uniquely creates a drive for which she provides no specific

organs of consummation, which serves no function of survival, and which is attended by so many health problems. Male homosexuality is notoriously unsanitary; male homosexuals are also notoriously promiscuous. This is another clue that male and female inversion aren't symmetrical, as their advocates imply by their constant equation of "gay and lesbian."

The very words "homosexual" and "heterosexual" create another false symmetry, suggesting as they do a parallel between the normal and what is only one of many kinds of abnormality. But the only parallel with a normal thing is a complementary normal thing. The homosexual is no more like the heterosexual than illogic is like logic.

"But," the eternal sophist is sure to demand, "who is to say what is normal?" This is like asking who is to say whether three and four make seven. Anyone who thinks the answer is a matter of authority, or of numbers, is already deranged. Common sense can see that the abnormal leads nowhere; abnormality is, as we now say, "dysfunctional."

To put it another way, the abnormal need the normal, but the normal have no need of the abnormal. Logicians don't need the advice of the illogical. Those who don't know what four and three make are forever at the mercy of those who do. The illiterate have nothing to tell the literate about Shakespeare.

The homosexuals exist at all, in other words, only because heterosexuals beget them; the favor can't possibly be returned. And this would be true even if homosexuals were the majority.

So it is beside the point to ask whether homosexuality is caused by nature or nurture. Many deformities are caused by nature; so are baldness and diabetes. We nevertheless recognize them as undesirable.

Yet as Horace said, you can drive Nature out with a pitchfork, but she'll be back. I recently saw a widely hailed movie of a couple of years ago called *Longtime Companion*, which is about a circle of young homosexuals, some of whom die of AIDS. This gay tearjerker made no attempt to hide its propagandist purpose (I could feel my consciousness being raised even as I watched). The gay characters were young, handsome, decent, well-spoken, and altogether wholesome—all-American inverts. They spoke romantically, they kissed and hugged, they lay in bed together.

What was remarkable about *Longtime Companion*, for a film about sex, was that there was no sex. As I watched it I wondered whether

it would follow the trend of simulating intercourse, showing only the upper torsos of the couple. It didn't. And there was an obvious reason for this avoidance. A normal audience that could respond sympathetically to homosexual suffering might well have dissolved in laughter at the sight of homosexual coupling—all the more hilarious for being fake.

Normal intercourse is not a spectator sport. Even Hollywood has learned that most audiences want some discretion in their salacity. If a movie is *too* dirty, it makes less money than a moderately lascivious film. So the movie industry has established certain conventional ways of representing intercourse. To apply these to any aberrant form of sex would look like parody.

**H**umor is the touchstone of normality. Nothing is more futile and self-defeating than the campaign of the Joke Police to ban jokes offensive to current interests. Jokes rest on convictions too deep to be eradicated. A bad joke falls of its own weight, but a good joke succeeds instantaneously because its foundation is ancient.

And people have been laughing at homosexuality throughout history. It would be one thing if it had only been condemned by organized religions. But it was also ridiculed by the irreligious. Juvenal's Second Satire is enough to prove that the Classical world's tolerance of homosexuality (that world was also tolerant of infanticide) was by no means a matter of simple approval or equal respect.

Even so, liberalism has chosen to make outright approval of homosexuality, and not mere tolerance, the latest of its moral litmus tests. To be virtuous, you must applaud vice.

This means turning a blind eye to the obvious. Never mind that homosexuality is twisted; that the male forms are especially promiscuous and unsanitary; that the only forms of life they propagate are viral and bacterial. Liberalism now means pretending not to notice such things.

Yet homosexuals themselves are aware of them. Their profound sense of degradation appears in the gay militants' impulse to defile others, and their obscene, scatological, and sacrilegious forms of protest show that they seek to pull the targets of their protest down to their own level.

But what are these militants protesting when they picket churches, insult hierarchs, disrupt masses, and even defile the Eucharist? What they call "homophobia" is really a comprehensive code of morality that condemns certain sins of normal people—adultery, for example—far more sternly than it condemns homosexuals. This code is not



a device of heterosexuals for the primary purpose of oppressing homosexuals.

Even more important, those who believe in this code don't regard themselves as its authors, and so don't believe they can change it at whim. They believe it comes from their Creator, and they consider themselves less judging than judged. It takes a high level of self-absorption to miss this point.

But liberalism tolerates more than homosexuals. It tolerates homosexual intolerance. Only a few liberals have cleared their throats to criticize organized gay outrages against churches and worship services.

Freedom of religion is giving way to something else. The new liberalism requires us to approve of hedonism, and disapproval of another's mode of seeking sexual pleasure amounts to intolerance, even persecution. The tacit creed of this liberalism is that we are soulless creatures from the moment of conception. And we remain soulless to the end, when, the pursuit of sexual ecstasy finished and only the prospect of pain remaining, Dr. Kevorkian will usher us out.

For soulless creatures, after all, abortion is no wrong, and suicide is a logical response to aging. If nothing has a purpose, then sex has no purpose; pleasure itself becomes a purpose rather than a mere signal, and no moral judgment can be passed on any form of pleasure unless it gives pain to another. One has no duty to a child conceived by accident.

If there is no soul to survive the body, it also follows that religion, which gives no sensual pleasure, is not very important. Freedom of religion is properly the concern only of those who are rational enough not to worship anything, and religion becomes baneful when it teaches people that some forms of pleasure are immoral.

Why then should liberals holler when religion is persecuted? They may disapprove of the means—pain is pain, after all—but they can only sympathize with the end.

The older liberalism, feeling itself a minority position in a world still strongly pious, was agnostic, studiously noncommittal in religious matters. Today, as a practical matter, it commits itself to the pursuit of comfort and pleasure. And America has, for the first time, a president who, though nominally Christian, almost mechanically embodies the new liberal attitudes. He seems to calculate that this is the winning position. And so far, he has been proved right.

If he *is* right, America's moral revolution may be complete and

JOSEPH SOBRAN

irreversible. This would mean a quiet but decisive repudiation of the natural law basis of the Declaration of Independence, in which all rights come from God and all men are answerable to God.

If such a change is consummated, legal abortion will turn out to have been only one component of the ensemble. Sexual “freedom”—in the sense of irresponsibility—will be grotesquely combined with an all-intrusive state that shrinks every traditional freedom. Homosexuality will be a right, but “homophobia” will be treated as either a crime or a mental illness.

What shall we call this new form of government? A strange hybrid, certainly: it blends sexual freedom, abortion on demand, fetal experimentation, public sex education, condom distribution, welfarism, higher taxes, state psychiatry, and thought police.

A less inspiring regime would be hard to imagine—even its benefits insult us. Until a more graceful name suggests itself, we may think of it as totalitarian hedonism.



*'Today, some of you will be leaving the hospital and going home to your families.  
But, first, a lesson in sex education.'*

THE SPECTATOR 20 March 1993

# Armageddon Revisited

*William B. Murchison*

First impressions, our mothers taught us, are the ones that count. As when we meet the father of The Most Wonderful Woman Who Ever Trod the Planet's Surface: hoping, as we smile at the old so-and-so, that we remembered to fasten all strategic portions of our trousers. As when the company human relations executive (in less euphemistic times, the personnel manager) turns a bland eye upon us, appraising among other things the likelihood of our knowing a butter knife from a soup spoon.

The impressions conveyed in moments such as these are the ones that last forever. As may the first impression of Bill Clinton, America's new president, pulling the plug on the social policies of the previous dozen years. Not social, as in how-much-do-we-increase-welfare-and-housing-subsidies? Social, as in what-kind-of-people-are-we-at-the-core?

These initial moments are more important, if possible, to politicians than to ordinary mortals with mortgages and lawnmowers. A new president, especially one who has defeated the man whose place he now assumes, knows the importance of signaling the nation, the world, what kind of leader he will be.

Bill Clinton, with eyes and mouth wide open, has signaled that America will be a different place indeed if he and his wife have anything to do with it. Among the new president's initial actions, once Fleetwood Mac packed up its amplifiers and decamped from the inaugural ball:

- Overturning by executive order the federal ban on abortion counseling in facilities receiving federal funds.
- Overturning by executive order the ban on abortions performed in federal hospitals.
- Overturning by executive order the ban on the use of fetal tissue in federally funded research.

All of which had been adumbrated in the rhetoric of the campaign. For these first impressions we were prepared. But there was more—some of which surprised.

---

William B. Murchison, a columnist for the Dallas *Morning News*, is syndicated nationally.

Note, for instance, the sheer intensity with which the Clintonites, seeking to fill Cabinet spots, rooted about for candidates allegedly representative of America's considerable "diversity." The search, in its latter stages, took on Marx Brothers aspects. Environmentalists had wanted former Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt as Interior secretary, but that wouldn't do, because the Cabinet needed another Hispanic. This "need" pushed to the fore New Mexico Congressman Bill Richardson (good Hispanic name, Richardson!). However, the environmentalists still wanted Babbitt, so Richardson went over the side. As a consolation prize, Hispanics were awarded the Transportation secretaryship.

Meanwhile a white male, Tim Wirth, who had thought himself in line for secretary of Energy, got dumped so that a black female could have the job. As expected, given Hillary Rodham Clinton's particular interests, white women scooped up the job of attorney general—then dropped it in the furor over Zoe Baird's household help.

Not to worry. Another exotically named woman, Judge Kimba Wood, stepped up to the plate. Whoops! She, too, had employed—albeit legally—an illegal alien. Y'er out! Next up was plain-old Janet Reno: whose private life, according to news reports in early March, was under scrutiny by the Senate Judiciary Committee. We will see how the Reno thing goes, but we know in general how the appointive process has gone: Social (to say nothing of economic) liberals are in. Social traditionalists are out—all the way out.

Yet far more talked about—and, it may be, more emblematic—of the new president's social concerns was the precipitate move to open the military to professed, practicing homosexuals. This took the cake. Clinton campaign workers had concentrated their minds by gazing on the famous sign reading, "It's the economy, stupid." Suddenly it was gay rights, stupid. And various Americans began wondering whether the stupidest of all had been those who took Candidate Clinton at his own evaluation.

The Gays-in-the-Military furor has died down temporarily but will re-emerge this summer when the question has been studied. That it should be studied at all is wonderful. Clinton was ready in January to overturn the homosexual ban almost at the snap of his fingers.

What goes on here? is an obvious question—one that should not be hard to answer. What goes on is something new and dramatic: the capture of the political heights by the generation of the Sixties.

You say, didn't we know this already? We knew the Clintons' chronological ages, yes; for that matter we knew their musical preferences. During the campaign, did anyone hear—ever—"Happy Days Are Here Again," the traditional Democratic feel-good ditty composed by Vincent Youmans? Rather, we heard Fleetwood Mac: or were told by the media that was what we were hearing, a useful tidbit for anyone very much older than the Clintons. However, this is just the surface of the generational thing. A little excavation brings us to the familiar strata of "Sixties culture"—the indifference, if not downright hostility, toward traditional norms; the me-centeredness; the slaphappy populism; the naiveté concerning the realities of human existence. All of this can be seen in Clinton's beginnings as president. The first impression the new president leaves us is not at all inadvertent; it is deliberately crafted; it springs from deep conviction as to how the world ought to be, even if it isn't that way.

Woodstock has moved to Washington. Its social and economic values—slightly cleaned up and modified by the passage of time—have come along for the ride. We are in for an interesting and provocative four years.

There is no necessary correlation between the Clintons' age and their cultural viewpoints. Many baby-boomers, even if they attended college during the turbulent era, 1967-73, are thoroughly traditionalist in practice and outlook. What of the Clintons? They are complex, that's for sure. Too intelligent ever to have been mere camp followers of Sixties culture, the Clintons know how to clean up for company. After Arkansans in 1980 ejected the Clintons from the governor's mansion—partly out of dislike for Hillary Rodham's unfeminine abrasiveness and concomitant refusal to adopt her husband's surname—she renounced granny glasses and slipped into the new identity of "Hillary Clinton" as deftly as if donning suede pumps.

Bill Clinton, though unwilling in the late Sixties to break off his time at Oxford University to serve in Vietnam, worried in his famous letter to the head of the University of Arkansas' Reserve Officer Training Corps about preserving his "political viability." To that moral paragon Phil Donahue he hotly denied having "somehow tried to have it both ways in the Vietnam war." Whether he "dodged" the draft or not, he unquestionably stepped out of its path. Likewise, he unquestionably demonstrated in Europe against American policy, taking conspicuous part in a 1969 march in London and subsequently

visiting Moscow under circumstances he failed adequately to explain during the campaign. We know—because he reluctantly acknowledged as much during the campaign—that, while at Oxford, he “experimented with marijuana a time or two.” However, to cite the campaign’s most dubiously memorable phrase, he “didn’t inhale.”

In 1972, Clinton strongly supported for the presidency George McGovern, the farthest-left Democrat ever to capture his party’s nomination: lacerated by Republicans as the candidate of “acid, amnesty, and abortion”; and drowned, politically, in a tidal wave of Nixon votes. At a time when numerous Americans were half-joking about procuring speedboats for escape to a new country should McGovern win, Clinton and Hillary Rodham, taking time off from Yale Law School, were laboring for McGovern’s election. Then or later, Clinton determined that he had backed a loser. To David Broder of the *Washington Post*, he would describe the McGovern movement as “unstable, irrational.” How much instability or irrationality Bill Clinton managed to counter—or foster—is a good question to occupy some future biographer.

So the spirit of Woodstock, lightly manacled, is upon the Clintons—and upon the country the voters chose them (or anyway one of them) to lead. This might well have happened sooner or later through application of the laws of probability. The counter-culture generation, that is to say, is massive in numbers. Its members have a disproportionate number of college degrees—partly a function of the student deferments that kept them out of the war they so heatedly opposed. But the counter-culture generation is something more: alienated and rootless, to borrow the jargon of the ’60s. Its view of life is coming steadily to dominate us.

The truth to which America never has really has faced up is that the counter-culture generation won the battle of the ’60s. It countered the culture, eyeball to eyeball. The culture blinked. Then ran.

The counter culture’s most visible achievement naturally was the frustration of American policy in Southeast Asia. But it went far beyond this. Slowly, slowly the Clinton generation bent existing social and cultural institutions to its will—colleges and universities, the public schools, the media, even the churches. This turned out to be not much of a feat. The institutions, at the approach of the long-haired muggers, displayed all the fortitude of Casper Milquetoast. They stammered, wrung their hands, asked what was wrong, not with the muggers but with *themselves*!

This should have been no great surprise. The institutions were dominated almost without exception by genteel liberals with little appreciation of their culture's complexity and vast tradition. The captains of the garrison of Western civilization, it turned out, actually sympathized with the barbarians outside the gates. My favorite line from the '60s is reported in John R. Coyne's account of the Berkeley disruptions, *The Kumquat Statement*. Coyne tells us that, as the campus ROTC building, put to the torch by war protesters, cast its pagan light on the campus, a tweedy professorial type observed to a companion: "They're trying to tell us something."

This was a quarter of a century ago. It is worse today. The genteel liberals have retired. Counter-culture alumni—or, more commonly, well-wishers and hangers-on—have assumed commanding positions in the churches, the academy, the media, the foundations, and certainly the political craft. There has been growth, of course; there has been maturing. It is years since anyone saw a painted peace symbol on a Volkswagen van. Lovebeads have given way to store-bought pearls, the trophies of material success won in law, politics, and related venues. Yet the intangible values of the Sixties endure.

The key to the Sixties' ethos is normlessness. You might, in fact, call normlessness the norm. By this account of life there are no overarching standards to which 20th-century Americans must submit. No, morality is individual. Standards (by the standards of the Sixties) were for lowing herds, content with their dead-end jobs and sterile home environments, their Sunday religion and philistine tastes. Self-expression was the imperative of the day. This meant the right, if not indeed the duty, to "experiment" with drugs and sex in quest of heightened perception and fuller experience; to reject conventional modes of dress and hair length; to use, proudly and publicly, graphic language once reserved for athletic locker rooms.

Meanwhile the feminist movement, mostly dormant since the achievement of women's suffrage in 1920, reinvigorated itself with new, and much more radical, assertions about the role and rights of women. The idea became current that conventional marriage, with the wife as homemaker and children as the normal expression of the couple's commitment to each other, was oppressive and stultifying: normal only for those with a taste for subservience. As belief waned in the desirability and purposes of marriage—an institution widely castigated as male-dominated—both the divorce rate and the proportion

of adults living alone grew sharply. Various women advertised their independence of men by taking fellow females as lovers.

Abortion is the characteristic gesture of the feminist movement: the woman sovereign in all choices, not excluding the choice of ending the life she carries within her. Me-over-thee is the "pro-choice" creed.

Likewise sexual preference, as it is delicately called, is free-floating: Whatever ya like, so long as it "feels good." This spacious tolerance goes beyond the male-female acts generally called kinky. It extends increasingly to lesbian and homosexual acts. The "gay rights" movement significantly is rooted deeply in the '60s. A 1969 police raid on a New York City homosexual hangout prompted patrons to fight back. To this comparatively trivial incident the movement traces the birth of its own consciousness. There was born the conviction that the practice of homosexuality was wholly unobjectionable—a matter of personal choice. The old concept of male-female relationship had changed. Abortion was OK because, under the new dispensation, the relationship of man to woman was geared to pleasure rather than to propagation of the species or to vague ethereal pleasures (mutual love and support) vouchsafed the propagators. If traditional marriage was out the window, it meant anybody could do it, including partners of the same sex. No one in this new and enlightened age, this time of infinite and endless self-expression—no one but the individual had the right to say what was right for him. The very nomenclature had to change. Homosexuality and lesbianism were "gay"—a fine, airy word with wholly positive connotations accumulated over the centuries.

Homosexuals, whose lifestyle by definition is sterile, have enjoyed enormous success at propagating the notion that they have been too long suppressed and now merit society's full respect and protection. Local gay rights ordinances enshrine that view. Newspapers and television stations, especially in major markets where homosexuals are numerous, treat them as one of many diverse demographic groups worthy of representation. Their parades are covered with serious interest; they weigh in with frequent Op-Ed articles. Why, homosexuals are just like anyone else, so far as the media let on. Apart naturally from their susceptibility to that incurable disease called Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

So operates the normlessness of the present day; everything is permitted; everything is OK. No one is to "judge" another—except



perhaps a cigarette smoker or fur-coat wearer. Well, I mean, there's a limit! The vices of Mom and Dad's generation clearly are insupportable. Ward Cleaver has gone to that great upholstered family living room in the sky, and the Beaver is divorced. The Woodstock generation has triumphed. Its own president, and presidentess, sit in the White House.

The Clintons, I say, are complex. After all, they are politicians. Senile Mom and Dad may be, but they vote, and we can't go around grossly offending voters. But to understand the Clinton era we must understand that the sea change it represents is generational all right but—much more than that—cultural. The busy, scurrying activists of the late '60s and early '70s—personified by the Clintons—have finished their Long March (or at least its first stage). They have been commendably patient and diligent, and, lo, as foretold in all our cultural myths, patience has met with reward. Who in the '70s, after the Kent State shootings and the subsequent collapse of the student anti-war movement, would have foreseen the degree of patience the Woodstockians manifested?

In other traditional virtues the Woodstockians have shown less interest; moral self-restraint, for example, and duty toward others. There is no discernable regard among them for corporate wisdom, meaning the conviction that over the centuries society has come to wise and judicious understandings that are worthy of respect today. In fact, there is not much respect at all in the Woodstock credo, the credo of do-your-own-thing.

There is not much respect, we know all too clearly, for unborn human life. The Woodstockians want the joys antecedent to conception without any of the consequences that may follow. Unborn life, on this view, is an inconvenience: something that gets in *my* way. Because *my* way is what counts more than anything else, it takes the upper hand over others' ways.

The Clinton's have bought fully into the abortion creed. One must look past the president's rhetoric on this topic. "Our vision," he said, on striking down the Reagan-Bush restrictions on federal support of abortion, "should be of an America where abortion is safe and legal, but rare." Rarer than the 1.6 million abortions performed every year in the United States? Pro-lifers would be delighted. But how to get there? Clinton gave no hint. Certainly you don't make abortion "rare" by empowering doctors at federally-funded clinics

to promote it in talks with pregnant women. The fact is, Woodstock accepts no limitations on an individual woman's right to "control her own body." Such limitations would damage her personhood, inhibit her right to self-expression. Such is the twisted creed the Clintons have lugged into the Oval Office—its very first appearance there.

The gays-in-the-military issue is of a piece with the abortion issue, because both are informed by the broad Woodstockian view that you don't penalize a man or woman for self-expression. The present ban on the acceptance of homosexuals in the military violates, on this understanding, the right to express one's sexuality however one wishes. Society, as the Woodstockians would have it, enjoys no right to enforce a uniform standard of deportment. This being so, open gays have to be admitted to the military. Clinton finesses the issue of likely effects on morale and discipline by saying that, under the new dispensation, there should be strict standards of behavior. One would hope so! But note the underlying meaning here. It is that heterosexuals and homosexuals, in Mr. Clinton's army, would be held to the same standards. Their sexual proclivities would be ruled socially and morally equivalent. This is a momentous thing indeed for the government to say, which of course is why the homosexual rights lobby has worked so hard to bring about this cherished end. A federal seal of approval on homosexuality is just the ticket to undermine resistance at the state and local level. No wonder the executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, when asked recently for a profile piece to name his favorite president, replied, "William Jefferson Clinton." Who else? None but a Woodstockian president would undertake, as one of his first official actions, to legitimate a sexual practice thoroughly condemned in the Western moral tradition. With Woodstockians, tradition cuts no ice; it's just something a lot of dead people used to think and do. Live people make up their minds for themselves. At least they do in Bill Clinton's Washington.

Clinton's economic program has understandably dominated the headlines and newscasts since, under fire, he prudently postponed final action on gay Marines and such like. But the social issue has not gone away; it will revive, because the new culture has challenged the old. The culture of norms and the culture of normlessness may soon battle more sharply, more visibly than ever before. There is an infinity of questions to be thrashed out, though certainly, during the Clinton years, nothing will be resolved.

The question that will agitate us in these immediate years, and beyond, is simply, are some things right, in and of themselves, and are other things wrong? This is the language of norms. We formerly talked such language with great fluency. Yes, some things were right, others wrong. The witness of our society, our religious tradition, came down on that side. That was until the Sixties threw such a notion to the ground and trampled on it.

Not that the Sixties are uniquely to blame. If, say, the Fifties were gosh-awfully, heart-warmingly wonderful, as some would contend, how come their former inhabitants surrendered so rapidly, so unconditionally, a decade later?

Let that go. The immediate challenge proceeds from those who, like William Jefferson Clinton and Hillary Rodham, assaulted the old ethical culture, vilified it, sought to undermine it, accepted rebuffs, burrowed down, kept plugging, and finally—in part through the help of old-culture members worried about their jobs—captured the political high ground. Now, from that ground, they survey a nation amenable to their manipulations. The Ronald Reagans, the George Bushes, old-culture men who preached the values transmitted to them by their fathers and grandfathers, are gone.

The first impression President William Jefferson Clinton made on us could not have been more deliberate. The president's game shocks because it is new, and because it seems gratuitous. Old-culture types cannot conceive of a president's exalting moral relativism—that's what it's all about, Alfie—to a position of public visibility, much less preeminence. John Kennedy, moral relativist *par excellence*, had the decency and good judgment to keep his personal views to himself. Not so Bill Clinton, who seems bent on entrenching his viewpoint, and that of his fellow Woodstockians, so that displacing it will be hard. In his inaugural message, Clinton used the word "responsibility" four times. It sounds good. It would look even better, if displayed from every White House window.

The White House is a great instructional forum. (I'll slug the next guy who "reminds" us of Teddy Roosevelt's phrase describing the power of the office.) There are other instructional forums that exponents of the old culture must work to reinvigorate. One is the church, the other the family. (Here and there—clearly not everywhere—the schools serve at least a limited purpose.)

Woodstockians are prominent in the mainstream churches—didn't

WILLIAM B. MURCHISON

Clinton used to sing in the choir?—and, of course, gay rights notwithstanding, most of them have children whom they are instructing. But in greater numbers, one would think, traditionalists inhabit both institutions (e.g., Woodstockians divorce faster and more often). We are in for a long fight in this country. The important thing is not to view it as a fight over fetal tissue research or gay ROTCs, urgent as these issues are.

The important thing is to recognize the cultural divide that besets this country: on one side, the proponents of do-your-own-thing; on the other side, those who refer all they do to higher, immutable standards, not mere appetite and preference. The former take their views from the television, the latter from Mount Sinai and the Gospels.

I have decided to quote Teddy Roosevelt after all: “We stand at Armageddon, and we battle for the Lord.”



*'Surely you two must have something in common.'*

THE SPECTATOR 25 April 1992

## Abortion and the GOP

*William McGurn*

In his first 48 hours in the Oval Office, Bill Clinton proved he hadn't forsaken all his campaign vows. Although the middle class will never take delivery on a tax cut, escaping Haitians will continue to find no room at the U.S. inn, and the deficit, far from being halved, will doubtless continue to spiral, at least one element of the Clinton coalition has every reason to be happy: the pro-choice movement. Among Bill Clinton's first acts as President was the signing of memoranda rescinding the Bush Administration's ban on federal funding for fetal-tissue research, the ban on abortion-counseling at federally funded clinics, and the ban on abortions at military hospitals. Each of these restrictions had represented hard-won victories by embattled Republicans. Yet they were reversed with a scratch of the pen.

Worse is yet to come. A generation after *Roe v. Wade* threw out the laws of all fifty states to usher in abortion on demand, prospects of a reversal have receded dramatically. Although President Clinton's judicial nominations will doubtless make reversal more unlikely, he cannot take all the blame. Twelve years of Republican appointees have failed to produce a Court willing to dislodge *Roe*; indeed, it was a Nixon appointee, Harry Blackmun, who wrote the majority opinion in the landmark 1973 case. Pro-lifers have been further disconcerted by statements from the outgoing chairman of the Republican National Committee, Rich Bond, blaming them for Bush's defeat, and even from the new chairman, Haley Barbour, who vows to place abortion on the back burner. Of more immediate concern, the new Congress appears to be decidedly more pro-choice than the last, and Representative Don Edwards (D., Calif.) has already reintroduced his Freedom of Choice Act, which appears to have the necessary votes to pass. Pro-choicers are sitting pretty and know it. Perhaps that explains why there were few counter-demonstrations at this year's right-to-life march on Washington.

---

William McGurn, formerly the Washington bureau chief for *National Review*, is now a senior editor of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* in Hong Kong. This article first appeared in *National Review* (March 15, 1993) and is reprinted here with permission (© 1993 by National Review Inc.).

Sooner or later, of course, President Clinton's decision to compensate the left wing of his party for his compromises on foreign and economic affairs by granting them carte blanche on the social agenda will take its political toll, especially as it becomes clear to Reagan Democrats who deserted President Bush that abortion is just the thin edge of a wedge of social issues from gay rights to banning school prayer. Doubtless Mr. Clinton will find himself on the defensive for this come 1996. As congressional reaction to the Clinton bid to lift the ban on overt homosexuals in the military demonstrates, even Democratic congressmen understand that though they enjoy a political majority they remain in the popular minority on these issues. (And that the best way to get what they want is to work through the back door of the courts.)

#### **Republican Muddle**

Whatever the potential troubles for Democrats tomorrow, Republicans face theirs today. The Democratic leaders at least know what they stand for on all these issues; what they have to worry about is how they get there. Republicans remain confused about both. The most obvious manifestation of this confusion is the party's commitment to a constitutional amendment to outlaw all abortions. Such an amendment is supported by at most a quarter of the public, but it seemed in the last campaign that no one in the Bush White House supported it. Republicans who resisted changes in that position in the run-up to last year's convention were nonetheless right, for a number of reasons, not the least of which had to do with the real political agenda behind such proposals.

Today, however, it is time for the GOP to make a change. But not just any old change. Taking into account the dramatic shifts in America's political, constitutional, and, yes, moral landscape, Republicans need to shift their position from support for a constitutional amendment outlawing all abortions to support for one asserting the constitutional prerogative of states in restricting abortion. The purpose of the shift would not be to water down the party's moral position but to strengthen its political one. And the reasons for it are simple, direct, and conservative: not only is a constitutional ban on abortion impossible, the Republican commitment to one now operates to disguise the intolerance of the abortion-rights community and to uphold a status quo that has brought us 29 million abortions since 1973.

Already I hear the groans offstage. Any change in language, the argument goes, would be taken as a retreat; certainly that is the

way it will be portrayed by a press whose more candid members concede that abortion is the one area where even the pretense of fairness goes out the window. A change in language, moreover, would dilute the moral clarity of the existing position. It would split the pro-life movement. It would be portrayed as an abdication of responsibility. And so forth.

Each of these arguments has some legitimacy, and of course much would depend on the choice of language. But they are not ultimately persuasive, because the organization in question is not a church or a pro-life group but a political party. Precisely here the art of the possible must intrude. A constitutional amendment prohibiting all abortion has always been a fiction. Although most Americans are firmly against abortion on demand (the *Boston Globe's* own headline on its poll was "Most in U.S. favor ban on majority of abortions"), most do not want abortion completely proscribed. This means that continuing to hold out for a constitutional amendment essentially guarantees there will be no restrictions at all. Indeed, despite the grave warnings of all those who darkly prophesied that the confirmation of Clarence Thomas would mean a return to back-alley, America continues to boast, if that is the right word, the most liberal abortion laws in the world.

This is not to say that fictions do not have their place. As with Taiwan's continued claim to be the legitimate government of all China, fictions often serve political purposes. Initial calls for a constitutional amendment in the wake of the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision helped galvanize the pro-life movement around a clear, fixed goal. Today that fiction is no longer convenient. Indeed, it is a hindrance to progress on the abortion front because it overlooks areas where pro-lifers can win and it lends cheap credibility to the press caricature of an inflexible Republican party in thrall to religious bigots. And it completely overlooks the constitutional arrangements and dispositions that ought to be the greatest source of pro-life political strength.

That strength lies in a principled opposition to the *Roe v. Wade* decision, which opposition would include many Americans who are otherwise pro-choice. Pro-lifers are fond of pointing to the parallels between abortion and slavery; these parallels are perhaps stronger than they know. In his 1858 debates with Stephen A. Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, a founder of the new Republican Party, made clear both his disgust for slavery and his distance from those abolitionists who

thought their moral claim absolved them from a respect for process. "I will add this," said Lincoln in his sixth debate,

if there be any man who does not believe that slavery is wrong in the three aspects which I have mentioned, or in any one of them, that man is misplaced, and ought to leave us. While, on the other hand, if there be any man in the Republican Party who is impatient over the necessity springing from its actual presence, and is impatient of the constitutional guarantees thrown around it, and would act in disregard of these, he too is misplaced standing with us. He will find his place someplace else; for we have a due regard, so far as we are capable of understanding them, for all these things. This, gentlemen, as well as I can give it, is a plain statement of our principles in all their enormity.

Certainly Lincoln himself danced on the precipice between moral conviction and political expediency. What sets him apart from other politicians, and what makes him a lesson for today, is how he managed to make his politicking serve his convictions.

Today, the pro-choice assumption is that the least restriction on abortion is wrong. A Republican Party that challenged that presumption would enjoy several notable advantages. Not least, the position of denying that all restrictions are wrong is one that can be defended by that majority of Americans who consider abortion an evil but nonetheless believe there are circumstances where abortion is the lesser of evils.

My position ought not to be confused with the so-called Big Tent position. The Big Tent proponents would purge the GOP not only of its political call for a constitutional amendment but of its moral content, whereas I would simply re-orient the political commitment to a more practical end. The Big Tent is not big enough for those who approve of abortion and yet it is far too large for the stronger constituency of Republicans who disapprove of abortion; it makes no commitment to any position and confuses a fuzzy moral language with a solid political position. The first man to pitch the Big Tent was Judge Douglas in his successful Senate race against Lincoln, where he argued not for slavery per se but for the right of every (white) man to make up his own mind about it.

#### **Firm Platform**

To be sure, party platforms do not usually have such importance, and there are any number of Republican Party members who would argue that changing the language on abortion would simply not be worth it, because it gives too much attention to something of little



importance. President Clinton proves every day how little his own platform means to him. But abortion is different, if only for the unfair reason that a hostile press keeps it in the news and clubs Republican candidates over the head with it. Now, it's true that Ronald Reagan won two landslide elections with this plank. But Ronald Reagan was more persuasive than most politicians. More to the point, the public did not then believe, as they are led to believe today, that the "fundamental right to an abortion" was under threat. That has changed with the Supreme Court's decisions, *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* in 1989 and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* in 1992, that chipped away at *Roe*.

Together with the Bush people's own obvious disagreement with their President's position on abortion and a press more than willing to capitalize on it, this changed judicial landscape helped open the door to last year's bitter platform fight. The party was, as I say, right to resist the change urged upon it, both because it would have been seen, against Bush's background, as yet another cave-in and because those doing the urging were friends of neither George Bush nor the Republican Party. Among the press and Beltway philosophies, they were the self-same people who incessantly urged upon the President the importance of putting aside his "no new taxes" pledge for a deal with Congress and then called him a liar over and over for having followed this advice.

As it turned out, the pro-lifers handily won all the votes at the Convention. Still, the election was lost, and however unfair the portrayal of Houston as "hate-filled" (compared to the Democratic Party Convention, where people handed out buttons of Pennsylvania Governor Robert Casey dressed in papal robes?), the GOP's opponents successfully conveyed the image of a party bent on eliminating abortion entirely and unleashing Pat Robertson as part of a *jihad* of intolerance.

How can this be in a country that twice elected the even more conservative Ronald Reagan just a few years earlier? It can be because American thinking on abortion remains muddled. It remains muddled because, as Mark Cunningham argued in a sterling article in these pages, if Americans are not forced to think about abortion, they won't. Hence the contradictions at work in Gallup and Harris polls showing, respectively, 77 per cent of Americans regarding abortion as some form of murder and 73 per cent who nonetheless believe the practice ought to be legal.

**"Out There"**

Alas, the preference for a federal "solution" unwittingly worsens the impasse. So long as the issue is decided "out there" in Washington, Americans can avoid addressing the issue. Were it returned to the states, however, Americans and their representatives would have to face up to abortion, to decide how much they are going to tolerate in their own backyards, to work to draw the line. This, of course, is messy and difficult, but chaining the GOP to a constitutional amendment means that Republican candidates at all levels who are not completely comfortable with the party plank—or are not ready for the pro-choice onslaught—will end up looking embarrassed and contradictory. But a Republican party that argued forcefully that abortion was wrong and that states had the right to restrict the practice (even Justices Sandra Day O'Connor, Anthony Kennedy, and David Souter recognized a "compelling interest" in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*) would again be on the offensive—the obvious strategy, moreover, now that we are faced with a Freedom of Choice Act.

Perhaps the most compelling virtue of a correct constitutional position on abortion is that it would finally highlight the pro-choice movement's complete inflexibility. As governor, Bill Clinton supported parental notification, but as the Democratic presidential candidate he embraced the Freedom of Choice Act, which would prohibit any state restrictions whatsoever, going even further than *Roe*. Ditto with Al Gore, who made pro-life noises early in his Senate career. Although no Democrat will admit being for abortion on demand, that is precisely the position they are forced to take—witness the whacking Dianne Feinstein took from her own side when, in her bid to be governor of California, she attempted to soften her image by coming out against abortion for reasons of sex selection. So long as Republicans talk about outlawing abortion completely, they allow these Democrats to avoid the questions about their own, far more radical platform: not simply abortion on demand, but abortion on demand at taxpayer expense.

**The Party of Lincoln**

There are other, nonpolitical reasons for shifting the focus of the Republican Party away from a constitutional amendment banning abortion. Over the last three decades it has been the Left that has elevated ends over means and the idea of forcing "consensus" through whatever means possible, primarily the courts. But we pro-lifers have been guilty as well, demanding that Republican congressmen, senators, and Presidents

offer the kind of moral leadership and responsibility in this area that mothers, fathers, teachers, and even priests, ministers, rabbis, and bishops are not demonstrating: by making the moral case against abortion. It is no wonder politicians have failed to fulfill this expectation. They are, after all, our representatives, which makes them as much the product of our culture as we are.

That culture is controlled by images and language, and the pro-choice side has been exceedingly clever in couching their position in positive abstractions such as “choice,” “rights,” and so forth. In a speech in Connecticut in 1860, Lincoln punctured the personally-opposed-but line of argument by moving to specifics:

Let us apply a few tests. You say that you think slavery is wrong, but you denounce all attempts to restrain it. Is there anything else that you think wrong, that you are not willing to deal with as a wrong? Why are you so careful, so tender of this one wrong and no other? You will not let us do a single thing as if it were wrong; there is no place where you will allow it to be even wrong; there is no place where you will allow it even to be *called* wrong! We must not call it wrong in politics because that is bringing religion into politics; we must not call it wrong in the pulpit because that is bringing politics into religion . . . and there is no single place, according to you, where this wrong thing can be properly called wrong!

Substitute the word “abortion” for slavery and the argument takes on an eerie relevance. Lincoln knew that the public hadn’t entirely thought things out on the question of slavery, and he understood the need to proceed cautiously. He knew that the way to expose his opponents was not to advance an impossibly pure political position but to pin his opponents down on specifics. The same goes for abortion. The one question all Democrats fear to answer is one they are never asked: name just one out of 1.7 million abortions per year you would like to see restricted. A 13-year-old girl who does not have her parents’ consent? A couple aborting for the third time because they would rather have a boy than the girls they have been conceiving? A woman who has deliberately gotten pregnant just to sell the fetus for research?

This is the debate Republicans need to join, and we need to join it by moving from our own abstraction of a constitutional amendment to the very real kinds of restrictions that are arising in the states. In moral terms we feel there is something incomplete and deficient about any states-based “solution” to an issue as serious as abortion. But that is because Washington has come to regard itself, and we have become accustomed to seeing it, as the arbiter of right and wrong,

WILLIAM McGurn

as opposed to the necessary mechanism by which we might all live together in relative peace if not absolute harmony.

In this light a Republican initiative to return the abortion controversy to the states, even if successful, ought not to be conceived of as an end in itself. It is, rather, a recognition of two vital points. First: in a democracy of, by, and for the people, means are no less important than ends in how we order ourselves. Second: if we are ever to enjoy any kind of ultimate consensus, it must work its way from the people up rather than be imposed from the top down. The Republican Party has it within its means at this moment—especially in the face of a proposed Freedom of Choice Act—to retain its moral disapproval of abortion, while adding a constitutional division of authority that would bring about a more honest debate and, undoubtedly, fewer abortions. Failure to do so today may mean the loss of all tomorrow.



THE SPECTATOR 27 March 1993

## A Tale of Two Women

Faith Abbott

*"When I found I was pregnant, I had not been pleased."*

—Elizabeth Klein, in the *Hers* column, *New York Times Magazine*, August 27, 1989

*"When she told me the test was positive, I felt shock begin to set in."*

—Elinor Nelson, *First Person* section, *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 9, 1992

As I was weeding my files—Spring Gleaning—I found these two articles I'd saved. As I read them again, I was fascinated by what two mothers of three had in common and by how different were their "choices" about the fourth child.

Elizabeth Klein, a writer and poet, begins the "Hers" feature with "They had labeled me 'Older Mother.'" The "They" were doctors at an antenatal clinic in England, where she and her husband were spending a year; she was in the hospital because she had developed a bladder infection in the eighth month of pregnancy, and the doctors wanted to keep her off her feet while the infection cleared up. Her third child was nine years old, and she had been looking forward to more freedom to finish her novel; the unplanned fourth baby ("a failure of birth control") would, if she had it, arrive in time for Klein's 40th birthday.

Friends had asked: "What about your writing? You have three lovely children. You've done your part." Indeed, Klein writes, "influenced by the zero population growth movement, certain acquaintances suggested we had done too much." She herself had signed petitions "and fought for every woman's right to have an abortion" but, she writes, "in this case, at least, I didn't think it was for me. At best, abortion is a difficult, painful choice—not something to be done without great need." She was married to a man she loved, a good father. They weren't starving, and their children—well on the way to adolescence—were delighted with the idea of a baby. Although a new child would disrupt her work and the "liberation from child care" she and her husband had been looking forward to, that did not seem cause enough. "An abortion, we both felt, would throw into question the way we saw the treasured family we already had."

---

Faith Abbott, our contributing editor, is the resident collector of interesting newspaper clippings.

Unfortunately, she says, her maternal instincts did not respond to reason: when a young friend placed her baby in her arms, she found herself looking with distaste into “a little scrunched face inspiring no tenderness, only intense tedium at the thought of tending him. What was I going to do with a baby I couldn’t return to his mother?” She arranged to have amniocentesis once they got to England, though she was not sure—despite her reservations—what it would cost her emotionally to have an abortion if something were wrong. When told she had as much chance of having a miscarriage from the amniocentesis as she did, at her age, of having a Down syndrome child, she hoped for the miscarriage: “That is until, lying on the table where the procedure was to take place, I saw the ultrasound scan on a television monitor above me reveal the perfectly shaped head of the child I carried. I wanted that baby!”

In the years since, she writes, “I have been enormously grateful that the possibility of abortion changed my late pregnancy from an accident to a choice. Once our little girl was born, we could not imagine our world without her, a joy undiminished by the wearying reflection that, when she leaves for college, my husband and I will have been parenting for 31 years.”

The title of Elizabeth Klein’s piece is “Bonus Baby.” The second woman’s article is titled “Infertility, Triplets—And an Abortion.” When Elinor Nelson was told her pregnancy test was positive, the shock set in; she paused “for what felt like an eternity” and then asked “What do I do now?” The doctor’s answer was: “That depends on whether you want it.” Achieving a pregnancy through normal means was a miracle, but through *in vitro* fertilization she’d had triplet boys, then two years old and creating havoc in the next room. The prospect of another baby in eight months was, “to say the least, daunting.”

She phoned her husband (he’s there in the picture above the article, with her and their three sons: the caption says “After years of struggling with infertility, Nelson, to her dismay, conceived naturally”) and shared “the shocking news.” They agreed that they didn’t want another baby “and this generated enormous guilt” but they were in no condition to make any decisions, and got off the phone “each with this monumental piece of news entering our own twilight zone.” Thus began what Nelson calls the two longest and most difficult weeks of her life. The only positive thing that emerged from this “short-lived hell” was the odd feeling that her unwanted pregnancy made her feel almost like an average woman—it was, after all, the most normal

of her reproductive experiences: "Conceiving three babies in a laboratory dish, after weeks of hormone injections, blood tests, ultrasounds and a doctor's game of darts with my ovaries, was hardly mainstream. But an unplanned pregnancy? This was downright pedestrian."

The morning after Nelson had got "the shocking news" about her pregnancy, she and her husband awoke to a scene of almost mass destruction in their boys' room. One boy had scaled the side of the bureau and had pulled down lamp, cassette recorder, and all the books from a high shelf. Mother and father looked at each other, having the same thought: "Imagine awakening to this mayhem with the added attraction of a screaming baby in the next room. We must be out of our minds to contemplate having another baby." Although the fact that she had gotten pregnant was simply amazing, she writes, the prospect of another baby in their home was overwhelming. Husband and wife outlined all the reasons for "terminating the pregnancy"; the "bottom line" was that they were managing their sons well, most of the time, but "we simply didn't see how we could fit another child into our busy lives."

She worried that this baby, even if healthy, might be "the piece of the puzzle that pushed us over the edge to become a dysfunctional family." And what if the baby had a serious medical problem? Adoption was not an option, she writes: "If I was going to carry a baby, I would keep it. I knew what it was like to go through a pregnancy, to feel the unborn child. If I went through that, it would be mine. . . . But the thought of lying on that table and having that life sucked out of me was repellent." Her "usually logical mind" was not functioning; it felt like mush: she couldn't even begin a decision-making process.

The best advice she received was from an old friend and former abortion counselor, Lori, who suggested she try to determine how the prospect of another baby made her "feel." Nelson realized that although she did have some loving feelings, she mostly felt stress and anxiety, and the prospect of trying to juggle another child into her household left her panicky. Lori's greatest contribution was to provide Nelson "with permission":

Simply because I was 34, happily married, financially comfortable, with a nice home, loving my children and surviving a history of infertility did not disqualify me from having an abortion. Furthermore, that all of my previous reproductive choices had been taken away did not mean that this one had to be eliminated as well. I decided to have the abortion.

The editors gave that section its own subtitle: "Choices Remain." A few days later, though, she and her husband found out why anti-abortion activists "like to display pictures of fetuses." When she underwent the ultrasound to rule out a tubal pregnancy (made likely by the anatomical problems that had caused the infertility) she hadn't told the radiologist about the planned abortion, and he pointed out not just the location of the fetus but also its heartbeat and measurements, and "We dragged ourselves out of the office feeling horrible." That night her husband confessed to second thoughts, but said he still felt the ultimate decision was hers. "The ultrasound," she writes, "made me feel the loss more keenly, but I still did not want the baby." Three days later they arrived at the abortion clinic—thankful that it was off the beaten path, away from any protesters, and that the staff was friendly and understanding. The waiting room was "filled with a true cross-section of the community. No one looked happy. No one was chatting with anyone but their partners. This was not a day to make friends." The abortion itself was uncomfortable, though she had gone through many infertility procedures that were much worse.

I tried to concentrate on the physical feelings, not on what was happening. It was over in minutes, and I was overcome with sadness. "I'm so sorry I didn't want you," I told the fetus. "I'm so sorry."

For several days she felt a depression stronger than the ones she'd had during the years of hormone-altering fertility drugs. She says she didn't regret having the abortion, but she felt terrible about *not wanting that baby*. The fog finally lifted; "feelings of sadness have recurred, but never that mind-altering depression" and "Now we look at our three bright, beautiful and very energetic sons, and we are thrilled with our family. Seeing other people's babies has not changed our minds. We are secure in our decision." Having the abortion, she says, was a dreadful experience; the best thing she can say about it is that it is over. And that she had it.

So these are the two stories: Elizabeth Klein, having a fourth child at age 40—old enough to be the mother of her hospital ward-mates—knowing that a new baby would disrupt her work, but *wanting* that baby, and deciding that an abortion would throw into question the way they saw the treasured family they already had; Elinor Nelson, a younger woman who didn't see how she and her husband could fit another baby "into their busy lives" and who didn't want the baby, anyway,



and feared that if she had it they might become a dysfunctional family.

Elizabeth Klein cannot imagine her world without her “bonus baby” daughter, who was 10 when the article was published. Klein remembers that on a tour of prospective colleges with their oldest daughter, the youngest had just been toilet-trained and they found “as much need to investigate the public facilities as the library holdings.” When the last of the older children went off to school, she and her husband couldn’t spontaneously join their friends for dinner or the movies: it was back to baby-sitting. So there were inconveniences, and sometimes embarrassments—such as when the little one’s friends would think her father was her grandfather. But Klein writes that “Having one child depending on us for entertainment and information has made us aware of how much our older children amused and taught each other.” And “We have found special pleasure in having our ‘bonus baby’ now that her siblings are away. We have the kind of close conversation with her at dinner that was rarely possible when our noisy threesome was at the table.” (You wonder how Elinor Nelson would feel, if she read that.) Bonus Baby and her mother “enjoy an easy intimacy, her questions about the adult world recalling those I asked in my own girlhood as an only child. She loves to report the responses over the telephone to her brothers and sister for verification, and delights, as I do, in the abundant love she receives from them even at a distance.”

Elizabeth Klein travels a lot, leading workshops and giving readings; she feels guilty for leaving her daughter so much but is regularly and endearingly reprieved by the sight of the colorful “Welcome Home Mom!” banners taped on the mantel. “Older mother and young daughter, our relationship is rich—unsettling and satisfying, as is any relationship bound by love.”

Elinor Nelson might have come to enjoy her Bonus Baby too, but she refused the gift.

Another woman with an infertility problem wrote a letter to the editors of *New York Woman* magazine (now defunct) which had run, in its June/July 1991 issue, a special section titled “The New York Woman’s Guide to Health Care.” The reader said that although the article itself was very informative, the choice of positioning the categories on fertility and abortion back-to-back “cut me to the core.” She writes that having an infertility problem herself makes her more sensitive in the area than the average child-bearer; however,

with the already outrageously high, and growing, number of women who must deal with infertility on some level, she's sure she speaks for many when she says they would have preferred seeing the abortion section at the opposite end of the article. "I suppose it seemed the logical place for positioning, but more important than logistics, it showed an enormous lack of sensitivity toward the person who may have been finding hope through your suggestions for infertility treatment." She ends her letter this way: "I believe in pro-choice but obviously have trouble accepting the termination of a life when I've tried so hard to create one of my own."

\* \* \* \* \*

In the wake of Rudolph Nureyev's death, *Newsweek* (January 18) ran an article titled "A Lost Generation." The authors note that in some quarters, where obituary pages are scanned even before the weather report, and funeral services are as much a part of social life as parties, "a kind of holocaust mentality has set in." Certainly the devastation from AIDS continues in every branch of culture—dance, theatre, music, literature, fashion, art, television, movies. "All lives are irreplaceable," states *Newsweek*, "but the death of an artist leaves a void that echoes beyond the circle of loved ones. There is the art work that will never be made. There are the lessons that can't be passed on to a new generation. . . ." There is a long list of names, from Rock Hudson ("The first fallen star on record") through Tony Perkins and Liberace to Nureyev. Lincoln Center's theatrical producer, Bernard Gersten, "grappling for historical perspective," asks "Of all the tragedies of this century, does AIDS stand alone as a robber of youth, creativity and potential? The last 20 years of the century will have been dominated by AIDS. There have been a great many scourges in this millennium. Yes, people are dying *today* and we must do something about it. But you can't help thinking of the great tragedies. Six million Jews and 20 million Russians died in World War II. How many died at Nagasaki and Hiroshima? How do you quantify all this? Still, AIDS is the concern of today. And the failure to act in the past against those previous scourges should stimulate us to act so that won't happen again—the 'never again' syndrome."

*Newsweek* urges us to think of the paintings that we will never see, the music we will never hear, the books we will never read. Indeed, there have been a great many scourges in this millennium—

but the last 20 years of the century will have been dominated not only by AIDS but by the legalized killing of those who never had a chance to become creative artists, or parents of artists, or children for artists to pass their talent on to—or anything at all. Out of an estimated 29 million unborn babies destroyed since the Supreme Court's "final solution" to abortion twenty years ago, wouldn't you think some might have created wonderful art and music and literature—perhaps even have found the cure for AIDS? Abortion has been likened to the Holocaust. Mr. Gersten says people are dying *today* and we must do something about it. "Today" in a literary/political context usually means "in these times," but quite literally *today*, this *very* day, there are more deaths from AIDS on the obituary pages of the *New York Times*, and for every artist there eulogized, you know there are scores more who hadn't quite reached the *Times*' standards of prominence. And today, *this* very day, another four thousand-plus lives will be extinguished in this country. Talk about Lost Generations.

Once upon a time there was a family of six. Elinor Nelson, the mother of the triplets, would probably call it "dysfunctional": anyone would call it disadvantaged. The father had syphilis, the first child was blind, the second one had died, the third one was deaf and dumb and the fourth had tuberculosis, as did the mother. She got pregnant again, with her fifth child. She did not have an abortion—she had Beethoven.

"All lives are irreplaceable," says *Newsweek*, "but an artist's death echoes beyond a circle of loved ones. . . ." Substitute "abortion" for "AIDS" and the next sentence would read "abortion has obliterated scores of creative spirits." And "How do you measure the devastation?" The world would still be here if Beethoven had been aborted, but it wouldn't sound quite the same. Elitist *Newsweek* will not have a feature about *abortion's* Lost Generations because no one knew the victims. Elizabeth Klein cannot now imagine life without her Bonus Baby. Elinor Nelson will never know anything about her fourth child. I wonder if *she* ever wonders . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

Whittaker Chambers, in his classic *Witness*, quotes his brother: "For one of us to have a child would be a crime against nature."

Though Chambers longed for children, he agreed with his brother: "There had been enough misery in our line. What selfish right had I to perpetuate it? And what right had any man and woman to bring children into the 20th-century world? They could only suffer its inevitable revolutions or die in its inevitable wars." Chambers writes that one extreme group among the Communists held that it was morally wrong for a professional revolutionist to have children at all: they could only hamper or distract his work. He didn't belong to that group but in general shared its views; as an underground Communist, Chambers took it for granted that children were out of the question. Abortion was a commonplace of party life: there were Communist doctors who rendered the service for a small fee; the Communists who were more "choosy" knew liberal doctors who would "render the same service" for a larger fee. "Abortion," says Chambers, "which now fills me with physical horror, I then regarded, like all Communists, as a mere physical manipulation."

Then one day, early in 1933, his wife Esther told him she thought she was pregnant. Chambers writes: "No man can hear from his wife, especially for the first time, that she is carrying his child, without a physical jolt of joy and pride." He felt that jolt, but they were both "so sunk in that life that it was only a passing joy, succeeded by a merely momentary sadness that we would not have the child." Esther said that she would go at once to arrange for the abortion.

When she returned, she was quiet and noncommittal: the doctor had said she *was* carrying a child. Esther went on preparing supper, and Chambers asked what else the doctor had said. "She said that I am in good physical shape to have a baby." And as Esther went on silently making supper, very slowly the truth dawned on Whittaker. He asked: "Do you mean that you want to have the child?"

Then she came over to him, took his 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."

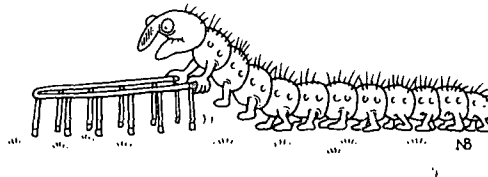
Then Whittaker was swept with "a wild joy"—the agony of his family, the Communist party and its theories, the wars and revolutions of the 20th century, "crumbled at the touch of the child. Both of us simply wanted a child. If the points on the long course of my break with Communism could be retraced, that is probably one of them—not at the level of the conscious mind, but at the level of unconscious life."

Esther had a very difficult labor, but brought forth a baby girl. “My wife,” Chambers wrote, “kept urging me feebly to go and look at it. She wanted me, of course, to approve and love what had so nearly cost her life.” He went into the hall and peered through a glass panel into “the antiseptic nursery where banks of babies lay in baskets.” The nurse pointed out his. And he went back to his 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.”

But some months later Chambers *did* begin to see. He dates his break with Communism from a very casual happening: he was sitting in their apartment in Baltimore, shortly before they moved to Alger Hiss’s apartment in Washington. His daughter was in her high chair; he was watching her eat. (He loved to watch her “even when she smeared porridge on her face or dropped it meditatively on the floor.”) His eye came to rest on “the delicate convolutions of her ear—those intricate, perfect ears. The thought passed through my mind: ‘No, those ears were not created by any chance coming together of atoms in nature (the Communist view). They could have been created only by immense design.’ ”

The thought was involuntary and unwanted, but he could never forget it. “I had to crowd it out of my mind. If I had completed it, I should have had to say: Design presupposes God. I did not know that, at that moment, the finger of God was first laid upon my forehead.”

Perhaps there is an immense design in the command to “suffer little children”? If but given the chance, they can lead us far beyond ourselves.



THE SPECTATOR 30 May 1992

## Maryland's 1992 Abortion Referendum:

### The Question of Question #6

*Frederica Mathewes-Green*

“Are you sure?”

The question caught me off guard. I had been rattling on to my friend Mark Crutcher about the terrible abortion law just passed by the Maryland legislature, the appalling anti-woman provisions, the consternation of the pro-life community, and had wound up with the assertion that we wanted to bring it to referendum.

“Well, of course we’re sure,” I said. “It’s a terrible bill. Citizens should have a chance to vote on it.”

Mark drew a deep breath. “Referenda are tricky,” he said. “They’re unbelievably expensive. Money is drained off that might be more effectively spent elsewhere. And if you lose, it’s a devastating blow to morale, not just in your state but across the country. My advice is, if there’s any way you can avoid it, don’t have a referendum. There are a lot safer, more effective ways to spend the time and energy it would require.”

I was nonplussed. The truth was, the referendum momentum was already rolling. Signatures were pouring in, and at the end of June, 1991 we would present the state with the largest number ever gathered for any referendum in state history—over four times the required minimum.

Although I held Mark in the highest esteem, I had to believe he was off base this time. The marketing/strategy genius, whose Life Activist Seminars across the country were turning out crack troops every week, just didn’t understand: our referendum was *different*.

But his words reminded me, uneasily, of a similar conversation with another friend—a hardworking pro-life lobbyist. Her usually gentle demeanor gave way to strongly-worded protest when I told her about the Maryland referendum. “Think of the money, the energy, the risk of loss,” she said: “how much better to put that money and energy into electing pro-life legislators?” Besides, “even if you win, you’re not going to save any babies.”

But this was, in fact, the very reason I felt sure our referendum

---

**Frederica Mathewes-Green** is vice president of Feminists for Life of America.

could succeed. Referenda initiated by pro-life forces in other states were usually aimed at restricting abortion. But we were fighting to keep the status quo: abortion legal throughout pregnancy for any reason, with \$3 million worth of tax-funded abortions a year. We were fighting to keep this abysmal situation because, hard as it is to believe, the new law made things *worse*.

Rumors abounded that the law, Senate Bill 162, was not written by the state abortion-rights lobby, but by the National Abortion Federation itself—the guild of the Abortion Industry. It was a “Businessman’s Special,” designed to change the old abortion law in a spectrum of ways that would benefit the industry, while actually *reducing* protection for women.

Where we had no parental involvement law, SB 162 pretended to give us one. However, the physician need not notify a parent if he thinks the minor is mature enough to give her own consent, and he cannot be sued for his decision not to notify (a protection he did not previously enjoy). A “liberalized” abortion law from the late 60’s, unenforceable since *Roe v. Wade*, was repealed. And where we presently had no limitations on abortion, SB 162 specified that the state could not pass any limitations in the future. Potential legislation restricting third-trimester abortions was permitted, but it could not penalize a doctor for deciding to do any abortion.

Then there were the repeals. The law against profit-making abortion counseling businesses was repealed. The law against receiving kickbacks for abortion referrals was repealed. Our mild Informed Consent law, which gave an abortion customer a pamphlet listing resources for continuing her pregnancy, was repealed. Even the law guaranteeing medical professionals freedom of conscience not to make abortion referrals was repealed (a subsequent outcry led to that law’s reinstatement in a weakened form.)

Thus, when I first read the law, I felt a mixture of revulsion and glee: How could it be that bad? On the other hand, thank goodness they made it so unbelievably bad! They went too far. The bill was a fine example of *hubris*, swaggering pride going before a fall. Even abortion advocates can’t defend this law, I thought; when we expose what it really says, we’ll have a pretty clear path to victory.

Almost two years have passed since I first saw SB 162. Now, all the work—the papers, memos, ad scripts, bumperstickers, videotapes, booklets—are worthless and discarded; our staff of nearly 30 is scattered.

We lost badly, 61% to only 39%. Our efforts cost some two and a half million dollars. It was a sobering experience and an expensive education. But I certainly learned a great deal that I didn't know before.

**When you're a Jet, you're a Jet all the way**

I believed we would win right up until midnight on election night—that the details about the bill were so noxious even so-called “pro-choicers” would feel too uneasy to vote for it. After all, I thought, voters have to like the entire package to vote for it, and any *one* of the rotten elements could push them over the line to *No*. I repeated throughout the campaign: “We have the easy job. All we have to do is tell the truth about the law. Our opponents have to cover it up until November. And that won't be easy to do.”

But I was reading the road map upside down. This was not a referendum on details and effects of a particular law; it was a referendum (à la the famous musical *West Side Story*) on which gang you belong to—the Jets versus the Sharks. While we focused on the specifics of the law, our opponents claimed that we were just attempting to confuse people; the *real* issue was simply that “anti-choice” people were against the law, and therefore all “pro-choice” people must vote *for* it. (One of their leaders worried in print that those who listened to our arguments might “not know how they're supposed to vote.”)

For our opponents, the sole point of the bill was repeal of an old abortion law that had been invalidated by *Roe v. Wade*. It was an example of the late-60s wave of “liberalized” abortion laws that had swept the country, allowing abortion until six months for many reasons, specifically including “mental health”—the ultimate loophole. Though currently unenforceable, this would spring to life if *Roe* were ever overruled.

But *Roe* seemed firmly entrenched after the Supreme Court's *Casey* decision, and a state Attorney General's opinion suggested that, even if *Roe* ever did fall, the penalties of the old law might not be zealously enforced. Even if they were, the law itself presented abortion “providers” with other advantageous loopholes. But that didn't stop our opponents from insisting that women would die in the streets without a *Yes* vote on the referendum. (In fact, state health-department statistics showed that, during the pre-*Roe* years the old law was in force, women were *not* dying of illegal abortion.)

I believed this to be a very silly strategy on their part. Surely



Marylanders were intelligent enough to take a hard look at the way the pending law would actually affect them? A *No* vote would preserve the status quo, which *already* allowed unlimited abortion. The new law had nothing to do with abortion rights—but it had a great deal to do with a woman's right to be informed and *protected* from abortion profiteers.

By the end of the campaign, we were getting daily calls from people saying "I'm pro-choice, but I'm worried about some parts of this bill. . . ." On the day before the election, it looked like a squeaker; previous referenda had suggested that the "opposed" position gathers most of the undecided vote, so we thought we had an even chance of winning.

But on election day our opponents mustered a half-dozen partisans at each polling place, shouting helpfully "A vote FOR choice is a vote FOR Question 6." One caller, the day after the vote, told us that was what swayed her—she *had* planned to vote against the law, but in the booth she felt confused—"I *am* pro-choice, I guess I should vote *for* this." (And she did.)

The biggest lesson I learned from the campaign is that the culture war is far more advanced than I had realized. The divisions are so deep that unbiased thought on abortion can no longer be expected. Our opponents were right: it was a matter of people being told how they were supposed to vote. They knew which was the fashionable label they were supposed to wear, and just needed help matching it with the correct item in the voting booth—Jets and Sharks, choose your colors, further facts would only be confusing.

Media consensus: Pro-lifers have "cooties"

I had hoped that the media would accept the challenge of this complex law and the opportunity to dig into its details and effects. But with few exceptions, they put *us* under the microscope. Our arguments were treated with deep suspicion. We were the anti-choice fanatics—anything *we* said must be examined for trickery. Our attacks on the bill elicited not interest but resentment.

One day, in a radio-studio debate, I watched the host's face change like a day in March; whenever I made a point, it would sag with misery, and he would look pleadingly at my opponent, who would cheerfully dismiss my charges with *ad hominem* flippancy: You know that these anti-choice extremists will stop at nothing, she smirked. Sheer gratitude spread across his face like the dawn, and he turned back to me with renewed courage.

When we did succeed in focusing on the law itself, there seemed to be an urgent need to discredit us while glossing over the law's actual effects. A glaring example was the repeal of the "no-kickbacks" provision. We harped on this point because it was so blatantly indefensible. At first our charge was simply ignored; then it was publicized with the rejoinder that a section of the Maryland state code *already* makes all medical kickbacks illegal. Again, "anti-choice" fanatics were misrepresenting the bill and trying to confuse people—presenting themselves as interested in women's rights, when all they want is to make sure women die, etc.

**S**tay with me now; it gets thick here. Of course we knew about that state-code proviso—but it was *already* in effect when the provision specifically against abortion kickbacks was passed (so the Legislature must have had *some* reason for thinking it necessary?). In fact, the code only applied to licensed medical professionals, and carried no fine—just a possible loss of license after medical board review. If you weren't a doctor or a nurse you had no license to lose, so in that case the law was meaningless. On the other hand, the law being repealed applied to everyone, and carried real fines: \$5000 or a year in prison.

But how could non-doctors be involved in kickbacks? Simple. We had the clippings from the Chicago *Sun-Times* 1978 exposé to prove it: entrepreneurs set up abortion "counseling" centers that charged women up to \$150 for their advice—but workers on the phone lines were told that their job was to *sell* abortions and dissuade other choices. These "counselors" directed women to abortion clinics with which they had prior arrangements, and the clinics would pay the referral center up to \$60 per customer.

The "counselor" is not a licensed doctor; the abortion-clinic owner need not be a doctor; the clinic itself doesn't even have a license in our state. If the abortionist is—as he *usually* is—a per-diem worker and keeps his nose out of the deal, and the other participants are not licensed medical professionals, abortion kickbacks would become perfectly legal once the referendum passed and the old law was repealed. But this was a tennis game with only two swings. We brought the charge, our opponents refuted it, and that was the end of the discussion; our follow-up rebuttal was never aired. Worried friends would call me: "I read in the paper that—is it true? You guys *lied* about the law?" A lot of clucking ensued about our deceptive ways. The *Baltimore*

*Sun* did a story on this new anti-abortion strategy of using women's-rights language instead of talking about making abortion illegal. The implication—that this was a slimy subterfuge—was magically turned into a fact by virtue of appearing in print, and clips of the article were waved at me in many a TV and radio station.

Likewise, the *Washington Post* editorialized that the anti-choicers have a right to their beliefs, but to cover up their *real* goal, and pretend they're interested in women's rights, and then lie about the bill at issue, was just despicable.

Yet when my boss Ellen Curro and I went to the *Post* to talk with the author of this editorial, she startled us by opening with: "By the way, I agree with you on parental notification. No parent is ever going to be notified under this bill." Later, she referred twice to how angry the black editors were over the repeal of the Information Act; they found the action patronizing and insensitive, and protested that "they think our women can't handle the information." Ellen and I looked at each other in surprise: this woman who had just blasted us in print was making all our points for us.

We gave her a lengthy explanation of the kickbacks provision, after which she studied us carefully: "If what you're saying is true and there really is a danger of this practice occurring, then once the referendum passes we will support you in getting the legislature to fix this." I protested: "But what possible motivation would they have to change something that's just been affirmed at the ballot box?" She was immovable. The law must pass, so that the old law can be repealed. No matter how bad the other elements of the package, we just have to look the other way. We must insure "abortion rights."

Naively, I had thought that the media would be interested in the facts. I found instead that gang allegiance comes first. The pro-life label made me "other," a suspicious, untrustworthy character, and tarnished my words before I spoke them. The corollary to the first lesson, then, is: "You're either a Jet or a Shark—and Sharks have cooties."

#### Barrier of a common cause

In every movement there is tension between the purists and the pragmatists, and this tension has been evident in the pro-life movement, in varying intensity, from the beginning. It emerged again in the course of the Maryland campaign when the Operation Rescue folks argued that our referendum team was pandering to the liberals in our emphasis on the women's-rights/consumer-rights aspects of the

bill. They said that there was no sense having a referendum if we didn't focus on the evils of abortion itself. The Committee Against Radical Abortion Laws formed to offer another front against the bill, and chose as their focus the very weak prohibitions against third-trimester abortions in the new law. They also distributed doorknob hangers showing a serene, intact late-abortion baby, which caused considerable media horror.

To us, the problem with this approach was the implication that a vote against Question 6 would somehow *stop* third-trimester abortions. On the contrary, voting against it would preserve a status quo in which there had not been any prohibitions against any abortion at any point in pregnancy for twenty years. We were leery of giving pro-lifers the false hope that this was their big chance to save some babies, when no such thing was possible in this referendum.

There was also the difficulty of making a blanket charge, as their literature did, that "This law allows abortion up until the minute before birth." A quick read of the law seemed to show that third trimester abortions were restricted to hard cases, so it appeared that this charge was an outright lie. A more careful reading revealed that the loopholes were voluminous and that late abortion was virtually unrestricted—but in this game where each side gets only one swing, you might not get a chance to explain.

The Rescuers continued to criticize our referendum team throughout the campaign. I see from their post-election newsletter that they still aren't ready to let up.

Ironically, our political opponents tried throughout the campaign to link us with Operation Rescue, apparently unaware that we were in its bad graces. Toward the end of the campaign I began hearing the charge that we were *funded* by Operation Rescue, which was good for a laugh around the office. But they found their evidence: when the donor lists were published, *one* out-of-state Operation Rescue chapter had sent us \$25. The pertinent page was blown up for an alarming TV commercial, which proved once and for all what crazed radicals we were.

**You never know who your friends *aren't***

Our first TV commercial was going to be a humdinger: Dr. Ben Carson, the internationally-famous pediatric neurosurgeon, had agreed to appear. Dr. Carson, besides being Johns Hopkins Hospital's favorite son, was well known in evangelical circles for his inspirational and

autobiographical books, and guest appearances on the *700 Club*. Was he pro-life? Well, apparently *sort of* a new pro-lifer. But that didn't matter. As we'd always said, you don't have to be pro-life to hate this law.

After Dr. Carson agreed to do the TV spot, the faxes were busy with copies of the law, draft scripts, and revisions. We went over the points we wanted to make—we had only a quick 30 seconds—about this complex law, and rewrote the ad several times until it matched the doctor's gentle, laid-back manner. After a week of such exchanges, we met at a cavernous soundstage to tape it. For some 30 takes, this soft-spoken black doctor sat on a stool in the simple set and repeated the words he had helped compose.

For the ten days his ad ran we prayed for him, aware that he must be taking plenty of heat from his liberal colleagues. Then, on the day the ad was due to be replaced with our second spot, we heard that Dr. Carson was appearing at a press conference.

The conference was being held by our opponents, Maryland for Choice. There Dr. Carson stood up and claimed that we had misled and pressured him. He hadn't realized, he said, it would be a *political* ad. He *even* said he didn't know that the tag line "Vote against Question 6" would be part of the spot (though it had appeared on every version of the script). He now thought the statements we had him make about the law needed further explanation to be made fully accurate.

That *hurt*: if Dr. Carson had concerns after taping the spot, he never phoned us. Though we could have helped him prepare arguments against the criticism that no doubt assailed him, we were never given the chance. It was not just that he had second thoughts about the ad, but that he stood at Maryland for Choice's podium to say so. We were bewildered and greatly saddened. And of course, "Even Dr. Carson says you lied" was thrown at us for the rest of the campaign.

Dr. Carson never contacted us again. We heard that in October he addressed a city-wide revival crowd of 40,000 to reiterate that we misled him and that they should vote for the referendum. Last week I attended a play at my sons' Christian school to mark Black History Month; one of the skits was an admiring presentation of Dr. Carson's work. There are no words for how this feels, except the ancient ones: "If it were an enemy who taunts me, then I could bear it; but it is you, my familiar friend . . ."[Psalm 54]

In my husband's college days, the father of a friend used to delight in reminding the boys that he *was* the Establishment—"the Big E,"

as he put it. One of our opponents' main tactics, to our surprise, was to claim exactly that mantle—that they represented the Establishment, an impressive array of weighty and influential voices in the state. Their benchmark TV ad consisted primarily of a scroll of the over 50 constituent groups of their coalition, from NOW to the state teachers' association to religious and ethnic groups. It was another manifestation of the Shark vs. Jets aspect of the fight; the referendum was not on the law, but on the character of those who favored or opposed the law. They were the Establishment; we were the radical fringe.

Ironically, 20 years ago I too scorned the "Establishment" title and was proud to style myself a member of the counter culture. Now here I was again, being forcibly tossed out of the mainstream and labeled a counter-culture agitator once more. There seems to be a theme emerging here. I'm pleased to think that, even at 40, with teenagers and a station wagon and a mortgage, I can still oppose the Establishment with the best of them. Blows against the Empire!

\* \* \* \* \*

I am a new convert to the Orthodox Church, and write at the beginning of our Lent—seven weeks of abstinence from meat, fish, and dairy products. Last night we bowed our heads to the ground, and asked the Lord to have mercy on His "sad and sorry people."

In this time of repentance and reflection, the largest regret I have about the campaign is a deeply personal one. This was my first experience with a political campaign. Swept up in the giddy, vivid days of a brilliant summer and fall, I sprouted gaudy, poisonous blooms of a self I'd hoped was dead: vanity, ego, mocking humor, cynical disdain. So many things I wish I could take back, do over with a spirit of gentleness, love and self-control.

I know it is possible to go through a political campaign serene, centered, and prayerful. I saw some of my co-workers do it. It may even, in theory, be possible for me. I hope I never have to find out.

On reflection, it's hard to know what should have been done differently, what might have won us a different headline on November 4. We could not have done more to insist that the actual flawed contents of the law be objectively examined; it was a tactic that ultimately could not prevail against the simplistic invitation to vote your gang colors. Perhaps we should have listened to those who

counseled us not to pursue the referendum at all, although it is nearly impossible to imagine reading that bill for the first time and deciding to do nothing. It was a gauntlet flung down that we felt we could not ignore.

But we did win some things. We probably shook every pro-life Marylander out of the rafters and got their names on a mailing list. We demonstrated that the law was not blandly favored by the populace: a full two-fifths of the state let it be known that they opposed it. We got people energized and working together to the very corners of our oddly-shaped state. And to tell the truth, we had a lot of fun doing it.

But when I consider that these small blessings cost us well over two million agonizingly-raised dollars, the hurt comes back. Were we foolish to try? Of that another must be the judge.



*'I've already met the tall, dark man. What I want to know is, where is he now?'*

THE SPECTATOR 13 March 1993

## A Law without Honor

*Robert P. Casey*

**A**ll of us are joined in our conviction that abortion is a bad thing. And although many of us are Catholics, we are also joined in the conviction that abortion is not simply a Catholic concern. It's a catholic concern with the small "c"—the concern of anyone who rejects the idea of human life as a disposable commodity. The concern of anyone with eyes to see, a mind to reason, and a heart to feel.

It is not an arrogant boast, but a demographic fact, that most Americans share this conviction. Anytime the question is put squarely to them, "Do you oppose abortion on demand?" more than two out of three Americans answer yes. Asked if they favor restrictions on abortion such as we enacted in Pennsylvania, again a majority of 70 to 80 percent say yes. Perhaps the most telling survey of all found that 78 percent of the people would outlaw 93 percent of all abortions—all but the familiar hard cases. Even in the last election, in which all sides sought to shelve the issue of abortion, exit polls revealed its central importance in the minds of most voters.

To those who favor liberal abortion policies, this persistent opposition is a mystery, a disturbing sign of something backward and intolerant in our society. Sometimes the abortion lobby pretty much concedes that Americans by and large favor restrictions on abortion—as when Pennsylvania's abortion laws were upheld by the Supreme Court. Such setbacks to their cause leave abortion advocates bewildered and alarmed, convinced that Americans still need to be "educated on the issue."

Other times—like right now—their tactic is to obscure public opinion by marginalizing the pro-life side, dismissing critics of their cause as a handful of fanatics resisting the tide of opinion. A quarter of a million people may gather to protest abortion on the Washington Mall, and if the media notice them at all, they're treated almost in a tone of pity, like some narrow fringe estranged from modern realities. As I discovered, even the governor of a major state who

---

**Robert P. Casey** is Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This article is the text (provided by his office) of his address to the Conference on Abortion and Public Policy at St. Louis University on March 11, 1993; he gave it in the same room in which *Dred Scott* was first argued. We reprint it here in full with his permission, which we appreciate.



holds pro-life views can be denied a hearing at his party's convention without the national media protesting it. The success of this tactic is truly a public relations triumph, only possible in an environment which constantly marginalizes and suppresses the pro-life message. And despite 20 years of brainwashing, the American people have not been fooled. If the majority of Americans support abortion, why have three of the last four presidential elections been won resoundingly by pro-life candidates? If my position is irrelevant, then so, I'm afraid, are the views of some 80 to 85 percent of the people of Pennsylvania and the United States.

As I read the polls showing our continuing unease with abortion, nothing makes me more proud to call myself an American. Among the "herd of independent minds" who make up our opinion leaders, abortion may be taken as a mark of progress. But most Americans have not followed. In the abortion lobby's strange sense of the word, America has never been a "progressive" nation. For we know—and this used to be the credo of my party—that progress can never come by exploiting or sacrificing any one class of people. Progress is a hollow word unless everyone is counted in and no one written off, especially the most weak and vulnerable among us.

You cannot stifle this debate with a piece of paper. No edict, no federal mandate can put to rest the grave doubts of the American people. Legal abortion will never rest easy on this nation's conscience. It will continue to haunt the consciences of men and women everywhere. The plain facts of biology, the profound appeals of the heart, are far too unsettling to ever fade away.

The abortion issue has intersected with my public life from the very beginning. It started in 1966, seven years before *Roe v. Wade*.

The occasion was the Pennsylvania Democratic gubernatorial primary. New York had just passed a very liberal abortion law, and the question was, Would I sign such a law in Pennsylvania if it were to pass? My opponent's answer was that this was an issue only women fully understood, that he would appoint a women's commission to study the issue, if elected, and that he would sign such a law, if enacted, in Pennsylvania. My response was simple and unequivocal: If the law were to pass, I would veto it.

I lost that primary by a narrow margin. I am fairly certain that my abortion position hurt me, because in a Democratic primary, where turnout is relatively low, liberal voters turn out in dispro-

portionately large numbers and thus exercise a disproportionate influence on the outcome.

The point I want to make about my decisional process in 1966 is this: I took the position against a liberal abortion law instinctively. I did not consider it to be a position dictated by my Catholic faith. As a matter of fact, the Catholic Church made it clear that it took no position in the primary. And many Catholics worked openly and actively for my opponent.

For me, the imperative of protecting unborn human life has always been a self-evident proposition. I cannot recall the subject of abortion ever being mentioned, much less discussed in depth, in school or at home. My position was simply a part of me from the very beginning.

When I was elected Governor in 1986, both my Democratic primary opponent and general election Republican opponent were pro-choice. The general election was a photo finish. When my opponent and I debated on statewide television shortly before the election, the inevitable question was asked: "If the Supreme Court overruled *Roe v. Wade*, and the Pennsylvania Legislature passed a law banning all abortion except to save the life of the mother, would you sign it?" My opponent said that, while there were "too many" abortions in our country, and we should work to reduce that number, he would veto the law banning abortion. My answer was: "Yes, I would sign such a law."

My campaign people thought that my answer, with no qualifiers—no ifs, no ands, and no buts—had lost the election. I won by about 75,000 votes.

When I ran for reelection in 1990, my Republican opponent was stridently pro-choice. The abortion issue was the motivating factor behind her candidacy. She was banking on the conventional wisdom of that period—the post-*Webster* period—when the pro-choice groups tried to convince the country that women, shocked by the *Webster* decision, would rise up and drive all pro-life candidates from public life. And their message was as cruel as it was direct. The leader of the National Organization for Women in Pittsburgh said that I was sick, and would probably be dead before the election. (I had had open heart surgery in 1987.) My opponent called me "a rednecked Irishman." The National Abortion Rights Action League released a poll purporting to show the election a dead heat when people were informed of my position on abortion. Pro-choice groups sent several dozen of their supporters to the Governor's Residence where

they chanted, "Get your rosaries off my ovaries," as the television cameras whirled. And my opponent, who spent two million dollars, ran a television commercial purporting to depict a rape, to dramatize my position of refusing to recognize an exception for rape, in which it was difficult to distinguish me from the rapist.

I won by over one million votes, the largest winning margin in Pennsylvania gubernatorial political history. I am convinced the abortion issue was a key factor in that victory.

But, in between the 1986 and 1990 campaigns, I came face to face for the first time with a conflict between my personal and public position on abortion, and what I regarded as the duty imposed by my oath of office to "support, obey and defend" the Constitution of the United States. As a lawyer, I was trained to believe that the Constitution means what the United States Supreme Court says it means. The consequence of that line of reasoning was that I could not sign a law which was, on its face, in direct conflict with what the Supreme Court had decided, even when I personally did not agree with the Court's ruling.

That issue was squarely presented when our legislature, in December 1987, and before the *Webster* ruling, passed an abortion control law which required the woman to notify the father of the child. This meant the biological father, whether or not he was the spouse of the woman. The Supreme Court had already struck down as unconstitutional even a spousal notification requirement, where the biological father was the woman's husband, and the two were living together in a normal domestic relationship.

I vetoed the law, pointing to my constitutional duty, under my oath, and the futility—from the standpoint of protecting unborn human life—of passing laws which had no chance of ever taking effect to help the unborn.

This is what I said in my veto message:

Let me restate in summary the distinction between personal belief and constitutional duty as it applies to this legislation. I believe abortion to be the ultimate violence. I believe strongly that *Roe v. Wade* was incorrectly decided as a matter of law and represents a national public policy both divisive and destructive. It has unleashed a tidal wave that has swept away the lives of millions of defenseless, innocent unborn children. In according the woman's right of privacy in the abortion decision both exclusivity and finality, the Supreme Court

has not only disregarded the right of the unborn child to life itself, but has deprived parents, spouses, and the state of the right to participate in a decision in which they all have a vital interest. This interest ought to be protected, rather than denied, by the law. This policy has had, and will continue to have, a profoundly destructive effect upon the fabric of American life. But these personal beliefs must yield to the duty, imposed by my oath of office, to follow the Constitution as interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States. . . .

Most importantly, I emphasize again that we must—and we will—enact a strong and sustainable Abortion Control Act that forms a humane and constitutional foundation for our efforts to ensure that no child is denied his or her chance to walk in the sun and make the most out of life. I will sign this bill when it reaches the end of the legislative process and attains those standards.

Following the veto, my staff and I worked closely with pro-life groups and legislative leaders to draft the Abortion Control Act of 1989 within the framework of the Supreme Court cases, including the *Webster* decision. The law requires parental consent for minors, informed consent and a 24-hour waiting period. These limitations were upheld in *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey*. A spousal notification requirement in the law was struck down.

Thus, while concluding that my oath of office precluded me from signing an unconstitutional law, I also recognized a right, if not a duty, to work to change the law within the democratic process. First, by enacting a law that was designed to limit and reduce abortions within the constitutional authority of the states. Second, to speak out in favor of the protection of human life so as to influence others, including federal and state policy makers, so that they too would adopt this view.

I have described how I understood my position in 1987. But now, six years later, I feel compelled to inquire further: What exactly is the relationship between the rulings of the United States Supreme Court and the Constitution I am bound to uphold?

As everyone knows, the Court can be—and has been—seriously wrong. The Court erred in the case of *Dred Scott*. And I believe that the Court erred in the case of *Roe v. Wade*.

In this context, in this place, one cannot help but recall Abraham Lincoln's attitude toward the Supreme Court's *Dred Scott* decision, which he and so many others believed to be disastrously wrong.

Lincoln viewed the *Dred Scott* decision as, “not having yet quite established a settled doctrine for the country.” A year after the decision, he said: “If I were in Congress, and a vote should come up on a question whether slavery should be prohibited in a new territory, in spite of the *Dred Scott* decision, I would vote that it should.” Several years later, Congress did precisely that. In open defiance of *Dred Scott*, Congress outlawed slavery in the territories.

In his first inaugural address, Abraham Lincoln, in referring to the *Dred Scott* case, expressed the view that other officers of the government could not be obligated to accept any new laws of the Court’s reasoning. Any other position would mean, in his view, that “the policies of the government upon vital questions, affecting the whole people, [could] be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties, in personal actions.” If that were to occur, said Lincoln, “the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned the government into the hands of that eminent tribunal.”

After much thought and reflection since 1987, I must confess that I am more and more persuaded that Lincoln’s view should be the standard for pro-life elected officials in 1993 and beyond.

The question I want to address tonight, then, is this: What are the responsibilities of a pro-life politician?

For no matter what the majority sentiments may be, the drift of law favors abortion. Our courts, which do not operate on majority rule, say abortion is legal, an implied constitutional right to privacy found nowhere in the text of the Constitution. For a politician like myself, opposition to abortion may thus become opposition to the existing laws one is sworn to uphold.

What then do conscience and duty require?

I believe the first step is to understand that such dilemmas are not new to our day. Any man who has ever tried to use political power for the common good has felt an awful sense of powerlessness. There are always limits on what we can do, always obstacles, always frustrations and bitter disappointments. This was the drama a future president once studied in *Profiles in Courage*, a book that now seems quaint in its simple moral idealism. The founders of our country understood the limits of political power when they swore allegiance to something higher, their “sacred honor.” Lincoln felt this tension when he sought to uphold the equality of men. His real greatness

was in seeing that political reform alone wasn't enough; not only the slave had to be freed, but the slave owner from the bonds of his own moral blindness. Likewise, Thomas More expressed the dilemma when, faced with the raw power of the state, he declared, "I die the king's good servant but God's first." Far from being a new problem, this tension goes all the way back to the Pharisees and their challenge to declare for or against Caesar.

Just as the problem is an old one, so are the alternatives. One of these alternatives is accommodation with power, a pragmatic acceptance of "the facts." In the abortion question, this position is summed up in the familiar disavowal, "I'm personally opposed, but . . ."

The hard facts—so runs this view—are against us. However we might oppose it, abortion is a sad feature of modern life. Tolerance is the price we pay for living in a free, pluralistic society. For the Catholic politician to "impose" his moral views would be an act of theocratic arrogance, violating our democratic trust. The proper and prudent course is therefore to bring change by "persuasion, not coercion." Absent a "consensus," it is not the place of any politician to change our laws permitting abortion.

I want to be careful here not to caricature this position. Some very honorable people hold it, and it is not my purpose to challenge their motives. Yet, as some politicians advance this view it does seem an evasion, a finesse rather than an honest argument. But that, so far as I am concerned, is the secret of their own individual hearts. Here I mean only to challenge the argument on its own intellectual grounds, with the presumption of good faith extended all around.

We can dispense easily with the charge of theocratic arrogance. That would certainly apply if we were trying to impose some uniquely Catholic stricture like church attendance or fast days on the general population. But the stricture to refrain from killing is not uniquely Catholic. And that, as a purely empirical assertion, is how nearly all people of all faiths at all times have regarded abortion—as killing. Just listen, for example, to Frank Sussman, the lawyer who represented Missouri abortion clinics in *Webster*.

"Neither side in this debate"—he said—"would ever disagree on the physiological facts. Both sides would agree as to when a heartbeat can first be detected. Both sides would agree as to when brain waves can first be detected. But when you try to place the emotional labels on what you call that collection of physiological facts, that is where

people part company.”

Or listen to former New York Mayor Ed Koch, a fellow Democrat: “I support *Roe v. Wade* wholeheartedly,” he wrote in a column. “And I do it even while acknowledging to myself that at some point, perhaps even after the first trimester, abortion becomes infanticide . . .”

Or, for that matter, just listen to President Clinton speaking last month in Chillicothe, Ohio: “Very few Americans believe that all abortions all the time are all right. Almost all Americans believe that abortions should be illegal when the children can live without the mother’s assistance, when the children can live outside the mother’s womb.”

By referring to the unborn as “children,” the President was not making a theological claim; he was just putting all the physiological facts together. The same is true when we say abortion “kills.” We don’t say it in meanness. It’s a unique kind of killing, for the motive may not be homicidal; it may be done in ignorance of what actually is occurring. We reserve a special compassion for women who find themselves contemplating abortion. But as an objective fact, that is what abortion is, and so mankind has always regarded it. Science, history, philosophy, religion, and common intuition all speak with one voice in asserting the humanity of the unborn. Only our current laws say otherwise.

So much for theocratic arrogance. That is the more obvious fallacy underlying the “personally opposed, but . . .” line of reasoning.

But I believe it arises from a deeper intellectual confusion. It confuses prudence with pragmatism, and mistakes power for authority.

Prudence we all know to be a virtue. Classical thinkers rated it the supreme political virtue. Roughly defined, it’s the ability to distinguish the desirable from the possible. It’s a sense of the good, joined with a practical knowledge of the means by which to accomplish the good. A world in which every unborn child survives to take his first breath is desirable. But we know that such a world has never been. And prudence cautions us never to expect such a world. Abortion is but one of many evils that, to one extent or another, is to be found at all times and places. Men can make good laws, but laws cannot make men good.

But the point is that after facing up to such facts, the basic facts of our human condition, prudence does not fall silent. It is not an attitude of noble resignation; it is an active virtue. The voice that says, “Aaaah, well, there is no consensus. We must take the world as it is. There is nothing further to be done”—that is not the voice

of prudence. It is the voice of expediency.

Prudence compromises—it doesn't capitulate. It's tolerant, but not timid.

Prudence asks: "If there is no consensus, how do we form one? What means of reform are available to us? How, lawfully, can we change the law?"

And here is where the difference between power and authority comes in. In the best of worlds, the law commands both. The law confers power on rightful authority, and invests authority with power. The integrity of our laws rests on a continuity, a *corpus juris* reflecting the accumulated experience of our civilization. Laws are the conventional application of permanent principles. And if democratic government depends on any one central idea, it's that raw power alone, laws that flout those permanent principles, cannot command our respect. Our obedience, yes. Our allegiance, no.

Alexander Hamilton put it this way: "The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of Divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power." Even the more secular-minded Thomas Jefferson agreed: The "only firm basis" of freedom, he wrote, is "a conviction in the minds of people that their liberties are the gift of God."

American history has had its dark moments, but only twice has this principle been radically betrayed. Only twice has mortal power, using the instrument of the law itself, sought to exclude an entire class of people from their most sacred human rights.

This place in which we meet today marks the first time.

One hundred and thirty-six years ago, a human being was declared a piece of property, literally led off in chains as people of good conscience sat paralyzed by a ruling of the court.

The other time was January 22, 1973. An entire class of human beings was excluded from the protection of the state, their fate declared a "private" matter. That "sunbeam" Hamilton envisioned, the Creator's signature on each new life, was deflected by human hands. No one has ever described what happened more concisely than Justice Byron White in his dissent. It was an act of "raw judicial power"—power stripped of all moral and constitutional authority.

*Roe v. Wade* was not, then, one more natural adaptation in our constitutional evolution. It was not like *Brown v. Board of Education*,



a refinement extending law and liberty to an excluded class. Just the opposite: It was an abrupt mutation, a defiance of all precedent, a disjuncture of law and authority. Where we used to think of law as above politics, in *Roe* law and politics became indistinguishable. How strange it is to hear abortion now defended in the name of “consensus.” *Roe* itself, the product of a contrived and fraudulent test case, was a judicial decree overruling a consensus expressed in the laws of most states. It arose not from the wisdom of the ages or from the voice of the people, but from the ideology of the day and the will of a determined minority. It compels us to ignore the consensus of mankind about the treatment of the unborn. It commands us to disregard the clearest of Commandments. After twenty long years, the people of the United States have refused to heed that command.

*Roe v. Wade* is a law we must observe but never honor. In Hamilton’s phrase, it’s a piece of “parchment,” a musty record bearing raw coercive power and devoid of moral authority. It has done its harm and will do much more. But those who say we must learn to live with it still don’t get it. Ultimately, *Roe* cannot survive alongside our enduring, unshakable sense of justice. It is no more permanent than any other act of human arrogance. It is no more unchangeable than the laws which sent *Dred Scott* back to his master.

This has been the generation of what Malcolm Muggeridge called “the humane holocaust.” The loss can never be recovered. Indeed, it can’t even be calculated. Not even the familiar statistic—1.6 million a year—begins to express the enormity of it. One person’s life touches so many others. How can you measure the void left when so many people aren’t even permitted to live among us?

The best we can do is change what can be changed, and, most importantly, stay the course.

And there is no need to wait for some political consensus to form. That consensus is here, and it grows every time someone looks for the first time at a sonogram. It needs only leaders—prudent, patient leaders. It doesn’t need apologists to soothe us into inaction. It needs statesmen who will work for change—change here and now.

So, we must ask ourselves, what must the role of the pro-life public official be in 1993 in the face of the catastrophic human carnage of abortion?

Let me be specific.

First, relentless, outspoken opposition to passage of the so-called

ROBERT P. CASEY

Freedom of Choice Act.

Second, continuous effort to expand and enlarge the protection of human life in state and national laws and policies.

Third, a continuous drumbeat of public expression which makes the American people confront the facts about abortion in all of its evil.

Fourth, advocacy of a New American Compact in this country which seeks to involve all public and private institutions in a fight for policies and programs to offer children and families the help they need to live decent, healthy and happy lives.

Fifth, political action which challenges both major parties and their candidates to protect human life and works for change in national elections.

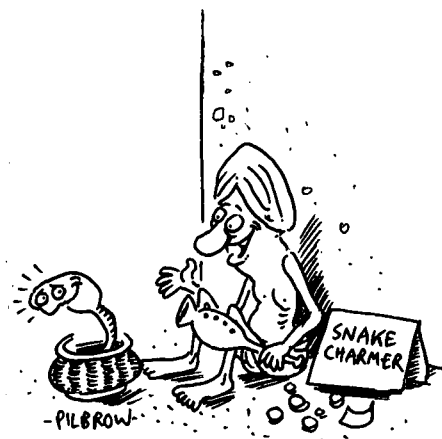
The need for constancy, activism and relentless effort cannot be overstated. In light of recent events, there is no doubt that this country faces a crisis of awesome dimensions.

National commentators want to treat this issue as settled. We can never let them get away with that. This issue will never die. It will never be "over."

We live in a time of anarchy—when those who claim the right to choose deny pro-life advocates the right to speak. Our voices must be even more determined in response.

In summary, the role of the public official must be to lead—to stand up and say to the people of this country who believe in protecting human life: Press On!

Let this, then, be our clarion call, our call to arms, the keynote of this gathering: Press On!



*'God, but you look lovely in this light.'*

THE SPECTATOR 20 February 1993

## The Lord Speaks Good Sense

Mary Kenny

Baron William Rees-Mogg of Hinton Blewitt in the County of Avon is probably the most influential public Catholic voice in Britain today. Created a life peer in 1988, he is a distinctive and distinguished member of England's second chamber, the House of Lords. One-third of the Lords inherit their titles: two-thirds are appointed: it is a system that practically every Government in this century has sworn to reform, but which none ever does, somehow, since so many people like it just as it is. It is so pleasant to become a Lord—and for a loyal political wife to become Her Ladyship—in the mature years of a political career. The Upper House also contains many knowledgeable and wise members, and is popular with the public for its beautiful manner.

The House of Lords is not a powerful institution—the House of Commons can always over-ride its decisions—but it is an influential one, and it is an important forum for debating ethical matters. Lord Rees-Mogg, who is only 64, has specialised in calling attention to the human life issues of abortion, embryo experimentation and euthanasia. He often finds the dice loaded against him. For perfectly acceptable reasons of merit, the Lords attracts a number of scientists who tend to take a secularised and agnostic view of these matters, and find Rees-Mogg's approach a vexation.

Yet, how insidious double standards can be, in this smooth world of “liberal,” indeed, patrician secularism! While forming a House of Lords committee to study euthanasia recently, it was stipulated that those serving on the committee should be “open-minded” about the issue. That was to say, members who were actively against euthanasia were to be ruled out. Imagine, says William Rees-Mogg, a House of Lords committee on, say, capital punishment, in which it was stipulated that anyone against the death penalty must not serve.

Rees-Mogg—who is married to Gillian (née Shakespeare) with five gifted children, the youngest of whom, Jake, was a stock market boffin at the age of 11—believes that euthanasia is *the* central pro-life issue on both sides of the Atlantic right now. He is not optimistic

---

Mary Kenny, a well-known columnist for the London *Sunday Telegraph* and a contributor to many other publications (including the *Irish Independent* in Dublin), is also a commentator on TV and radio. She is now our contributing editor for Europe.

about developments in the future. "The Americans spend 14 percent of their GDP on health. Now, if everyone just lived six months less than they do, this would take 30 percent off health expenditure. It is possible that the Americans will come to see health spending, particularly on the old, as an 'intolerable burden.'"

The financial pointers have to be watched. In Britain, euthanasia (like abortion) has some alarming support from the Right, which argues from an impeccably capitalist viewpoint that supporting "unwanted" human life is too financially costly.

Lord Rees-Mogg's professional background is in financial journalism, and he has proved an astute predictor of woeful financial scenarios (his book, *The Reckoning*, co-authored with James Davidson, predicted with uncanny accuracy the financial doldrums of the 1990s), but in recent years he has turned his thoughts more and more towards moral problems. As the chairman of the Broadcasting Standards Council, he has had the job of scolding the BBC and commercial British television for its sliding standards on explicit sex, violence and foul language, and has at least won the battle of insisting that material unfit for young folk should not be broadcast before 9 p.m.

Rees-Mogg has occasionally been geyed by the liberals for his high-mindedness ("Confessions of a State Prude," ran a headline in the upmarket *Observer*, concerning the good Lord's BBC role), but on the whole, it is remarkable how much his unfashionable views are respected, even deferred to, because of his seriousness of purpose and, probably, too, his impeccable Establishment credentials. England is still run on a caste system, and he remains the Brahmin caste: elite public school (Charterhouse); Bailliol College, Oxford; President of the Oxford Union. Editor of *The Times* at the age of 39. Lives in Palladian mansion near Bristol and in Queen Anne house near Westminster. Yet it is, in the end, the gravitas of his writings and speeches which commands authority.

He has read everything, from Shakespeare to Adam Smith, and he has specially read the divines of the 17th century. He likes the quotation from the great Anglican devotional writer, Jeremy Taylor: "God is wholly in every place, included in no place, not bound with cords (except those of love), not divided into parts, nor changeable into several shapes, filling Heaven and Earth with his present power, and with his never absent nature." (He has also written a well-received religious work, *An Humbler Heaven*.)

Thus, when he makes pronouncements on a serious moral subject,

he sounds both scholarly and reasonable. He can write moralistically about AIDS, while underpinning his moral concern with compassion. But his compassion for the poverty that is congruous with AIDS does not blind him to the moral path he feels the world should take in facing it. "Monogamy will be our pathway to salvation," he advises. "High partner change nations are obviously at much greater risk than low ones, and homosexuals are at risk because they have formed a high partner change subculture," he wrote in December 1991. Only monogamy can ensure that AIDS will not become a universal disease. This is all pointed out so coolly, so reasonably, that Rees-Mogg never attracts the kind of opprobrium that almost anyone else articulating those views would do. In Britain, as elsewhere, "safe sex" is the only orthodoxy when considering the spread of AIDS, and that is the counsel offered too, by Her Majesty's (Conservative) Government. But Lord Rees-Mogg is somehow "allowed" to advocate monogamy, because he does so with that exquisite gravitas.

What is alluring about his moral conservatism, too, is that he goes out of his way to be pro-woman. His gallant advocacy of respect for women, their work and their lives may indeed come from his close, but not cloying, relationship with his Irish-American mother, *née* Beatrice Warren, of New Rochelle, New York. (His maternal grand-father, Daniel Warren, hailed from Cork. It is from this source that he gets his Catholicism.) His intelligent mother, who had been an actress, encouraged him, and in return, his instinct is to champion women.

"Women's career ambitions and patterns are not exactly the same as men's and never will be," he has written. "Women need provision made for childbirth and child rearing and often put a higher proportion of their youthful energy into the work of the family. But that can be compensated for by good employment practice. In general, the reason more women do not rise higher in their jobs is that other people block them." He has encouraged the BBC to take a more affirmative view of promoting women.

Thus, as he said in a recent interview with Valerie Grove of *The Times*, he sees screen pornography and violence as exploiting women, who are "powerless in the face of the male-dominated broadcasters who introduce their rape fantasies into the living room. . . . Society takes its standards basically from the mother. It is the mother who sets moral standards. Mothers want to defend the home. They want the home to be a place of civilisation, a place of calm, and a place of security."

Travelling around Britain recently getting grass-roots reactions to broadcasting standards, he found it was the mothers who most objected to gross language and other unacceptable standards. There was, he observed, "a widespread similarity of point of view" all over the country when it came to moral standards expected of broadcasters. (Mr. Michael Medved, author of *Hollywood versus America*, got a very similar response during his recent visit to the United Kingdom.) Rees-Mogg also believes, as a seasoned expert on broadcasting, that child-abuse is directly linked with explicit sexual material on TV and in the movies. "If you de-privatise sex and make it a public thing, then I think you are more likely to get sexual abuse of children."

But Rees-Mogg will champion the cause of women, while mounting a vigorous attack on the culture of feminism. When discussing the matter of women being ordained in the Church of England, (a passionately controversial subject over here) he affirmed that "a woman's place is in the universal church," and yet warned against the subversive elements in feminism which were inimical to Christianity. "Most of us belong to the materialist post-Enlightenment culture of the industrialised northern world. Although this culture stretches across Europe and North America, it is modern and local, deriving its origins from a recent period of history and limited both by geographical area and by class."

He argues that this culture "includes modern feminism, the women's movement, which has its own agenda and claims. Despite its influence on Christians, the women's movement is not itself Christian. Indeed, Christian feminism can be considered as a sub-group of modern feminism in general. Some of the goals of the women's movement are not compatible with traditional Christian teaching. This is particularly true of the movement's attitudes towards abortion and sexual morality."

Also, "If the modern women's movement has in it anti-Christian elements, one may be concerned about its influence on the organisation of religion. The women's movement is strongest in the US, where its political power has been used to defend a free-choice abortion system that kills 1.6 million fetuses a year. That, from a Catholic point of view, is a massacre of innocents, a holocaust. One could be more content with the standing of Christian feminists if the Christian feminists were all clearly opposed to the attitudes of the rest of the women's movement on abortion." Much of modern feminism, he warns, is simply neo-pagan. (Camille Paglia would not disagree:

she might, indeed, say it was not neo-pagan *enough!*)

Privately, he is very pessimistic about the abortion issue, and feels, basically, that “we have lost.” But as a political creature, perhaps, he sees the battles lost in political terms, possibly overlooking the terrain which is being won in terms of psychological awareness and pro-life caring work in Britain. And he feels the big guns are now turning to euthanasia as the next “anti-life” issue. He often returns to the theme of atheism and atheistic values being anti-human life. Atheism is utilitarian: it does not impose sacred limits to human convenience. “If embryos are a nuisance, exterminate them; if old people are a burden and take up valuable nursing time, ask them politely whether they would prefer to be exterminated. Even in its most benign form, and the progressive peers (in the House of Lords) themselves have a benign intention, atheism makes human utility the measure of conduct.”

The problem is, he says, that “In the West we do not much like to think about this. We are all the children of the enlightenment, and have absorbed the teachings of Bentham and Voltaire. We prefer to think that metaphysical belief is only a matter of preference. But in Britain the atheist belief that human life is a temporary object of utility has killed two million babies. And Marxism-Leninism’s version of atheist utility has killed 50 million people, perhaps a hundred million, perhaps more.”

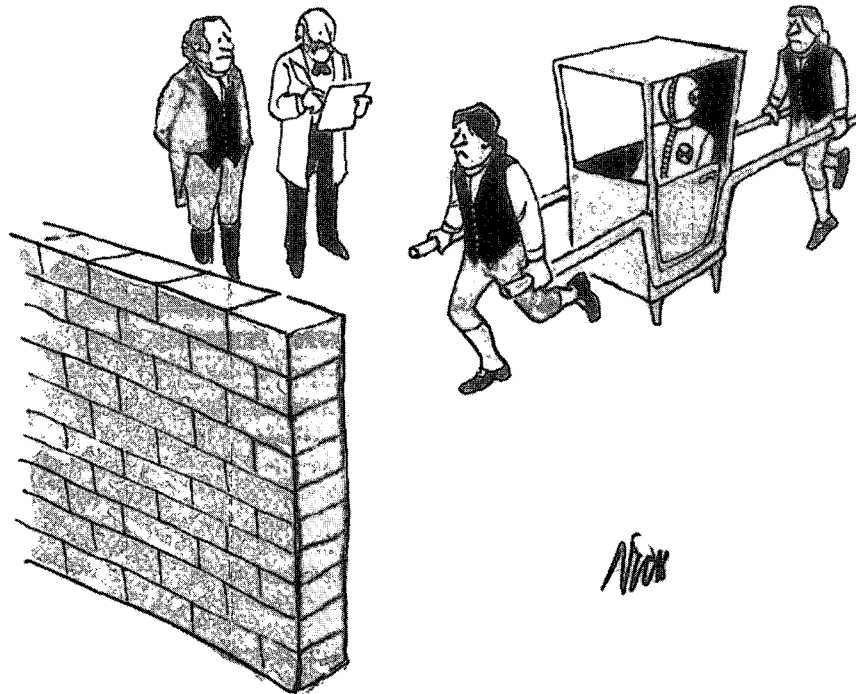
Lord Rees-Mogg is listened to in England, even when he says these unfashionable things, using language that the “politically correct” would frown upon, coming from anyone else. He simply represents the serious Christian conscience of the layman, in the eye of the public. He is not the maverick that Malcolm Muggeridge was, and he is not an entertainer. Tall, thin, bespectacled, pink-faced, with a faint speech impediment which, if anything, adds to his air of authenticity, he seems the outstanding public figure defending Christian values—sometimes rather more than the clergy, indeed.

His upper-class background (and perhaps his happily-married, loving, parents) have given him a confidence which leaves no room for paranoia. In a recent BBC programme he was asked by an inquisitor (in regard to his authority’s ruling against certain television broadcasts): “Do you feel that, as a Roman Catholic, you have the right to impose your values on others?” He answered calmly that his views represented those of millions. He also told me, at interview, that he hardly ever came across

MARY KENNY

anti-Catholic attitudes, which means he clearly doesn't notice the sting in such questions. (The historian Paul Johnson says, *par contre*: "The English have never been anti-semitic: they have always been anti-Catholic.")

Rees-Mogg was keen to go into active politics as a young man, and only lost the Conservative nomination for a safe Conservative seat by one vote on the selection committee. Had he got it, he might well be Prime Minister, or something very near to it, today. But perhaps in some respects, as an influential Christian thinker who continually places human-life issues before the public—both in the Lords and in his public broadcasts and writings—he is doing more important work. Without doubt, the good Lord Rees-Mogg has gone far—perhaps he will go yet further still.



THE SPECTATOR 23 May 1992



## Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation

*Ronald Reagan*

The 10th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* is a good time for us to pause and reflect. Our nationwide policy of abortion-on-demand through all nine months of pregnancy was neither voted for by our people nor enacted by our legislators—not a single state had such unrestricted abortion before the Supreme Court decreed it to be national policy in 1973. But the consequences of this judicial decision are now obvious: since 1973, more than 15 million unborn children have had their lives snuffed out by legalized abortions. That is over ten times the number of Americans lost in all our nation's wars.

Make no mistake, abortion-on-demand is not a right granted by the Constitution. No serious scholar, including one disposed to agree with the Court's result, has argued that the framers of the Constitution intended to create such a right. Shortly after the *Roe v. Wade* decision, Professor John Hart Ely, now Dean of Stanford Law School, wrote that the opinion "is not constitutional law and gives almost no sense of an obligation to try to be." Nowhere do the plain words of the Constitution even hint at a "right" so sweeping as to permit abortion up to the time the child is ready to be born. Yet that is what the Court ruled.

As an act of "raw judicial power" (to use Justice White's biting phrase), the decision by the seven-man majority in *Roe v. Wade* has so far been made to stick. But the Court's decision has by no means settled the debate. Instead, *Roe v. Wade* has become a continuing prod to the conscience of the nation.

Abortion concerns not just the unborn child, it concerns every one of us. The English poet, John Donne, wrote: "... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

We cannot diminish the value of one category of human life—the unborn—without diminishing the value of all human life. We

---

**Ronald Reagan**, while sitting as the fortieth president of the United States, sent us this article shortly after the tenth anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*; we printed it with pride in our *Spring*, 1983 issue, and reprint it now, after *Roe*'s twentieth anniversary, just as proudly.

RONALD REAGAN

saw tragic proof of this truism last year when the Indiana courts allowed the starvation death of "Baby Doe" in Bloomington because the child had Down's Syndrome.

Many of our fellow citizens grieve over the loss of life that has followed *Roe v. Wade*. Margaret Heckler, soon after being nominated to head the largest department of our government, Health and Human Services, told an audience that she believed abortion to be the greatest moral crisis facing our country today. And the revered Mother Teresa, who works in the streets of Calcutta ministering to dying people in her world-famous mission of mercy, has said that "the greatest misery of our time is the generalized abortion of children."

Over the first two years of my Administration I have closely followed and assisted efforts in Congress to reverse the tide of abortion—efforts of Congressmen, Senators and citizens responding to an urgent moral crisis. Regrettably, I have also seen the massive efforts of those who, under the banner of "freedom of choice," have so far blocked every effort to reverse nationwide abortion-on-demand.

Despite the formidable obstacles before us, we must not lose heart. This is not the first time our country has been divided by a Supreme Court decision that denied the value of certain human lives. The *Dred Scott* decision of 1857 was not overturned in a day, or a year, or even a decade. At first, only a minority of Americans recognized and deplored the moral crisis brought about by denying the full humanity of our black brothers and sisters; but that minority persisted in their vision and finally prevailed. They did it by appealing to the hearts and minds of their countrymen, to the truth of human dignity under God. From their example, we know that respect for the sacred value of human life is too deeply engrained in the hearts of our people to remain forever suppressed. But the great majority of the American people have not yet made their voices heard, and we cannot expect them to—any more than the public voice arose against slavery—*until* the issue is clearly framed and presented.

What, then, is the real issue? I have often said that when we talk about abortion, we are talking about two lives—the life of the mother and the life of the unborn child. Why else do we call a pregnant woman a mother? I have also said that anyone who doesn't feel sure whether we are talking about a second human life should clearly give life the benefit of the doubt. If you don't know whether a body is alive or dead, you would never bury it. I think this consideration itself should be enough for all of us to insist on protecting the unborn.

The case against abortion does not rest here, however, for medical practice confirms at every step the correctness of these moral sensibilities. Modern medicine treats the unborn child as a patient. Medical pioneers have made great breakthroughs in treating the unborn—for genetic problems, vitamin deficiencies, irregular heart rhythms, and other medical conditions. Who can forget George Will's moving account of the little boy who underwent brain surgery six times during the nine weeks before he was born? Who is the *patient* if not that tiny unborn human being who can feel pain when he or she is approached by doctors who come to kill rather than to cure?

The real question today is not when human life begins, but, *What is the value of human life?* The abortionist who reassembles the arms and legs of a tiny baby to make sure all its parts have been torn from its mother's body can hardly doubt whether it is a human being. The real question for him and for all of us is whether that tiny human life has a God-given right to be protected by the law—the same right we have.

What more dramatic confirmation could we have of the real issue than the Baby Doe case in Bloomington, Indiana? The death of that tiny infant tore at the hearts of all Americans because the child was undeniably a live human being—one lying helpless before the eyes of the doctors and the eyes of the nation. The real issue for the courts was *not* whether Baby Doe was a human being. The real issue was whether to protect the life of a human being who had Down's Syndrome, who would probably be mentally handicapped, but who needed a routine surgical procedure to unblock his esophagus and allow him to eat. A doctor testified to the presiding judge that, even with his physical problem corrected, Baby Doe would have a "non-existent" possibility for "a minimally adequate quality of life"—in other words, that retardation was the equivalent of a crime deserving the death penalty. The judge let Baby Doe starve and die, and the Indiana Supreme Court sanctioned his decision.

Federal law does not allow federally-assisted hospitals to decide that Down's Syndrome infants are not worth treating, much less to decide to starve them to death. Accordingly, I have directed the Departments of Justice and HHS to apply civil rights regulations to protect handicapped newborns. All hospitals receiving federal funds must post notices which will clearly state that failure to feed handicapped babies is prohibited by federal law. The basic issue is whether to value and protect the

lives of the handicapped, whether to recognize the sanctity of human life. This is the same basic issue that underlies the question of abortion.

The 1981 Senate hearings on the beginning of human life brought out the basic issue more clearly than ever before. The many medical and scientific witnesses who testified disagreed on many things, but not on the *scientific* evidence that the unborn child is alive, is a distinct individual, or is a member of the human species. They did disagree over the *value* question, whether to give value to a human life at its early and most vulnerable stages of existence.

**R**egrettably, we live at a time when some persons do *not* value all human life. They want to pick and choose which individuals have value. Some have said that only those individuals with “consciousness of self” are human beings. One such writer has followed this deadly logic and concluded that “shocking as it may seem, a newly born infant is not a human being.”

A Nobel Prize winning scientist has suggested that if a handicapped child “were not declared fully human until three days after birth, then all parents could be allowed the choice.” In other words, “quality control” to see if newly born human beings are up to snuff.

Obviously, some influential people want to deny that every human life has intrinsic, sacred worth. They insist that a member of the human race must have certain qualities before they accord him or her status as a “human being.”

Events have borne out the editorial in a California medical journal which explained three years before *Roe v. Wade* that the social acceptance of abortion is a “defiance of the long-held Western ethic of intrinsic and equal value for every human life regardless of its stage, condition, or status.”

Every legislator, every doctor, and every citizen needs to recognize that the real issue is whether to affirm and protect the sanctity of all human life, or to embrace a social ethic where some human lives are valued and others are not. As a nation, we must choose between the sanctity of life ethic and the “quality of life” ethic.

I have no trouble identifying the answer our nation has always given to this basic question, and the answer that I hope and pray it will give in the future. American was founded by men and women who shared a vision of the value of each and every individual. They stated this vision clearly from the very start in the Declaration of Independence, using words that every schoolboy and schoolgirl can recite:

## THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We fought a terrible war to guarantee that one category of mankind—black people in America—could not be denied the inalienable rights with which their Creator endowed them. The great champion of the sanctity of all human life in that day, Abraham Lincoln, gave us his assessment of the Declaration's purpose. Speaking of the framers of that noble document, he said:

This was their majestic interpretation of the economy of the Universe. This was their lofty, and wise, and noble understanding of the justice of the Creator to His creatures. Yes, gentlemen, to all his creatures, to the whole great family of man. In their enlightened belief, nothing stamped with the divine image and likeness was sent into the world to be trodden on . . . They grasped not only the whole race of man then living, but they reached forward and seized upon the farthest posterity. They erected a beacon to guide their children and their children's children, and the countless myriads who should inhabit the earth in other ages.

He warned also of the danger we would face if we closed our eyes to the value of life in any category of human beings:

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?

When Congressman John A. Bingham of Ohio drafted the Fourteenth Amendment to guarantee the rights of life, liberty, and property to all human beings, he explained that *all* are "entitled to the protection of American law, because its divine spirit of equality declares that all men are created equal." He said the right guaranteed by the amendment would therefore apply to "any human being." Justice William Brennan, writing in another case decided only the year before *Roe v. Wade*, referred to our society as one that "strongly affirms the sanctity of life."

Another William Brennan—not the Justice—has reminded us of the terrible consequences that can follow when a nation rejects the sanctity of life ethic:

The cultural environment for a human holocaust is present whenever any society can be misled into defining individuals as less than human

RONALD REAGAN

and therefore devoid of value and respect.

As a nation today, we have *not* rejected the sanctity of human life. The American people have not had an opportunity to express their view on the sanctity of human life in the unborn. I am convinced that Americans do not want to play God with the value of human life. It is not for us to decide who is worthy to live and who is not. Even the Supreme Court's opinion in *Roe v. Wade* did not explicitly reject the traditional American idea of intrinsic worth and value in all human life; it simply dodged this issue.

**T**he Congress has before it several measures that would enable our people to reaffirm the sanctity of human life, even the smallest and the youngest and the most defenseless. The Human Life Bill expressly recognizes the unborn as human beings and accordingly protects them as persons under our Constitution. This bill, first introduced by Senator Jesse Helms, provided the vehicle for the Senate hearings in 1981 which contributed so much to our understanding of the real issue of abortion.

The Respect Human Life Act, just introduced in the 98th Congress, states in its first section that the policy of the United States is "to protect innocent life, both before and after birth." This bill, sponsored by Congressman Henry Hyde and Senator Roger Jepsen, prohibits the federal government from performing abortions or assisting those who do so, except to save the life of the mother. It also addresses the pressing issue of infanticide which, as we have seen, flows inevitably from permissive abortion as another step in the denial of the inviolability of innocent human life.

I have endorsed each of these measures, as well as the more difficult route of constitutional amendment, and I will give these initiatives my full support. Each of them, in different ways, attempts to reverse the tragic policy of abortion-on-demand imposed by the Supreme Court ten years ago. Each of them is a decisive way to affirm the sanctity of human life.

We must all educate ourselves to the reality of the horrors taking place. Doctors today know that unborn children can feel a touch within the womb and that they respond to pain. But how many Americans are aware that abortion techniques are allowed today, in all 50 states, that burn the skin of a baby with a salt solution, in an agonizing death that can last for hours?

Another example: two years ago, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* ran a Sunday special supplement on "The Dreaded Complication." The "dreaded complication" referred to in the article—the complication feared by doctors who perform abortions—is the *survival* of the child despite all the painful attacks during the abortion procedure. Some unborn children *do* survive the late-term abortions the Supreme Court has made legal. Is there any question that these victims of abortion deserve our attention and protection? Is there any question that those who *don't* survive were living human beings before they were killed?

Late-term abortions, especially when the baby survives, but is then killed by starvation, neglect, or suffocation, show once again the link between abortion and infanticide. The time to stop both is now. As my Administration acts to stop infanticide, we will be fully aware of the real issue that underlies the death of babies before and soon after birth.

Our society has, fortunately, become sensitive to the rights and special needs of the handicapped, but I am shocked that physical or mental handicaps of newborns are still used to justify their extinction. This Administration has a Surgeon General, Dr. C. Everett Koop, who has done perhaps more than any other American for handicapped children, by pioneering surgical techniques to help them, by speaking out on the value of their lives, and by working with them in the context of loving families. You will not find his former patients advocating the so-called "quality-of-life" ethic.

I know that when the true issue of infanticide is placed before the American people, with all the facts openly aired, we will have no trouble deciding that a mentally or physically handicapped baby has the same intrinsic worth and right to life as the rest of us. As the New Jersey Supreme Court said two decades ago, in a decision upholding the sanctity of human life, "a child need not be perfect to have a worthwhile life."

Whether we are talking about pain suffered by unborn children, or about late-term abortions, or about infanticide, we inevitably focus on the humanity of the unborn child. Each of these issues is a potential rallying point for the sanctity of life ethic. Once we as a nation rally around any one of these issues to affirm the sanctity of life, we will see the importance of affirming this principle across the board.

RONALD REAGAN

Malcolm Muggeridge, the English writer, goes right to the heart of the matter: "Either life is always and in all circumstances sacred, or intrinsically of no account; it is inconceivable that it should be in some cases the one, and in some the other." The sanctity of innocent human life is a principle that Congress should proclaim at every opportunity.

It is possible that the Supreme Court itself may overturn its abortion rulings. We need only recall that in *Brown v. Board of Education* the court reversed its own earlier "separate-but-equal" decision. I believe if the Supreme Court took another look at *Roe v. Wade*, and considered the real issue between the sanctity of life ethic and the quality of life ethic, it would change its mind once again.

As we continue to work to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, we must also continue to lay the groundwork for a society in which abortion is not the accepted answer to unwanted pregnancy. Pro-life people have already taken heroic steps, often at great personal sacrifice, to provide for unwed mothers. I recently spoke about a young pregnant woman named Victoria, who said, "In this society we save whales, we save timber wolves and bald eagles and Coke bottles. Yet, everyone wanted me to throw away my baby." She has been helped by Save-a-Life, a group in Dallas, which provides a way for unwed mothers to preserve the human life within them when they might otherwise be tempted to resort to abortion. I think also of House of His Creation in Catesville, Pennsylvania, where a loving couple has taken in almost 200 young women in the past ten years. They have seen, as a fact of life, that the girls are *not* better off having abortions than saving their babies. I am also reminded of the remarkable Rossow family of Ellington, Connecticut, who have opened their hearts and their home to nine handicapped adopted and foster children.

The Adolescent Family Life Program, adopted by Congress at the request of Senator Jeremiah Denton, has opened new opportunities for unwed mothers to give their children life. We should not rest until our entire society echoes the tone of John Powell in the dedication of his book, *Abortion: The Silent Holocaust*, a dedication to every woman carrying an unwanted child: "Please believe that you are not alone. There are many of us that truly love you, who want to stand at your side, and help in any way we can." And we can echo the always-practical woman of faith, Mother Teresa, when she says, "If you don't want the little child, that unborn child, give him to me." We have so many families in America seeking to adopt children



that the slogan "every child a wanted child" is now the emptiest of all reasons to tolerate abortion.

I have often said we need to join in prayer to bring protection to the unborn. Prayer and action are needed to uphold the sanctity of human life. I believe it will not be possible to accomplish our work, the work of saving lives, "without being a soul of prayer." The famous British Member of Parliament, William Wilberforce, prayed with his small group of influential friends, the "Clapham Sect," for *decades* to see an end to slavery in the British empire. Wilberforce led that struggle in Parliament, unflaggingly, because he believed in the sanctity of human life. He saw the fulfillment of his impossible dream when Parliament outlawed slavery just before his death.

Let his faith and perseverance be our guide. We will never recognize the true value of our own lives until we affirm the value in the life of others, a value of which Malcolm Muggeridge says: ". . . however low it flickers or fiercely burns, it is still a Divine flame which no man dare presume to put out, be his motives ever so humane and enlightened."

Abraham Lincoln recognized that we could not survive as a free land when some men could decide that others were not fit to be free and should therefore be slaves. Likewise, we cannot survive as a free nation when some men decide that others are not fit to live and should be abandoned to abortion or infanticide. My Administration is dedicated to the preservation of America as a free land, and there is no cause more important for preserving that freedom than affirming the transcendent right to life of all human beings, the right without which no other rights have any meaning.

# Pricking the Conscience of the Nation

John Muggeridge

**“F**or two hundred years we had sawed and sawed and sawed at the branch we were sitting on,” wrote George Orwell in early April, 1940. “And in the end, much more suddenly than anyone had foreseen, our efforts were rewarded, and down we came. But unfortunately there had been a little mistake. The thing at the bottom was not a bed of roses after all, it was a cesspool full of barbed wire.”

Orwell and his fellow lumberjacks are post-Enlightenment rationalists; the branch they came down with is Christianity; the bed of roses they expected to land in, socialism; the cesspool full of barbed wire they mistook for it, Hitler and Stalin’s Europe, and the book which inspired the telling of this sombre parable, my father’s *The Thirties*.

But the parable itself is about Orwell, not Malcolm Muggeridge. Orwell uses it not to explain Muggeridge’s approach to contemporary history, but to show how closely that approach conforms to his own; in other words, how right it is. Historians who share our viewpoint are always the ones who seem most perceptive. Orwell depicts Muggeridge as an unabashedly Orwellian post-Christian pessimist, honest enough to admit that belief in God is, in Orwell’s words, “vanishing from the human mind,” and clear-eyed enough to see that since, according to Orwell, “no sanction can ever be effective except the supernatural one,” hell has indeed arrived on earth. He then goes on to pronounce *The Thirties* to be “nearer to essential truth than any ‘constructive’ outlook could have made it.”

The Spring of 1940, however, was no time for abandoning all hope. Orwell liked wars. Before his death at forty-seven he had twice volunteered for active service during periods of international peace, and in World War II ill-health alone kept him out of the combat zone.

He thought of war as a substitute for religion; it was a way of curbing human selfishness without having to resort either to God or to barbed wire. Soldiers who face death together in a common cause, so he claimed, become aware of “some organism greater than themselves stretching into the future and the past, within which

---

John Muggeridge, who writes from Welland (Ontario), is a contributor to several American journals, including *National Review* and *The American Spectator*.

they feel themselves to be immortal.” With a very slight increase of consciousness, thought Orwell, these warrior mystics could be made to transfer their sense of loyalty to humanity itself. All else having failed, might we not end up fighting our way out of the post-Christian cesspool?

Look at Malcolm Muggeridge. Few English writers have expressed such comprehensive gloominess about their country’s future. Even Orwell found *The Thirties* depressing. And yet having put the final touches to this tale of woe, its author joined the army. Orwell, of course, was delighted. Enlistment belied Muggeridge’s pessimism. It showed, said Orwell, that “beneath his seeming acceptance of disaster there lies the unconfessed fact that he does after all believe in something—in England.” Orwell claimed perfectly to understand how Muggeridge could have come both to savage his country’s institutions and take up arms to defend them. The emotion that Muggeridge had felt, says Orwell, was that of “the middle-class man, brought up in a military tradition, who finds in the moment of crisis that he is a patriot after all.”

Not so. My father *wasn’t* middle-class; he *hadn’t* been brought up in a military tradition, and above all he *didn’t* believe in England. Certainly he felt affection for his native country, as well as due gratitude for the protection provided him by her policemen and soldiers. But this is not patriotism—at least not the sort that Orwell had in mind. Orwell seriously thought that my father and like-minded bourgeois militarists were moved to rally round the flag in September, 1939, by such lines of poetry as: “What have I done for thee, England, my England?” and “Who dies when England lives?”

Far from being moved by such rhetoric, Muggeridge held it in the utmost contempt—as, for that matter, he did all forms of patriotic tear-jerking. I well remember, for example, how breaking into “we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender” was guaranteed to get him telling unpublished stories at Churchill’s expense for a whole evening. And few pieces of news delighted him more than the revelation that one famous Churchillian oration had been delivered first by an actor.

No, Muggeridge’s religion was not love of England. It was religion. Nowhere does his longing for transcendence show through more clearly than in the articles that he wrote in the thirties for a literary

and political review called *Time and Tide*. Interestingly enough, Orwell was a fellow contributor to this magazine. The two writers did not meet until 1944, but it is difficult to think that before then they had not read each other's journalism. Orwell must surely have come across Muggeridge's 1936 meditation on *Why I Am Not A Pacifist*, for example, in which, having argued in favour of England arming herself against her enemies, Muggeridge goes on to assert that the only hope for a world fallen into corruption and wickedness was "the promise that with God all things are possible." The point here is not that being prepared to fight made Muggeridge religious; being religious made him prepared to fight. There was a God, and he owed Him a death. The one unempty thing in life, concludes Muggeridge, is "the soul's obscure longing" which "never has and never can be satisfied within the confines of Time."

And three years later Orwell writes as if Muggeridge was as much a victim of the cutting down of Christianity as he was. "Unfortunately," he concludes, "Mr. Muggeridge shows no sign of believing in God." What he really means, of course, is *fortunately*. It was more than just a case of misery loving company. Despite his nostalgia for pre-materialist Britain, Orwell remained a doctrinaire atheist. He called Christianity "in essence a lie." But he saw it as something far worse than just a harmless superstition; in his eyes it was the secular humanist's equivalent of original sin, darkening man's intellect, weakening his desire for progress, and inclining him to capitalism. No wonder he put Muggeridge's weekly wrestling with eternity in *Time and Tide* down the memory hole. Only by disposing of them in that way could he bring himself to go on taking their author's other writing seriously.

Orwell's intellectual successors followed suit. In the fifties and sixties they crowned Muggeridge king of the iconoclasts. These were the years when a Cambridge professor, writing in *The New York Review of Books*, called him Britain's most distinguished anarchist, and when, as he once boasted to me, twelve minutes on the Jack Parr show earned him enough to live on for a year. "God love you, Malcolm," Jack used to exclaim, as they waited for a commercial break, with his guest's latest comment on the funniness of sex or the silliness of prime ministers still ringing in the ears of a quarter of a million viewers.

What ended Muggeridge's romance with the *cognoscenti* was not his rediscovery of Jesus; it was his determination to do something about it. In the late sixties he became what we used to call at my

Church of England boarding school a God-botherer. It was all right to get up for early Communion in the afterglow of Confirmation, but, *please*, don't make a habit of it. Here was the cause of Muggeridge's fall from grace. He began to take Grace too seriously. He had the gall, for example, to write to *The Times*, praising Pope Paul VI's encyclical against artificial birth control. And then to make matters worse, in 1969 he resigned as rector of Edinburgh University because the student council wanted condom machines (there's *avant vu* for you!). But the final straw came when he turned anti-abortionist.

Enough was enough. Clearly Muggeridge had got out of control. Academics dropped him first. The same professor who had admired his anarchism now dismissed him as a puritan and a Calvinist. Christopher Booker, an old friend who had once borrowed Muggeridge's house to write a book in, accused him of hypocrisy. For others he was on an ego trip, out to boost his television ratings or, when no other explanation immediately recommended itself, a victim of premature senility. The sneering goes on even posthumously. Only last Christmas, more than two years after Muggeridge's death, the British Broadcasting Corporation ran a television special which implied that Christianity had turned him into a humourless, bigoted monomaniac.

To do Muggeridge justice, being despised by the media never bothered him very much. For one thing, their contempt for him came nowhere near to matching his for them. Then again, if you hand it out, as he once reminded my wife, who had just received a letter from one of her readers blaspheming her for having had too many pregnancies, you have to take it. So instead of repining over his loss of a forum in *The New York Review of Books*, Muggeridge offered his pen to the religious *samizdat*.

This explains his association with *The Human Life Review*, and in particular, his afterword to President Ronald Reagan's powerful and—for a sitting President—*unexampled* defence of the sanctity of human life, "Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation," which first appeared in the Spring, 1983, edition of that journal. What impresses one most about this article is not its message, though that is clearly and eloquently enough conveyed, but the Christian assumptions behind it. Christianity is supposed to have been abolished, except as a privately-held aberration, tolerated by the courts in the name of individual freedom. To readers whose children have had dinned into them from day care to university that morality is a personal

choice, Mr. Reagan talks of the conscience of the nation. The Supreme Court of the United States prohibits those same children from praying aloud on public school property, and yet here is the President of the United States urging their parents to be "a soul of prayer."

Mr. Reagan, moreover, makes these outrageously unsecular appeals, not as an individual exercising his constitutional right to free speech, but in his capacity as President. He refers approvingly to Abraham Lincoln's description of the Declaration of Independence as a "lofty, and wise, and noble understanding of the justice of the Creator to His creatures." For Mr. Reagan the bond which holds the United States together is a spiritual one, and he is convinced that most Americans agree with him. As a nation today, he claimed in 1983, "we have *not* rejected the sanctity of human life." He even looks forward to a reversal of *Roe v. Wade* if only the justices would consider "the real issue between the sanctity of life ethic and the quality of life ethic."

Presidents are expected to be high-flown and up-beat, especially when they face re-election. But they don't have to be pro-life. Inevitably Mr. Reagan has taken some of the blame for his party's defeat last November. Joe Sobran wrote recently, for example, that all Reagan's sandhills had been washed away. But some of them at least were Christian sandhills, built not just to win votes, but to implement principles. Politics has seldom been much more than the buying off or selling out of special interest groups. But here surely is one politician who, for a moment at least, rose above that sordid activity. While other world leaders, except for the Pope, were backing and filling on life issues, President Reagan displayed what Muggeridge, in a letter to the editor of this review, called the "courage and honesty to commit himself, without any sort of reservation, to de-legalizing abortion."

Only a conservative could talk of de-legalizing something. Liberals de-criminalize and regulate. They seek to replace the rule of law with that of government. Under them, criminal codes shrink and statute books multiply. President Reagan's administration produced no fewer reams of government regulations than had its Democratic predecessors. It too put its faith in agencies. On the other hand, Mr. Reagan did wish to be remembered as a preserver of tradition, rather than as a legislator of change. Why else would he have argued against abortion by quoting Abraham Lincoln and the Declaration of Independence? Why would he have nominated as a Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Bork, America's most notorious exponent of the theory that laws

should be judged according to the way in which they were originally understood by their framers? But most significantly of all, why would the revolutionists have fought Judge Bork's confirmation so bloodily? Clearly what People for the American Way feared most was that a Justice Bork would judge *Roe v. Wade* to have been un-American.

Never within living memory had such Christian conservatism been preached from the White House. Hearts rose. Serious scholars agree, claimed President Reagan in *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation*, that abortion-on-demand is not a right granted by the Constitution. Well then, perhaps serious scholarship would come back into fashion. Hadn't George Gilder, for example, already pointed the way to an original understanding of American family life? And what about the rest of the traditionalists' agenda? Why might we not look forward to the break-up of the Department of Education and the so-often-heralded dawn of vouchered schooling, to tenured conservatives in social science departments, and medical schools which accepted the linkage between euthanasia and gas chambers, as described in C. Everett Koop's "The Slide to Auschwitz" and documented by Doctor Leo Alexander, a consultant to the U.S. government at Nuremberg?

Because things didn't happen that way. Ten years later anti-abortion prospects are bleaker than ever. With a feminist wife at his back and a compliant Democratic majority in Congress, President Bill Clinton has negated a quarter of a century of lobbying for pre-born children. And as for the American family, its fortunes have never sunk lower. Meanwhile college sociology texts are as likely to quote George Gilder at face value as they are Doctor Joseph Goebbels. But for me the most extraordinary example of institutionalized paganism occurs in the fine print of my health insurance plan where I find—included in the list of those qualifying for coverage—single-sex couples and their families. Nobody had to tread the grapes of wrath to win that particular victory, which puts Anne and me *below* the level of the common-law couple next door. I suppose that at least the insurance companies benefit; it cuts down on the cost of drugs prescribed by obstetricians.

Yet the game is not up. We know it, but more importantly so do our opponents. Their brush with counter-revolution still rankles. Otherwise they would be able to argue with us less shrilly. At work I inhabit an anti-Reagan universe. It is as if the last two U.S. presidential

elections had not happened. We're still shaking our heads over the leader of the world's most powerful nation falling asleep at press conferences, and confusing the names of visiting dignitaries, not to mention transferring the plots of movies that he has starred in from celluloid to history. This is not just the tribute that error pays to truth. For some reason *we're* running, and *they're* scared.

Perhaps it's because we can see beyond cesspools with barbed wire in them. This was my father's great strength. As my mother once reminded him, he never took his eyes off the light. It led him to the anti-abortion movement and on to Catholicism. A friend from his days with the British Society for the Protection of Unborn Children remembers a march in Liverpool (it must have been around 1970), "contraceptives showering down on Malcolm Muggeridge and myself from an overhead bridge." Most appropriate. And of course he ended up in that Mecca for all anti-abortion communicators, the *Human Life Review*. Here he found not a chasm between faith and reason, but complementarity. It was in his *HLR* pieces that for the first time in his literary career he used footnotes. He was coming to realize that since His God had been born into history, the very least he could do was to document it.

He had also come to understand why he had never taken seriously the nightmare vision of his friend, George Orwell. A nightmare is something you wake up from. Orwell thought otherwise. The one certain feature of history is its unexpectedness. Who knows? We may get *neither* global warming *nor* a second ice age. And who could have predicted that the president elected in 1980 would have adopted a Christian approach to politics?

With St. Augustine, Mr. Reagan saw government as both a result of original sin and a remedy for it. He called the Soviet state an Evil Empire and set in motion the process which led to its downfall. That surely was a case of using government to remedy original sin. *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation* took aim at another evil empire nearer home. This one was permitted to stand. No matter. The Good Fight goes on. In 1983 the editor of the *Human Life Review* calculated that it had printed over a million words explaining why abortion was a national disaster. Ten years later that figure must have doubled. And he is still counting. Malcolm Muggeridge would have applauded.



## APPENDIX A

*[The following column appeared in the Long Beach, California Press-Telegram (Feb. 9, 1993) and is reprinted here with the author's permission. Miss Shaver is a free-lance writer.]*

### Easing of abortion code raises some searing questions

*Jessica Shaver*

Now that President Clinton has lifted the "gag rule," given the go-ahead on fetal tissue research and called for re-consideration on the ban against the abortifacient RU-486, I have some questions.

According to Dr. Willard Cates, chief of abortion surveillance for the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, 400 to 500 abortions a year produce live babies instead of dead ones. Since tissue from aborted fetuses can now be used for research, does this include tissue from fetuses who survive? Can my friend Gianna, whose mother aborted her in her seventh month of pregnancy, be used in research? She is 15 years old now; is there a statute of limitations on the use of her tissue?

Does a woman who has an abortion have the right to a dead fetus, or only the right to a terminated pregnancy? When it takes two people to start a baby's life, why does one of them have the right to end it and the other doesn't? Why does the aborter have a choice and the abortee doesn't?

Why is a fetus a nonperson if the mother doesn't want it, but it becomes a person if the mother does? Why is it manslaughter if someone other than the mother kills it accidentally but not murder if the mother kills it on purpose? Why is a fetus a nonperson when it is within the mother's body, but the minute it is removed from the mother if it lives, it becomes a person? How can it be that at seven months, a fetus is a nonperson if it is aborted, but the same baby is a person if it is born prematurely?

Why does a woman have a right to kill her baby before birth and not afterward? Why is it legal for her to get rid of it one day before she would have gone into labor, and illegal for her to get rid of the same baby a day later?

When counselors at school-based clinics refer 13- and 14-year-olds for abortions without their parents' knowledge and consent, and the child suffers one of the many complications of abortion—perforation of the uterus, serum hepatitis, hemorrhage, pulmonary, cardiac or cerebral embolism, sterility, blood poisoning, peritonitis, infertility, convulsions, coma, permanent brain damage, fever, infection, endometriosis, anemia, shock, suicidal depression or problems with future pregnancies such as cervical weakness or scarring, tubal pregnancies, premature birth, or death, to name a few—who pays the medical or funeral bills?

When clinics perform abortion procedures on women who aren't really pregnant or they perform partial procedures that leave a woman still pregnant and then charge more to have the "retained tissue" removed—as many who have worked in the industry admit some clinics do regularly—what legal recourse

## APPENDIX A

does the woman have? How can she find out if this was the case with her?

Why aren't abortion clinics subject to the same rules regarding keeping records and health inspections as every other medical facility?

How can a woman find out whether her fetus is being properly incinerated and sent to a landfill or whether it's in the trash can in the alley behind the clinic, attracting dogs and rats, as is the case in some cities? How can she find out if collagen from her fetus is an ingredient in her next jar of face cream, as it is in some parts of Europe?

Why can a doctor legally kill a fetus at any point during pregnancy—but if the fetus manages to survive the abortion, the doctor cannot try to kill it again without being tried for murder? Why is the doctor then expected to use “heroic measures” to save its life?

Why are feminists still claiming that “back alley abortions” took the lives of thousands or tens of thousands of women before abortion was legalized in 1973, when the people who came up with those statistics have admitted publicly that they were unconfirmed and the Centers for Disease Control records show only 339 maternal deaths from abortion in 1972?

Why are many Americans more concerned with protecting other species when 1.6 million of their own are slaughtered yearly?

Why do people who work at abortion clinics and hospitals deny that abortions are legal beyond 24 weeks or so when they must know that *Roe v. Wade* made them legal throughout pregnancy for virtually any reason, according to a Senate sub-committee conclusion in 1980.

Why do those who profit from abortions support sex education in the schools when their own studies have shown that for every \$1 million given to family planners by the federal government, 2,000 additional teen pregnancies can be expected two years later? Why do they promote the use of contraceptives when articles in the January 1971 and October 1980 *Family Planning Perspectives* and an independent study by the Institute for Research and Evaluation agree that the incidence of teen pregnancies is significantly higher in areas where contraceptives are provided or easily available.

Why do those who profit from abortion continue to offer abortion as a quick fix when the Alan Guttmacher Institute studies acknowledge that “post-procedural trauma for abortion clients may be as high as 91 percent of all cases.”

Why do women who abort to save a relationship usually end that relationship soon after the abortion? Why do women who have had abortions have such difficulty letting themselves get close to people? Why are divorce and alcoholism rates among abortion staffs so much higher than among any other group of doctors and nurses? Why are people who perform or undergo abortions so defensive?

Why do anti-abortionists try to talk women out of abortions, providing food, housing, maternity clothes, even paying their medical bills, finding homes for the babies, sometimes adopting the babies themselves—when they don't make a penny from doing so?

## APPENDIX B

*[The following column appeared in the Boston Herald (Jan. 26, 1993) and is reprinted here with the author's permission.]*

### **Majority in muddy middle on abortion**

*Beverly Beckham*

There are zealots on both sides of the abortion issue: pro-choicers who believe a woman should be able to have an abortion at any stage in her pregnancy for any reason at all; pro-lifers who decry all abortions, no matter what the circumstances.

These are the people we continually read about or see on the news. But their views aren't our views. Their views don't represent where most Americans are on this issue.

Most of us remain confused and morally ambivalent about an issue that pits a mother against her child. Most of us lean over backwards trying to understand and be fair.

"Whatever you decide, we'll stick by you."

"You have to do what feels right."

"Maybe it isn't what I would choose, but I don't have the right to impose my beliefs on someone else."

"I don't know what I'd do, if I were in your shoes."

These are the things we say.

The words are rooted in kindness and empathy. A girl is too young for motherhood; a woman too old. The timing is wrong. The circumstances are bad. What right has anyone to judge the decisions of another?

People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. The world is full of glass houses. We live in them. Our children live in them, so do our friends, our neighbors.

And so we consistently identify with the girls and women who are pregnant. They are the ones we see in those houses. They are bits of ourselves and our daughters.

We seldom think about the unborn child. We don't even think words that humanize the child. We keep it clinical—the embryo, the fetus. This makes it easier. For it is easier, far easier, no matter how wrenching the decision, to terminate an unwanted pregnancy than to give birth. The scales are tipped in favor of abortion. Abortion is an instant solution to a huge problem, a way to make the slate clean.

Quick and supposedly easy.

But maybe too quick and too easy.

And about to become even quicker and easier.

Last weekend, Catholic churches around the country used the pulpit to preach against the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA), which would eliminate all the

## APPENDIX B

restrictions that are now on abortions. If FOCA is passed there will be no more waiting periods for women having abortions, no more parental notice requirements, no more apprising women of other options, and no time limit on when abortions can be done.

Theoretically, a woman could choose to abort in the ninth month.

This is a grave assault on human life.

The womb used to be a safe place for a child to grow. That's what the priest in my church said. His words made me remember how amniotic fluid is an insulator and a shock absorber and how when I fell down the library steps when I was eight months pregnant, I skinned my knees and tore my pants, but the baby remained unharmed.

"A woman was talking to me the other day about how much her baby son had grown in just eight months. Imagine how much he grew in the first eight months, I told her," the priest said.

Imagine—it's the thing we don't want to do. We don't want to put a face on the life a woman carries or give it arms and legs and a tiny body.

"Everyone has someone to speak for them," the priest continued. "Women, gays, minorities, persons with disabilities and handicaps, even animals. If we don't speak for the children, who will?"

This is an old argument, I know. And maybe it doesn't hold much weight for a fertilized ovum that has yet to implant itself in the uterus. But at some point, the mass of cells that is that fertilized ovum becomes a human being. When is the big question.

Pro-lifers insist that life begins at conception and the pro-choicers argue that life doesn't begin until birth. Every woman who has ever had a child knows that life begins long before birth. That's why they grieve when they have miscarriages; they know that a life has passed through them.

Convicted murderers on death row are entitled to dozens of appeals before they are executed. It is not an infringement on a woman's rights to require that she wait 24 hours before having a procedure that will take the life of a child; that she talk to someone about other alternatives; and that she be restricted to having an abortion in the early weeks of her pregnancy.

If the unborn could speak, they would certainly demand far more.

## APPENDIX C

[The following column appeared in the *Phoenix Arizona Republic* (Dec. 7, 1992) and is reprinted here with permission (© 1992 by *Phoenix Newspapers, Inc.*.)]

A person, no matter how small

*Karen McCowan*

It was one of those tongue-biting moments.

The interview was over, my notebook already shut when the abortion-rights activist added her conspiratorial aside.

"There's no way a 12-week fetus is a baby," she asserted, clearly assuming that a journalist would share her viewpoint.

I had many such moments when writing news stories on abortion. Now that I'm a columnist, I can finally stop biting my tongue and speak my mind.

"A baby" is exactly what each of my unborn children was to me, 12 weeks into pregnancy. I remember poring over books on fetal development. I was blown away by how early you can identify fingers and toes, eyes and heart.

So it's only a baby if you plan and want it? This sleight of semantics makes me nervous. As a journalist, not as an abortion opponent.

I hope my stance surprises some people because I went to agonizing lengths to write objectively on this subject. I think I came as close as anyone can. No thinking person can be truly neutral on abortion.

An unconventional road led me to my stand. It's not a matter of religious convictions: mine haven't changed since I moved from pro-choice to pro-life.

### Early unease

My own unease with abortion started 13 years ago, when I learned about fetal development during my first pregnancy. But it didn't crystalize until two years ago, when I wrote a story on Dr. Kenneth Edelin, Planned Parenthood's national chairman.

I tried to handle the story objectively by presenting it in Q&A fashion, letting Edelin respond to the toughest questions I could devise.

I relied on Planned Parenthood's biographical information for a short introductory paragraph, reporting that Edelin had been convicted of manslaughter for performing an abortion in 1973, but that the conviction was overturned on appeal.

An anti-abortion activist contacted me after my article appeared, suggesting that I hadn't told the whole story. She challenged me to research the case.

I did. Yellowed newspaper accounts of the case were sketchy—my profession has an uncharacteristic aversion to grisly detail where abortion is concerned. I had to go to old issues of *Science* for a complete account.

She was right. Edelin had not been convicted of manslaughter for performing an abortion. Abortions were legal in Boston in 1973. He was convicted for

## APPENDIX C

killing a five-to seven-month-old fetus *after* disconnecting its umbilical cord, by drowning it in amniotic fluid inside its mother's womb.

### **Ruled legal**

His conviction was overturned, even though the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court allowed that the fetus "may have been alive in the very narrow sense of some postnatal gasping of air." The justices found no "evil frame of mind" or "criminal purpose" in what Edelin did. It was legal.

What I read sickened me, but my pro-choice conditioning was still operative. This was a worst-case scenario, I told myself. Most abortions are performed in the first trimester, well before a baby would be capable of gasping for breath.

That night, I discussed the matter with my family, as I often do when wrestling with an issue. This meant explaining abortion to my then-10-year-old daughter. Her reaction, untainted by social conditioning, shamed me. She was, rightly, horrified.

But it was later, while reading a bedtime story to my youngest child, that my pro-choice stance quietly changed.

The book was *Horton Hears A Who*, by Dr. Seuss. It's the story of an elephant who heeds a cry for help from a creature so tiny that none of the other animals will even believe it exists. They label Horton a kook, but he stands his unpopular ground:

*I'll just have to save him.  
Because, after all,  
A person's a person, no matter how small.*

It might seem ironic that I was finally convinced by the writing of Theodor Seuss Geisel, who proudly considered himself a bleeding-heart liberal.

But I find it perfectly consistent. Caring for those whom society finds undesirable is what having a bleeding heart is all about.

And a person's a person, no matter how small.



*'Hi, honey, I'm Homer!'*

THE SPECTATOR 16 May 1992

## APPENDIX D

[The following editorial by "Caton" appeared in the *Piedras Negras, Mexico Zócalo* (Jan. 26, 1993) as an "Of Politics and Lesser Things" column; "WC" is William Clinton. Our translation by Rebecca Ryskind.]

### WC Will Pay For Each Vote By Killing a Child

*Caton*

No trivialities in today's column. What follows is a little fable: yes, and a meaningful one. All that's of interest in my little column this day is contained in the three words, which you will come to know, which express my opinion of the new president of the United States. You won't find anything beyond these in my column today. . . .

I begin with the fable . . . . One day four dogs were talking. One dog was Cuban; another was from Africa; the third was American and the last Mexican. Said the Mexican dog, "Sometimes at night I feel hungry, but when the family comes home, I simply bark and they give me dinner." The Cuban dog asked: "What is 'bark'?" The African dog asked: "What is dinner?" And then the American dog asked: "What is family?"

The fable, like all fables and those who write them, is simplistic and perhaps generalizes unjustly. Not all ants are workers and not all cicadas are lazy. There must be ants who are like me and cicadas who aren't. But . . . the moral serves me as a three word manifestation of the opinion I've formed of the president of the United States, William Clinton (WC), after his first day of his government. Here's the opinion, expressed in the most diplomatic term possible: "He's a calamity\*."

In effect, each vote he received in order to win the election over Bush, he's going to pay for by killing a child. No sooner did he rise to power than he paid his debt to the abortionists. He opened the doors on abortion in such a way that it is now more difficult in the United States to kill a cockroach than to take the life of a human person with his own individual and distinct existence—as a child in the womb of his mother.

What Clinton has now legalized without a single hesitation or limitation is the assassination of innocent human beings. Why did he do this? Because he represents a new generation of Americans born after the second World War, fruit of an arrogant and hedonistic society, whose values can be summarized as commodiousness, economic success and the deprecation of all which doesn't serve to satisfy their egotism or obscene well-being. How is it possible that the leader of the United States proclaims himself a champion of human rights and

---

\*It's nearly impossible to translate the word he uses: "caón." This is a superlative form of "caós," or "chaos." It's not strictly speaking a word, but it's typically Mexican to emphasize a word in this fashion. At any rate, to call someone a chaos in the Mexican slang is about the worst thing one could say—it's a person in total disarray, beneath respect. To use the superlative form (and to say that this is "diplomatic") is . . . not complimentary.

## APPENDIX D

doesn't respect the most elemental of these rights, which is the right to life? What kind of hypocritical society is it which cries and gets indignant over the accidental death of a dolphin and then applauds the legal and methodical assassination of a human creature? We can soon see what significance this attitude of Clinton's could have in relation to Mexico.

Lately, Harvard brethren, we've come to depend on the gringos for everything, to submit our destiny to theirs. The model of American life seems beyond all imagining; we hope to imitate it. For this reason we won't be long in hearing voices begging us to "modernize" as well, like the yankees: "If we want to be First World, we too must kill children, just like them." Well and rightly did that Catholic Church act—the Church which so often commits grave sins against "prudence"—in having energetically and without hesitation condemned the barbarous dispositions of the new president of the United States.

Let's prepare ourselves to see in the Clinton era a new nation in which many of the traditional values of the American people will be absent; among them concern for the family. . . "What is family?" he will ask—like the dog in the fable—that frivolous yuppie cloaked in power.



**THE SPECTATOR** 5 December 1992



## APPENDIX E

[The following editorial appeared in the Little Rock, Arkansas Democrat Gazette on March 11, 1993, and is reprinted here with permission (© 1993 by Little Rock Newspapers, Inc.).]

### Mod god: Abortion as a political icon

Why do the freedom-of-choicers rage? Because this session of the Legislature is being asked to pass a bill that would require a woman to wait 24 hours before having an abortion.

Outrage! Apostasy! Another vicious attack on women's rights!

How strange when you think about it, if anybody thinks about such things any more. Here are people who might be receptive to requiring a 24-hour or maybe a 30-day waiting period before allowing someone to buy a dangerous weapon, who surely would want to sleep on it before deciding to change jobs; who might think it only prudent to pause and get a second opinion before going ahead with any other kind of elective surgery on a healthy human being, and who would surely take at least a day before making a final decision on buying a house or a car or where to take a vacation . . . and these good, reasonable, ordinarily calm citizens are thrown into a political paroxysm because the Legislature might hold up an abortion for 24 hours.

Why is that? Why has abortion become the equivalent of a political sacrament among a broad band of American opinion? How did abortion become the litmus test of political correctness, the combined *sine qua non* and *summum bonum* of political progress? Why should an undivided loyalty to *Roe v. Wade* become the only specific qualification announced by the president of the United States for the next appointment to the Supreme Court?

Of the estimated 1,600,000 abortions a year in this country, or 30 million since *Roe v. Wade*, surely some of them—just one of them?—could have waited 24 hours. Is there not any reason for any abortion anywhere that would be unacceptable to those who look on the right to an abortion as the one absolute constitutional principle in the American system? We can think of some test cases:

What about the young matron who just got a wardrobe of new clothes and really doesn't want to spend the season pregnant and unable to wear any of those super new gowns, and so opts to Have It Done?

Then there's the couple who really want a boy and, thanks to recent medical and legal advances, can discover the sex of their next child while it's still in embryo, and keep aborting till they get one of the desired sex. Ain't science grand? And in this case, what a boon for women's rights!

Or what about the young lady who might otherwise have to miss a whole semester of college?

Or the family that would really rather have a new car?

Surely there are some cases in which abortion is so, uh, gratuitous a procedure—let's not be caught using outdated words like sin or crime—that

## APPENDIX E

the state, which is all of us, should be able to say in clear, unmistakable terms: No. Or if we lack the courage, perhaps whisper a pusillanimous: Wait a day before you do this thing.

To judge by their sheer number in this country, abortions have become but another means of birth control, and one of the more popular ones at that. Is that some great testament to liberty, or only one more symptom of rampant license?

The test of a civilized society, it seems to us, is how it treats the most vulnerable—the old and sick, the young and ignorant, the poor and disabled, the homeless and despised, the dispossessed and imprisoned. The least among us. Once upon a time there would have been no hesitation to include in such a category life in the womb. Now there is a “serious” question about whether it is human life at all. (What else could it be—an aardvark?) Once there was a folk metaphor for security—“as safe as a child in its mother’s womb.” At the rate of 1.6 million abortions a year in America circa 1993, surely few would make any such assumption now.

Abortion is wrong.

If abortion is not wrong, then nothing is.

Most people understand as much, which is why many of us tend to duck into evasions and shift from foot to foot when trying to rationalize it, and start using slippery words, or constructions like “While I’m personally opposed to it . . .” before defending it.

This is not to say there are no greater wrongs that may arguably justify an abortion. For example, the need to save a mother’s life, or the barbarity of forcing a woman who cannot bear even the thought of it to bear the child who may be the result of rape or incest . . . but such surely are the horrific exceptions, and not the rule among the millions and millions of abortions that have taken place in this country since *Roe v. Wade*, the great Magna Carta of American abortion.

Yet to say that abortion should be limited by law, even for 24 hours, is to draw the wrath of its advocates, who often deny that they are advocates at all. They are not pro-abortion, they explain, but prefer to be thought of as pro-choice—as if any choice other than abortion required defending. The need of that kind of verbal disguise should tell all of us something about what it is they are advocating.

Even as he signed proclamation after proclamation bound to increase the number of abortions in this country, our new president explained that he wished for a society in which abortions were rare. One was reminded of those antebellum defenders of slavery who sighed deeply and said they did not really approve of The Peculiar Institution (even then great wrongs required elevated euphemisms) in principle but . . . but they were willing to see it expand without limit or hindrance. The inherent contradiction in their position escaped them. They tended to shake their heads sadly over the consequences of the very policies they advocated, and reserve their opposition for those who would have

## THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

restricted slavery, the kind of meddlers and agitators who called a wrong a wrong and fought it.

Someone who is really opposed to something, one would innocently think, would oppose it. But that may seem unspeakably logical as the country tries not to look too directly at just what is being tolerated here, and more than tolerated—promoted.

Our new governor opines that Arkansas doesn't need any new legislation on abortion, not at this session of the Legislature. Yes, let's not raise The Question, or encourage the sort of abolitionists who are always making trouble. Maybe if we ignore it long enough, abortion will go away. Like the slavery question?

During the legislative hearings, a young lady who deeply regretted having had an abortion blamed her sorrow and pain on the abortion industry and its pressures. That is scarcely fair in the midst of a whole society that seems to have covered itself with indifference, and is capable of viewing even a brief waiting period before an abortion as an intolerable bother.

## APPENDIX F

*[The following column appeared in the New York Post (Feb. 9, 1993) and is reprinted here with permission (©1993 by Associated Features).]*

### **Quick, which party has an abortion litmus test?**

*Mark Shields*

For proclaiming "I will not allow abortion to be a litmus test for membership in this party," Haley Barbour of Mississippi, the newly elected Republican national chairman, has won virtually uncritical praise from the national press.

The St. Louis meeting of the Republican National Committee that elected Haley Barbour chairman "clearly signaled," according to the justifiably esteemed dean of political reporters, David Broder, "the beginning of the end for abortion as a litmus test for Republicanism."

If Broder is right and Barbour keeps his word, both of which seem to be good bets, then one's position on abortion will be a litmus test in only one of our two major political parties: the Democrats.

At last August's GOP convention in Houston, delegates heard from pro-choice Gov. Bill Weld of Massachusetts, pro-choice Senate Republican Whip Alan Simpson of Wyoming, and pro-choice Labor Secretary Lynn; Lynn nominated pro-life President George Bush.

One month earlier in Madison Square Garden, the convention that nominated pro-choice Bill Clinton was spared any such diversity of opinion from the podium on the abortion issue. Among Democrats in New York in July, orthodoxy was imposed; dissent was not tolerated.

Clinton's managers took seriously the threat of militant pro-choicers to wreck an orderly convention if pro-life Bob Casey, the two-term Democratic governor of Pennsylvania, was allowed anywhere near a microphone. Instead, the Democratic convention heard from Kathy Taylor, a Pennsylvania Republican who had campaigned and worked against Casey and the entire Democratic ticket but who (did somebody say something about a "litmus test"?) was reliably pro-choice.

Just last week, when President Clinton signed the family leave bill providing 12 weeks of unpaid leave to employees who become parents (legislation that I, along with a large majority of Americans, enthusiastically support), few voices could be heard asking how many young women will now be able to be happily off any payroll for three months.

All of which reminds us of the first rule of press analysis: Any political figure who changes his or her position on a controversial issue and moves instead toward the orthodox-establishment position on that same issue is judged by most of the press "to have grown." However, when that same politician reverses the process and moves from the orthodox-establishment position to the unenlightened-unwashed side of a thorny question, then that craven politician

## THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

has bowed to pressure, broken his word and, quite possibly, sold out.

Nearly everybody in the political press is personally and philosophically pro-choice. Most Washington journalists don't sip wine, drink beer, or nibble Velveeta with people who are pro-life.

It's not a conspiracy. It's simply a fact that most American political journalists can be classified as upscale—economically, educationally and socially. And most such upscale American people are pro-choice.

Thus you end up with a neat, little formulation from those of us in the press: Unquestioning and unqualified support for abortion is not a litmus test but rather a “principle.” Opposition to abortion in politics, however, can very often be a pernicious “litmus test” which can only be safely passed, to the applause of the press bus, by moving from pro-life to pro-choice.

## APPENDIX G

[The following column appeared in the Washington Times (Feb. 16, 1993) and is reprinted here by permission of Thomas Sowell and Creators Syndicate.]

### **Courting the anointed throng**

*Thomas Sowell*

One of the scariest talks I have ever heard was given by a very sober and savvy man, Judge Laurence H. Silberman of U.S. Circuit of Appeals in Washington. Judge Silberman's thesis was that his fellow judges seemed to him to be influenced by how their decisions would be perceived by the media and the intelligentsia.

Not long afterward, a Supreme Court decision came down in which the justices themselves expressed concern about how their handling of the case would be seen by "the thoughtful part of the nation."

Recently, Justice Anthony Kennedy gave a speech to the American Bar Association that was painfully embarrassing to watch, as he obviously tried to play up to them with current buzzwords. Just a few days ago, a friend of Justice David Souter was quoted as saying that Justice Souter sees his role as being "a healer of divisions in the country."

You might think that being a justice of the Supreme Court would be a full-time job and a heavy enough responsibility that those on the court would not have the time or the energy left to be looking out for their image or playing philosopher kings.

When millions of people, billions of dollars, and the future of freedom in the United States are affected by judicial decisions, why should federal judges be playing to the peanut gallery? With lifetime tenure and no one able to tinker with their paychecks, how much courage does it take for federal judges to uphold the law?

When men are sent into combat to put their young lives on the line for their country, is it too much to expect comfortable and insulated judges to carry out their duties without regard to their image or other personal vanities?

The media seem to be aware of their ability to influence some judges by the way they cover them. The New York *Times* lavished all sorts of praise on Justices Kennedy, Souter, and O'Connor in a long puff piece just before last year's abortion decision, in which those justices were the crucial swing votes that kept *Roe v. Wade* from being openly reversed. Among other things, does this suggest that the impending decision was leaked?

Despite the bitter controversies that still rage over abortion, 20 years after *Roe v. Wade*, that decision was not just about abortion. More fundamentally, it was about the role of law itself.

Nothing written in the Constitution provided any basis for *Roe v. Wade*. The issue is not whether you are for or against abortion. The issue is whether

judges should turn their courtrooms into places where the political agendas of the elite are enacted into law, when those agendas cannot be enacted into law by elected officials.

One of the favorite excuses for judicial policymaking is that courts were “forced” to act because legislatures “failed” to act. When the public does not want something done, it is not a failure when the legislature refuses to do it. That is called democracy.

When courts take over the job of imposing rejected elite doctrines on the masses—when it plays to the gallery of “the thoughtful part of the Nation”—then we have something very ugly, something that comes very close to a repeal of the American Revolution, on the installment plan.

Admittedly, those who wish to be honest judges and to uphold the law face a cruel dilemma. Decades of free-wheeling policymaking by the likes of Justices Harry Blackmun and William J. Brennan have left the legal landscape strewn with the wreckage of Supreme Court precedents without any genuine basis in the Constitution.

Both the Constitution and the precedents are things that a judge with honor and integrity would wish to uphold. However, the reckless judicial activism of the recent past has made that impossible.

When a choice must be made between upholding the Constitution and upholding these recent precedents, it cannot be easy. But what are Supreme Court justices there for, if not to make the tough calls?

What the much-celebrated “centrists” on the Supreme Court—Justices Anthony Kennedy, David Souter and Sandra Day O’Connor—try to do is to work out some politic compromise, and then paper it over with pious rhetoric. The problem with that is not with the merits or demerits of their particular compromises, but that there is no principle left standing at the end of it all.

With no principle, there is no law. Anyone with power can issue orders, but arbitrary orders are not law, even when those orders come from judges. We may as well remove the words carved in stone over the entrance to the Supreme Court: “Equal Justice under Law.”

“Take Your Chances with Evolving Standards” might be a more accurate motto today. While we are trying to explain to the Russians that a framework of known laws is essential for a free market and a free society, we have a Supreme Court that beclouds all sorts of issues with nebulous and inconsistent rulings—and even exalts this lack of principle into a principle in itself, “evolving standards.”

Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, and Chief Justice William Rehnquist, have been more concerned about upholding the law as written, including both statutes and the Constitution, and less preoccupied with upholding all precedents at all cost. Mercifully, they have spared us any hand-wringing about what “the thoughtful part of the Nation” might say.

What Justices Kennedy, Souter and O’Connor have in common is that they all came on the court tagged as “conservatives,” supposedly meaning that they

## APPENDIX G

believed in carrying out the written law. But at crucial junctures, they have wavered and compromised with legal principles, thereby letting stand some liberal social policies that have no basis in the written law. For that, they have been lionized in the media.

Cynics say every man has his price, but you can at least have a higher price than that. Moreover, current media reactions are not the verdict of history.



## APPENDIX H

*[The following syndicated column was issued March 11, 1993, and is reprinted here with the author's permission (©1993, Universal Press Syndicate).]*

### Terminating An Abortionist

*Joseph Sobran*

WASHINGTON—"The vilest abortionist," wrote George Bernard Shaw, "is he who attempts to mold a child's character."

When Shaw wrote that, he could count on people understanding that the abortionist is among the vilest of human characters. This was not so much his point as his premise.

When an abortionist named David Gunn was murdered Wednesday in Pensacola, Fla., one word was conspicuous by its absence in every news account I saw or read: "abortionist." Gunn was called a "doctor," a "physician," and even an "abortion provider," but the media carefully avoided the obvious word, the word that described his work best.

That's odd. Other medical practitioners—even the humble urologist—like to be known for their specialties. Only the abortionist is an exception.

And the media oblige him by swathing his trade in euphemism. He doesn't kill, he "terminates." What he kills is not a child, but a "fetus." He's even made to sound downright paternal by being called a "provider"—at which point one suspects a kind of gallows-humor governing the nomenclature.

Isn't it a little peculiar to call an abortionist a "doctor"? The word used to mean a healer who took the Hippocratic oath, which is among other things, a pledge never to perform abortions.

Why the hypocrisy? In classical times, not only abortion but infanticide too was common. And nobody shrank from calling these practices "killing." Most people saw nothing wrong with them. The Roman paterfamilias had the right to kill any of his children, including daughters-in-law.

But we post-Christian men are uncomfortable with such open brutality. We regard it as wrong to kill anything human. So we have to go through semantic contortions to justify abortion.

We are comically squeamish about the word "kill." We speak of killing germs or cockroaches, but we don't want to admit that dismembering a growing, moving human fetus is killing. So we find circumlocutions, and pretend we don't know when life begins. (This would have come as a surprise to my high school biology teacher; he taught us that human life began right at conception, just like frog life, and he'd have snorted at the idea that the matter had to be referred to theologians.)

Gunn was the first abortionist to be killed in America during 20 years of anti-abortion demonstrations. Never mind that abortionists during that time have killed about 30 million fetuses. This murder is a great propaganda windfall for

## APPENDIX H

the pro-abortion forces, among whom we must include the major news media, who so assiduously tint the news to serve the cause. Most of the networks led off the evening news with Gunn's killing, making it sound like the peak of a crime wave.

The man who shot him was not even a member of any anti-abortion organization. The others at the demonstration didn't know he had homicide on his mind: why should they have suspected it, when they were there precisely to protest killing?

Nevertheless, Peter Jennings and his colleagues made the most of it, leading off the evening news and filling the front pages with the murder of the poor "doctor." The moral was supplied by Kate Michelman of the National Abortion Rights Action League, who decried "anti-choice terrorism."

Terrorism? Why not just call it murder? The killer's intent was to kill, not to terrify. Mrs. Michelman may sense that one murder hardly warrants the hysteria she wants to stir up. Or she may be shying away, on a sound instinct, from defining the issue as killing.

Put in those terms, after all, the score is now about 30 million to 1. By all means punish the killer, but there is no point in weeping for the abortionist. He was a killer, too.

The chief difference between him and his own murderer is that he got paid for taking innocent lives. And there's also a semantic difference: The news media aren't calling his murderer either a "provider" or a "terminator."

## APPENDIX I

*[The following column appeared in the Washington Times (March 3, 1993) and is reprinted here with the permission of Tribune Media Services.]*

### The Smiling Terminator

*Patrick J. Buchanan*

Jack Kevorkian, the pathologist who made himself famous for assisting in 15 suicides, mostly of depressed women, may have gotten carried away with enthusiasm for his work.

A right-to-life activist discovered in a garbage bag, outside the scene of several of Dr. K's suicides, his signed "Final Action" report on the death of No. 13, Hugh Gale.

Seventy-year-old Mr. Gale, suffering from emphysema and heart disease, volunteered to be gassed on Feb. 15. According to the Final Action, however, 45 seconds after Mr. Gale pulled the death mask over his face and started the flow of lethal carbon monoxide, he "became flushed, agitated, breathing deeply saying, 'Take it off.'"

Dr. Kevorkian complied. Twenty minutes later, Mr. Gale asked that the mask be put back on. "He again flushed, became agitated . . . and said, 'Take it off,' once again." This time, the mask was left on.

A police raid on Dr. Kevorkian's apartment found an updated Final Action with Mr. Gale's second "Take it off" whited out. With a county prosecutor mulling charges, and Michigan enacting a law making it a felony to assist suicide, Dr. Death's run may be over.

Dr. Kevorkian himself appears more than a bit of a nut case. As far back as the 1950s, writes Rita Marker of the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, Dr. Kevorkian had a grand plan to anesthetize death row inmates, to harvest their body parts while they were still alive.

His life has been spent around corpses. For two decades, he traveled California, living out of the same Volkswagen van where his first "patient" would kill herself. "During a stint at Beverly Hills Medical Center," writes a Los Angeles Times reporter, he was known for his "death rounds. . . . He would rush to the bedsides of dying patients throughout the hospital to photograph their eyes to pinpoint the exact moment of death." Returning to Michigan, he advertised as a "DOCTOR-CONSULTANT—for the terminally ill who wish to die."

While Dr. Kevorkian's first victim was a woman in the early stages of Alzheimer's, another was a mental patient who complained of horrible pelvic pains, though an autopsy showed no sign of active disease.

"Now, the stage is set for fun!" Dr. Kevorkian whooped, on hearing Michigan had passed a law outlawing assisted suicide. In a taped discussion of one double suicide, Dr. Kevorkian is heard reassuring the grieving families, "They'll make the 5 o'clock news."

## APPENDIX I

Dr. Kevorkian is not a doctor; he is not a friend, counselor or healer of the sick. He has no expertise in treating cancer, heart disease, emphysema, Alzheimer's or multiple sclerosis, the real maladies of his "patients."

Smiling Jack is a terminator, a serial mercy killer of the suicidally depressed, a disgrace to medicine who belongs in a padded cell or a prison dorm with the convicted killers whose vital organs this defrocked quack was once so anxious to collect.

"You pass any law against euthanasia or assisted suicide, and I will disobey it," says Dr. Death.

Appalled at his scofflaw attitude and tinkertoy death engines, Michigan recoiled. But Dr. K has put issues on the table that are not going away. "You have brought to the world's attention the need to give this topic paramount concern," said a judge in his first trial.

The Netherlands agrees. Doctors who follow set procedure to assist the terminally ill to end their lives will no longer be prosecuted. One in every 50 deaths in the Netherlands is a mercy killing. Reportedly, doctors are now taking it upon themselves to accelerate the departure of the terminally ill and elderly who are unwilling to go.

Outside Dr. Kevorkian's apartment this weekend, demonstrators carried signs saying, "Hit the Road, Jack" and "Send Jack to Jail." Others held signs reading, "Dr. K is OK," "Death with Dignity" and "Gas Engler"—John Engler, the Republican governor who signed the Michigan law outlawing assisted suicide.

The sign-carriers represent two sides of this ongoing debate in the West: The Sanctity of Life vs. The Quality of Life.

Dr. Kevorkian and his Dutch allies have entered a post-Christian era that resembles the pre-Christian pagan era, when not all life was worth living, and suicide was an honorable way out. Their logic is inherent in *Roe vs. Wade*: If a woman and her doctor can end the life of an unborn child, who are these "religious fanatics" to tell her she cannot end a life too painful to live? Whose life is it anyway?

In the Old and New Testament, Augustine and Aquinas, natural law and Judeo-Christian tradition, God is the Author of life; He has written the rules of human conduct in His words, His Books, and on the human heart; no man is permitted to play God, and take innocent life.

But, in the New Age, that is the old dogma of a dead creed. God does not exist. If he does, He is not party to the debate. Each of us, individually, determines his own moral code; and we will decide, democratically, of course, when life begins, and when it should end.

Because these conflicting beliefs are deeply held, compromise is impossible; one or the other will prevail in law, and determine the character of the people and nation we shall become.

Any man or woman who has chosen Jack Kevorkian as death-bed doctor is suffering in soul as well as body, not only from disease but from despair.

THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

But despair is curable, and hope is the antidote, available, at no cost. We need not only lock up Jack, but rescue his "patients," and tell them there is a better way out, more worthy of the children of a loving God, and a better world, on the other side.



*'For our entertainment tonight there's a choice. On one channel there's cardiovascular diseases plus fatty degeneration. On the other there's urban decay, child abuse, also battered women. . .'*

THE SPECTATOR 13 June 1992

## APPENDIX J

*[The following column appeared in the Baltimore Sun (Feb. 18, 1993) and is reprinted here with the author's permission.]*

### Just Glad to Be here

*Stan Sinberg*

*Mill Valley, California.*

On the 20th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, which gave women a constitutional right to abortion, President Clinton reversed several Bush positions, making it easier for women to get them.

Great. Super. It's about time.

Except that recently something happened that put me through some changes on the subject.

I was sitting at a wedding, next to my mother, a woman who can go years without talking about her past, when I expressed surprise that a cousin of mine, who'd been married just a year, already had a baby boy. An innocent comment. Made without forethought. Something to say to pass the time. But not to my mother. For some reason, this was a clarion call to tell me the unknown story of my birth.

"I wouldn't talk," my mother said. "You were a little early too, you know."

As in "illegitimate" early.

All right, this part I knew. But only because when I was 23, I made plans to throw my parents a surprise 25th wedding anniversary party, and I was halfway through the guest list when I called my aunt, and she told me it was really the 24th anniversary. Which meant that my parents "had" to get married.

Now some 17 years after I hastily canceled the party, my mother decided to tell me herself.

She could've stopped there, of course, and that would've served me nicely for another 17 years, thank you. But no-o-oo.

She sipped a spoonful of cream of carrot soup, and added, "I tried to have an abortion."

The entire banquet could hear the clunk of my soup spoon.

"WHAT?"

"Your father said he would ask around if anyone did them."

My mother was saying this as casually as if she had just bought a new pair of shoes.

I was agog. "So—ah—what—what happened?" I sputtered.

My mother shook her head. "I didn't have one."

"Mom, I KNOW you didn't have one. But why?"

"Your father said he couldn't find anyone. But I don't think he really tried."

My mother went on to say that she wanted the abortion because she didn't want to wear a wedding gown being pregnant.

THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW

Oh, well as long as there was a good reason.

“So you can thank your father you’re here today. Now don’t ask me any more questions.”

I was stunned. Me—an unwanted love child! It was a little hard to go back to making small talk about the bride’s wedding gown.

Not only that but I owed my existence to repressive social legislation.

The ironies kicked in. Here I am, a pro-choice supporter, alive because my mother was deprived of hers.

And the parallels were striking. A few years ago, when I was about my father’s age in this story, my girl friend also chose to have an abortion, and I favored having the child. And if we had, we also would’ve “had” to get married.

The difference between then and now is that my girl friend didn’t have to depend on me wandering through pool halls to find someone who could perform an abortion.

Anyway, the metaphysical implications are mind-boggling: Am I even entitled to have an opinion on this subject any more? I mean, if my pro-choice position had been law in my mother’s day, I wouldn’t be around today to advocate it.

Don’t misunderstand: I’m glad President Clinton reversed President Bush’s policy on abortion counseling and fetal-tissue research, *etc.*

It’s just that it’s pretty hard to not come out sounding like a hypocrite when the most ringing endorsement you can honestly muster is: “Sure, I’m pro-choice. Now.”

## APPENDIX K

*[The following article first appeared in Commonweal magazine (March 26, 1993) and is reprinted here with permission (© 1993 by Commonweal Foundation). Mr. Maier is the editor of the National Catholic Register.]*

### **Things Danny Taught Me (A Father's Story)**

*Francis X. Maier*

He stood there, dignified, in his polyester fast-food uniform, earnestly waiting for the bus and oblivious to the river of traffic around him, to the forced smiles and brief, uneasy glances from passersby.

In a world of multiple urgencies and lives racing at 50 mghz, he had one focus only—in this case, the Laurel Canyon bus to McDonald's. He was alone, and he needed to concentrate. He had a job. That meant a schedule and responsibilities.

Stopped at the light, I watched him through my windshield. He was eighteen or so, short black hair slightly askew, with the thick body and unfinished facial features so common to Down syndrome. Three years ago, I would have looked away, just as the other people nearby on the street were doing now.

But instead I just watched. I find that I can't look away anymore, not from Down people, not since Danny.

My wife and I were both forty-one when she became pregnant. It was a surprise. We had been out of the baby business for nine years. Suann was teaching full time and going to grad school. We had three older kids. I had my hands full with my own job. And yet the news was like a wonderful fresh wind. Sure it was inconvenient, and yes, the future would get a drastic overhaul. But we were also excited. After all, we were veterans, more experienced and relaxed, and more financially stable. Secretly too, even more than my wife, I just wasn't ready to let the idea of babies go. All those mistakes with the first three—well, this time, we'd get it right.

We knew the risks. We got the standard, "so-you-can't-sue-me-later" briefing from the obstetrician on birth defects in older women, but both of us had been active on the abortion issue for more than a decade. It was never an option. Even after the first, slight hint of trouble turned up in a blood test, we declined an amniocentesis. What was the point? The results would be unreliable, and the test itself could hurt the baby. Better to leave it in God's hands; he'd handle it; which, in his own way, he did.

I remember the exact moment when I knew, with my heart anyway, that things had gone south. We were in the ob-gyn's office, and on the ultrasound screen, as the baby swam serenely in the womb, the doctor measured the fetus's arm once, then again, and then a third and fourth time. Suann, smiling, devoured the baby with her eyes. But I knew, and so did the doctor. There's a statistical relationship between bone-structure abnormalities, particularly in the upper arm,



and Down syndrome; not enough to be conclusive, but enough to spark shallow words of reassurance and advice for a second opinion.

Two weeks later, Danny was born by emergency C-section, blue, limp, underweight, lungs filled with fluid. Three things happened in rapid succession: They suctioned the liquid from his lungs; I held him as my wife baptized him; and they took him away to intensive care.

It's then, with the baby out of your arms and the big emptiness just beginning, that your heart is most like a vacuum, and into the space comes a rush of feelings that are hot and contradictory, that make you ashamed and exalted at the same time: anger at God; fear about the future; helplessness and failure without a bottom; but also an absolute clarity that you can handle this; an urgency to protect the baby and his mother, to somehow make the cup pass by cutting a deal with God; or hey, maybe there's been a mistake; and even, most humiliating of all, a wheedling pride that whispers: Maybe I can use this.

You discover a lot about yourself. I assumed, with the callousness writers seem to perfect, that this "Danny thing" would be the source of so much good material. Well, he is; but not remotely in the way I expected. For the two years since his birth, every time I've sat down to write about him, an arctic silence has settled into my head. Danny will not be used. He is too intimate, too demanding, too funny, too eager to play; he does not fit conveniently into a prefabricated holding pen for the mentally handicapped. And I am too ignorant and not far enough along the road to offer any advice, other than to recount the experience of my own family.

I know that this is doable. It hasn't been easy, but it hasn't been a cross either. You stop thinking like that. Danny's just here, he's part of our normal routine. You adjust. Our marriage has the same love and strengths, and also the same faultlines, it always had. So does the family. You learn to stop melodramatizing; you get tired of your own bathos.

I also know that we've been given a gift. A friend, Chicago novelist Patrick Creevy (*Lake Shore Drive*), the brother of one Down person and father of a Down daughter, put it this way: "The best thing [about a mentally handicapped child] is having a son or a daughter in whom you're never disappointed; you're absolutely out of the business of disappointment. . . . So many of the expectations that in parents turn tragic, we're safe from. And in its place comes this wonderful, unconditional love, an unburdening from the hunger for perfection."

It's a kind of redemption. You enter a community—parents of sick and handicapped children—filled with far harder stories than Down syndrome; where quiet, heroic love is an ordinary affair, and you learn from it. Danny's brothers and sister are a part of that now; they know what the imperfect look and think and feel like. They aren't afraid.

I also know, as my novelist friend says, that a "supposed normality which begins to eliminate 'otherness' in the name of its own self-image" is profoundly

## APPENDIX K

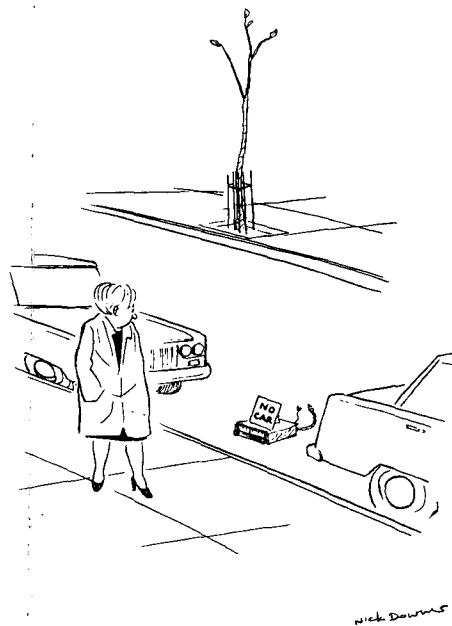
evil, and that “[words like pro-choice,] while they’re supposed to embody liberalism, are really the worst and most terrifying kind of conservatism.”

Down syndrome children are becoming extinct. Most are now aborted before they can be born.

Ninety percent of Down children are only mildly to moderately retarded. And while they are prone to a wide variety of physical ailments, nearly all are treatable. In fact, most Down children, with love and care, can live happy, productive, surprisingly independent lives.

So whenever I pass that young Down man in his McDonald’s uniform, I look his way. I’ll tell you why. There is a person there; someone with courage. He has ventured into a world that doesn’t see him, and in his own way, he is succeeding in it.

I look at him, I watch him, I pray for the eyes to really see him—for my own sake. The problem, I have learned from Danny, is not with his humanity, but with mine.



THE SPECTATOR 20 February 1993

## NOTICE:

**Subscriptions:** *the Human Life Review* accepts regular subscriptions at the rate of \$20 for a full year (four issues). Canadian and all other foreign subscribers please add \$5 (total: \$25 U.S. currency). Please address all subscription orders to the address below and enclose payment with order. You may enter gift subscriptions for friends, libraries, or schools at the same rates.

**Additional Copies:** this issue—No. 2, Volume XIX—is available while the supply lasts at \$5 per copy; 10 copies or more \$3 each. A limited number of back issues from 1991 to the present are also available at the same prices. We will pay all postage and handling.

**Bound Volumes:** XVIII (1992) will be available soon. XVII (1991) is still available at \$50 the copy, while our supply lasts. Send your order to the address below.

**Earlier Volumes:** while several volumes are now in very short supply, we can still offer a complete set of volumes for the first 16 years (1975-1990) of this review for \$700 the set. The volumes are indexed, and bound in permanent library-style hardcovers, complete with gold lettering, etc. (they will make handsome additions to your personal library). Individual volumes are available while our supply lasts, at \$50 the volume. Please send payment with order; we pay all postage and handling.

*The Human Life Review* is available in microform, CD-ROM, and electronic transmission to on-line terminals from University Microfilms Inc. (300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106).

*Address all orders to:*

**The Human Life Foundation, Inc.  
150 East 35th Street  
New York, New York 10016**

