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ABOUT THIS ISSUE . . .

. . . Francis Canavan, SJ, a longtime friend and contributor to the *Human Life Review*, would have been 100 years old on October 27—the day after our Great Defender of Life Dinner honoring Carly Fiorina. The Winter 2018 edition will include speeches and photographs from what was a delightful and inspiring evening; those who are interested can view a video of the speaking program on our website at www.humanlifereview.com. But I want to mention here Dawn Eden Goldstein's heartfelt introduction of *Fun Is Not Enough*, an anthology of Father Canavan's commentaries for the newsletter *catholic eye*, which she edited and graciously made available as a gift for dinner guests. The book, a testament to the special friendship the two enjoyed, can be ordered—print or digital format—through our website, and, thanks to the generosity of Ms. Eden Goldstein and Sebastian Mahfood of En Route Books and Media, all proceeds from its sale will benefit the Human Life Foundation. We reprint here a column from the collection (*Appendix H*, page 95).

There are many others to thank for material that appears in this issue, beginning with our friends at *First Things*, who gave us permission to reprint Mark Regnerus's "The Death of Eros" (page 45) and Wesley J. Smith's "Euthanasia for Alzheimer's Patients?" (*Appendix C*, page 84). Prof. Regnerus's new book, *Cheap Sex: The Transformation of Men, Marriage, and Monogamy*, has just been published by Oxford University Press. Mr. Smith, a regular contributor to the *Review*, is the author most recently of *Culture of Death: The Age of Do Harm Medicine* (Encounter Publishing, 2016).

Two appendices in this issue originally appeared in Public Discourse, the online journal of the Witherspoon Institute: Richard Doerflinger's analysis of a recent New York State Court of Appeals ruling against assisted suicide (page 79) and Elizabeth Kirk's report on an ACLU lawsuit seeking to chase faith-based organizations out of foster care and adoption services (page 92). Many thanks to Public Discourse's editor, Ryan T. Anderson, for allowing us to share these with our readers. Mr. Anderson's latest book (with John Corvino and Sherif Girgis) is *Debating Religious Liberty and Discrimination* (Oxford, 2017).

Reaching abroad, we'd also like to thank the Irish *Catholic Herald* for permitting us to reprint David Quinn's "Who's Funding the Abortion Lobby?" (*Appendix F*, page 89). Mr. Quinn has a new book out: *How We Killed God: And Other Tales of Modern Ireland* (Columba Press, 2017). David Albert Jones, who heads up the Anscombe Bioethics Centre in Oxford (*Appendix E*, page 87) has a new book out, *Approaching the End: A Theological Exploration of Death and Dying* (Oxford Studies in Theological Ethics, 2017), which we hope to review in a future issue.

And thanks, as always, to the inimitable Nick Downes, whose cartoons subdue dark subjects in these pages with humor.

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INTRODUCTION

“We are a divided nation indeed—more divided, it would appear, than in living memory,” observes Senior Editor William Murchison in an article that provocatively opens with Dallas’s contentious tug-of-war over “a truly distinguished equestrian statue of Robert E. Lee” and then segues to abortion, Democratic dogmatism, and Hillary Clinton’s shamelessly self-serving account of the 2016 presidential campaign, *What Happened*.

What ties those topics together, Murchison argues with his trademark ingenuity, is that all are instances of how “the ideological left, its adrenalin kicking in, its brains fuzzed up, is currently on a tear.” Despite the past year’s apocalyptic political rhetoric punctuated by demonstrations descending into riots, he diagnoses our current climate as “not immediately fatal to reasoned discussion of abortion . . . but more and more dicey, more and more dangerous, from a free speech standpoint, as absolutism takes hold in the media and academia.”

Next, Senior Editor Mary Meehan ponders “What Would It Take to Make the Democrats Pro-Life?” Reflecting on how to better introduce true “choice” into the Democratic Party, she argues that “The pro-life movement has been far too dependent on the Republican Party since the Reagan era. While this dependence has produced substantial gains in times of Republican dominance, it has produced disaster when the Democrats have retaken both the White House and Congress.”

Meehan reaches back to Long Island Democrat Ellen McCormack’s 1976 pro-life campaign for the presidential nomination to find lessons for today. Although McCormack never came near toppling the frontrunners, her campaign publicized the issue and provided invaluable experience for up and coming politicians. She urges activists from both parties to consider running for office, since the pro-life cause cannot be won in the long run without bipartisan support.

Next we bring you two articles drawing on feminist and female-focused approaches to the abortion debate. First, Feminists for Life President Serrin M. Foster persuasively makes “The Feminist Case *Against* Abortion,” laying out the compelling history of feminist opposition to abortion from the early days of the suffragettes all the way to Alice Paul, the originator of the Equal Rights Amendment. Though this rising generation of pro-life feminists currently constitutes a small minority, Foster testifies to how they are actively making their case and supporting women in crisis pregnancies on college campuses and in local communities. Foster affirms,

we stand in solidarity with women coerced into abortion because *they felt they had no choice* We stand in solidarity with women who have been betrayed by those they count on the most, with women who have underestimated their strength . . . We mourn with men who weren’t given a choice or who contributed to an abortion that they now regret.

Imagine the impact of Democratic party candidates who were feminist *and* pro-life!

Self-described pro-choice feminist Punam Kumar Gill stumbled upon the scientific evidence that abortion is harmful to women's physical and mental health and future fertility and produced her controversial documentary *Hush* to spread the word. (A review of this documentary appeared in our Fall 2016 issue.) Contributor Raymond Adamek tells readers what he learned, including the film's citing of "108 studies worldwide regarding the possible link of induced abortion to an increased incidence of breast cancer," with a large majority finding such a link. Despite such findings, the official reaction of much of the "health" community is to ignore or explain away the evidence.

Gill encountered the same dismissive response for 139 studies linking abortion and risk of premature and low-weight births. *Hush* also cites the evidence for higher incidence of cervical incompetence in pregnancies following surgical abortion. And of course there is the highly contested link between abortion and depression. Adamek encourages proliferators to seek out *Hush*; after all, "If abortion 'is a woman's decision,' it ought to be an informed decision."

For decades, society (including most of the "experts") has also ignored the mounting and clear-cut evidence of the harm caused by divorce. In late friend of the *Review* and contributor John Muggeridge's 1994 article on this topic, reprinted here, he deftly interweaves personal observation with the results of sociologist Judith Wasserstein's 18-year study of children of divorce. His (and her) conclusion? "The truth is that the victims of family breakup receive wounds which time does not heal."

Though Wasserstein expected to find short-term damage that resolved over time, she discovered deep and persistent harmful effects among a cohort of in other respects privileged white middle-class children. In Muggeridge's words, "Divorce is more devastating than bereavement. At least death puts an end to uncertainty. Not so divorce. Unlike departed ones, absentee parents telephone, visit, issue invitations to their weddings and, most heart-wrenchingly of all, announce that they are re-divorcing."

Children normally come into being through sexual intercourse, but according to a thought-provoking article by sociologist Mark Regnerus, less and less of that is going on in both married and unmarried households. Regnerus identifies several possible explanations for "the demise of eros," including the decline of marriage, reduced libido (a common side effect of the antidepressant medications that one in eight adult Americans are currently taking), and use of social media.

In addition, Regnerus notes that "the benefits of marriage receded as women's earning power rose relative to that of men . . . Women had less reason to marry, and they had less attractive mates should they nonetheless decide to." Finally, he dares to present evidence that "Differences between men's and women's work—between breadwinner and homemaker, father and mother—are increasingly viewed as arbitrary and oppressive. And yet this loss of everyday oppositions between men and women has made Americans less, not more, attractive to each other." *Vive la différence!*

Edward Short rounds out the articles with his tribute to the prophetic insights of

INTRODUCTION

20th-century chronicler of culture Christopher Dawson. Short notes that “In nearly all of his works, Dawson shows how religion is the key to history because it is the key to culture, without which there can be no civilization, and in this the primacy of family is always patent.” Even in 1933, Dawson could already write: “The functions which were formerly fulfilled by the head of the family are now taken over by the state, which educates the children and takes the responsibility for their maintenance and health . . . To the modern girl marriage and motherhood appear not as the conditions of a wider life, as they did to her grandmother, but as involving the sacrifice of her independence and the abandonment of her career . . . under these circumstances who will trouble to marry?”

This time around Booknotes carries two reviews on very different abortion-related books. George McKenna finds Karissa Haugeberg’s *Women Against Abortion: Inside the Largest Moral Reform Movement of the Twentieth Century* disappointingly dismissive of great early figures of the pro-life movement—like Mildred Jefferson and Marjory Mecklenburg—as “part of a larger patriarchal project devoted to disciplining women into becoming wives and mothers.” Charles Bellinger recommends Cheryl Sullinger’s *The Trial of Kermit Gosnell: The Shocking Details and What It Revealed About the Abortion Industry* and Ann McElhinney and Phelim McAleer’s *Gosnell: The Untold Story of America’s Most Prolific Serial Killer*.

We also bring you three recent columns from our website, the first two of which touch on Brave New World attempts to refashion and improve on human life. My own blog, “Searching for the Soul of R2-D2,” concludes that accounts of artificial intelligence threatening to dominate human beings is “camouflage for certain people taking control of other people.” David Mills relates the late Polish philosopher Zygmunt Baumann’s fears for the imperfect, the sick, and the elderly from human engineering. Finally, Ursula Hennessey, the mother of a daughter who has Down syndrome, recounts with warmth and humanity the battles over “people-first” and “identity-first” language for the disabled/people with disabilities.

* * *

Our appendices include two concerning a rare pro-life victory in New York, where the Court of Appeals unanimously refused to okay assisted suicide. Wesley Smith describes the ominous push in the U.S. and elsewhere to euthanize Alzheimer’s patients; David Albert Jones of the Anscombe Bioethics Centre decries gene-editing experiments on human embryos; and David Quinn writes on who’s funding the campaign to legalize abortion in Ireland. We also include Elizabeth Kirk on the harm caused by forcing faith-based groups out of foster care and the adoption business and President Trump’s Statement on Down Syndrome Awareness Month. We end with a column from *Fun Is Not Enough*, a new collection of our late contributor Fr. Francis Canavan’s commentaries for the newsletter *catholic eye*.

ELLEN WILSON FIELDING
SENIOR EDITOR

Things Are Not Well

William Murchison

I'm going to start with something I've been working on here in Dallas which doesn't have anything directly to do with abortion. After which I'm proceeding directly to abortion. And then to some carpentry, in joining together these and a couple of other topics. I *believe* I know what I'm doing, though nothing, in the year of grace 2017, seems to me half as clear as it should be.

Anyway . . .

I've been involved for weeks with fellow Dallasites laboring to save from displacement a truly distinguished equestrian statue of Robert E. Lee. You know the backstory. The violence in Charlottesville threw the nation—at least the vocationally articulate segment thereof—into a tizzy about Hatred, Racism, White Supremacy . . . dah-de-dah-de-dah. The import of which tizzy was that All Monuments to Confederates Must Come Down Now This Instant, in Expiation of . . . dah-de-dah-de-dah-de-dah.

Whereupon was born the Anti-Confederate Moment from which we may have—but likely not—escaped by the time this essay sees print. The Left is in full cry against American History and, in no inconsiderable degree, Western Civilization. I don't expect much improvement for a long time—notwithstanding the Left's partial triumph in Dallas, achieved through the carting away of a bronze Gen. Lee, accompanied on horseback by a bronze aide de camp.

Why do I bring up this statuary business in the inestimably more important context of abortion? I do so in weary recognition of a truth that highlights and complicates the cause of protecting unborn life. The truth is that the ideological left, its adrenalin kicking in, its brain cells fuzzed up, is currently on a tear. And isn't brooking contradiction. Look at this fall's Emmy Awards, if you please, bestowed, according to the *New York Times*, on nervous, argumentative, pronouncedly or inferentially anti-Trump shows as a way of showing America's conscience still to be alive.

America's conscience? Give me a break. So alert is America's conscience, as progressivism continually represents it, that arguments of a nature contrary to that representation can't be heard. Voiced maybe, but certainly not heeded on account of being so wrong; so pronouncedly in conflict with the

William Murchison writes from Dallas for Creators Syndicate and is a senior editor of the *Human Life Review*. He is currently working on *Moral Disarmament*, a book examining the consequences of our moral disagreements. *The Cost of Liberty*, his biography of John Dickinson, an influential but neglected Founding Father of the United States, was published in 2013 by ISI Books.

views of Nancy Pelosi, Elizabeth Warren, Stephen Colbert, and Alec Baldwin, who apparently know everything worth knowing, and are honored to tell us so.

The keepers of our progressive conscience will not concede the possible justice of arguments other than their own. Not even, necessarily, when hands are raised and votes are counted, as mere members of the voting public sometimes display an appalling inability to grasp essentials. I have found myself, in writing locally about the Left and the Confederate issue, using words like “dogmatism,” “schoolmarmish,” and “prissy.” Such are the Left’s instincts, even in the Trump era—especially, perhaps, in the Trump era!—respecting public-policy questions: abortion prominently displayed among them, in a niche permitting worship as progressives account that unmodish practice. We are a divided nation indeed—more divided, it would appear, than in living memory. There seems not much to be done about it. Not much of an immediate nature.

On abortion, ask-no-questions, accept-no-restraints progressives have lately laid on the table a question of extraordinarily divisive potential: Shall the Democratic Party, or shall it not, accord its support to political candidates who accept or honor the pro-life position? This is pushing the matter rather far, you will recognize immediately. The Democratic Party has always had a sizable pro-life constituency served by representatives of sincere or feigned pro-life sentiments. And so the question awaits resolution, planned or circumstantial. We presently hear two points of view on the question: Yes, the Democrats—generally acknowledged as the natural home of progressivism, should acknowledge the pro-life cause; and—forgive me—hell, no, they shouldn’t. The matter requires some deconstruction.

Support for abortion is a longstanding Democratic position, held with intensity. Ramesh Ponnuru gave the title *The Party of Death* to his excellent and instructive 2006 book on the Democrats’ embrace of what, for public-relations purposes, is called reproductive freedom. The party, in 2016, affirmed its support of women’s “right to safe and legal abortion” and its opposition to laws and policies (e.g., the Hyde Amendment, forbidding U.S. taxpayer support of abortion) that hinder access to abortion.

However, in the spring of 2017, Democratic National Chairman Tom Perez upped the ante by declaring that “Every Democrat, like every American [!!!], should support a woman’s right to make her own choices about her body and her health. That is not negotiable”—like, presumably, love of small animals and adherence to a non-sweetener diet—“and should not change city by city or state by state.” Atten-SHUT! Off to the polls: One, two, one, two . . . There’s nothing like democracy or free thought, I always say, when a congressional seat is at issue.

But, of course, no taint of heresy must course through the Democratic bloodstream as to the need for standing with those who stand with spiked heel poised over your foot. The difficulty lies in how strongly to align your forces with one highly important element in your coalition concerning one highly important issue. The Democrats aren't yet sure. Various of them have demurred at Perez's frank talk. One of those is Nancy Pelosi, another Chuck Schumer—Washington operators as opposed to grassroots ideologues. Planned Parenthood liked the idea, as did NARAL. At any rate, Perez opened the bag and out scrambled the cat. Abortion policy, for Democrats, is a huge deal, which they have yet to figure out to broad-based satisfaction.

Which is not exactly odd. Numerous Democrats, especially in the past, have expressed their distrust or dislike of the abortion agenda. These included House Democratic Leader Tom Gephardt of Missouri, Pennsylvania Governor Robert Casey, Senator Paul Simon of Illinois, Good Ol' Joe Biden, and—yes!—then-Governor Bill Clinton, who confessed to Arkansas right-to-life spokesmen that “I am opposed to abortion and to government funding of abortion.” We can probably assume that at the time and place of Clinton's declaration, opposition appeared the discreet and therefore proper stance to assume.

The operational view among many of today's Democrats is “personally opposed” to abortion. Yes, I favor the protection of unborn life! However (less and less and less heard through embarrassed coughs), I, uh—you will understand when I tell you I can't, I simply can't assign my personal convictions priority over the law of the land, I just can't. That would be to interfere with my duty to uphold the law: which duty, when it comes to abortion, seems never to embrace the idea of changing the law peacefully, with the aid of popular consent.

We are entirely too familiar with the “personally opposed” canard. I see no need to hover around the absurdity, not to say the dishonor, of voting to protect what you think may not in actuality be worthy of protection. If you really do think it, why don't you act like it? The question seems not untoward, even in the mess known as modern politics.

At the same time, Democrats like Nancy Pelosi, canny operator that she is, and Chuck Schumer also, regret rising temptations to go overboard on abortion. If you commit candidates to walking the straight and narrow on pro-choice issues, you are thumbing your nose at pro-life independents and, because there are some, Democrats: inviting them to keep their convictions out of other people's faces and accept meekly their seats in the back of the bus. None of that Rosa Parks stuff, you hear? The “big tent” theory—we run

the show, but we take all paying customers—commends itself to Mrs. Pelosi because the vote of a proliifer counts the same as that of a pro-choicer. First things first might be taken as the Pelosi-Schumer motto. One can't see the Democrats actually purging proliifers—such as remain—from party ranks, but more and more they seem to exist on mere sufferance, with some personal stubbornness mixed in.

The Democrats' growing infatuation with abortion has to do with their growing dependence on the feminist vote; their sense that women who organize and give money, and, best of all, show up at the polls, pictures of political determination, are not to be trifled with. Not when Hillary Clinton herself, in full feminist flower, managed to lose not only the presidency but the votes of white women, and especially rural white women. (Black women overwhelmingly supported her, or at any rate the Democratic ticket to which blacks are habituated.) As the Democrats' feminist dependence grows—it cannot be otherwise in the Age of Trump—so their rage and radicalism grow, as per Chairman Perez, with his call to condition eligibility for Democratic support upon individual Democrats' embrace of the abortion agenda.

Says the Pew Research Group: “. . . [T]he share of Democrats who favor legal abortion has risen 9 percentage points [from March to November 2016]. Just 18 percent of Democrats now say abortion should be illegal in all or most cases. The partisan gap in support for legal abortion, 45 percentage points, is at its widest point in close to a decade . . . This shift in Democratic support is especially pronounced among women. Currently, 85 percent of Democratic women think abortion should be legal in all or most cases, up 18 points from March [2016]. This is the highest level of support for legal abortion among Democratic women in the past two decades.”

Well. You see where Mrs. Clinton is coming from in *What Happened*, her *non mea culpa* for losing a presidential election she believed was in her handbag. Yes, Tim Kaine, a “personally opposed” but politically coerced supporter of abortion rights—“as a matter of law and policy”—was her running mate. She adds, tellingly, and a little bit alarmingly, from a certain standpoint: “[W]hen personal views on abortion become public actions—votes on legislation or judges or funding that erodes women's rights—that's a different matter.” Kaine is entitled to breathe easier for having lost, in consequence of the late election, the responsibility of taking satisfaction in the, perhaps, daily overthrow of his religious convictions.

But religious convictions—what are those anyway? Snatches of remembered Bible verses; nothing to inform a particular stance on a particular policy

whose implications are not to be teased out from study, reflection, conversation, prayer. Prayer! Good golly! Prayer admits to our deliberations a realm, an entity, lacking direct connection to—and don't we know it?—the next election, the next reform, the next excited dispatch from CNN.

Back to where we started. Not to the statue controversy so much as to the mindset that equates Robert E. Lee with Benedict Arnold and cultural conservatism with fascism and something called—why, I couldn't tell you—white supremacy. The no-tolerance, sit-down-and-shut-up mindset of a creed and breed steadily growing more absolutist, less willing to entertain diversity as distinguished from the kind the media cheer with enthusiasm.

I can't discern yet a crackdown emerging in full fig from the left side of the political spectrum—the pro-choice, the anti-Confederate, and, especially, the anti-Trump side. I think at the same time we must be watchful. Signs aren't encouraging; for instance, California Senator Dianne Feinstein's presumptuous slam at Prof. Amy Coney Barrett of Notre Dame, a presidential nominee to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, on the basis of her supposedly unspeakable adherence to Christian orthodoxy. There's the firing, at Google, of contrarian engineer James Damore for daring, in a private memo, to raise questions about the company's diversity policies. Of course there's Middlebury. Close to the center of every discussion of left-wing dogmatism and conformist preachment is the spectacle of a mob shutting down, at a respected liberal arts college, the attempt by the much-honored libertarian scholar Charles Murray to share his insights into social problems of the first order.

I wanted to laugh, then thought better of it, when I read of the Los Angeles City Council's war on Christopher Columbus—its declaration that Columbus Day must henceforth be known as Indigenous Peoples Day. *Reductio ad absurdum*, yes; but with accent not so much on the absurdity of the thing as on the reduction of logic and human accomplishment to negligible commodities, unimportant to those who seem ready to lead us all around by the nose. That is why the temptation to laugh at certain absurdities must be suppressed.

The flight of reason may be the main attribute of our times. In place of the goddess of reason—to speak broadly—stands Tom Perez for one. Reason? We don't need no stinkin' civil discourse, no sharing of viewpoints for the purpose of mutual enlightenment. We need muscle: as in, "Hey, get me some muscle here"—the immortal plea of a University of Missouri journalism—I said journalism—instructor trying to throw the media off campus in order that student protest could wax without inhibition.

What have we got going on here? We've got here a climate not immediately fatal to reasoned discussion of abortion, and to tolerance within the Democratic Party of opposition to abortion (just as support for abortion lives and occasionally flourishes within the Republican Party). Not immediately fatal, I say, but more and more dicey, more and more dangerous, from a free-speech standpoint, as absolutism takes hold in the media and academia.

Things can get uglier than they are at present. What if post-Hillary Democrats such as the Clintons' own senior senator, Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, not to mention Senator Feinstein, decide to push the party a little: to tighten their grip on its windpipe and insist on solidarity with the Perez doctrine of uniformity in support of abortion rights? They've already lent their backing to the idea. What if they trundle it to the center of discussion? With her attack on Prof. Barrett's credentials for public service, Senator Feinstein has signaled her willingness to disparage religious belief. Religious belief being intertwined with support for unborn life, what is to prevent secularists like the senator from campaigning to shove abortion discourse into the recesses of the church? How would this play out?

One result would be the increased flight of Democratic voters to independent ranks or even to drop-by collaborations with the dreaded Republicans—provided these latter have a reasonable comeback to the absolutist, don't-you-dare-argue-with-me pronouncements of a Perez or a Feinstein. The president of the United States, no mean rhetorician himself, could be counted on to advance that cause, if at some further cost to our already damaged unity as a people.

A Tom Perez speech atop a Middlebury riot atop a Confederate statue atop congressional questioning of the right to orthodox religious belief equals danger to civic comity—such as remains of it—and to the once-prized American ability to work through old perplexities prior to taking on new ones.

Things are not well among us. They can be made better—likely much better, provided we set hearts and minds to the task. But first must come the recognition that things as they stand are not—not one bit—well.

Can the Democratic Party Be Pro-life?

Mary Meehan

Democratic Party leaders, still trying to recover from their loss of the 2016 presidential election, have suggested minor concessions to the 26 percent of Democrats¹ who identify as pro-life. Yet the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and NARAL Pro-Choice America still have a death grip on Democratic Party policy. Can it be broken? And if so, how?

The main concession that party leaders now offer is quite limited: acknowledging that some Democrats do oppose abortion and should not be excluded from party affairs. Thus Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), the U.S. House of Representatives minority leader and a strong supporter of abortion, defends the right of other Democrats to be against it. In May she told the *Washington Post*: “I grew up Nancy D’Alesandro in Baltimore, Maryland; in Little Italy; in a very devout Catholic family; fiercely patriotic; proud of our town and heritage, and staunchly Democratic. Most of those people—my family, extended family—are not pro-choice. You think I’m kicking them out of the Democratic Party?”²

This sounded like good news for pro-life Democrats, but they had best be wary. Pelosi knows that if relatively *small* numbers of anti-abortion Democrats are elected to the House—from districts that openly pro-abortion candidates cannot win—Democrats can regain control of the House. That control will then be used to squash pro-life efforts there—as Pelosi did when she was Speaker of the House.

David v. Goliath

Democrats for Life of America, a brave but very small group, would like to elect pro-life Democrats everywhere and at all levels. Currently, though, it has just one paid staff member and must rely heavily on interns and volunteers. Kristen Day, the staff member, and her volunteer helpers have persisted despite very daunting odds. Day knows how Capitol Hill works because of her prior experience as chief of staff for a Democratic congressman. She is the author of *Democrats for Life: Pro-Life Politics and the Silenced Majority* (New Leaf Press, 2006). Her Democrats for Life work has given her experience in lobbying as well. She lobbies against funding for Planned Parenthood because of the organization’s deep abortion involvement. In an

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interview, she said that “they really can force people to switch and vote against their conscience.” She believes that they are “destroying the Democratic Party” and that they “need to be cut down for the future of the Democratic Party. And the party doesn’t see it.” She said that Planned Parenthood also helps “build up the Republican Party. Not necessarily what they were planning to do, but that’s the result.”³

Currently, there are a few Democratic proliferers in the House, but only Rep. Daniel Lipinski (D-Ill.) stands out as deeply committed and reliable. There are a few Democratic senators who sometimes vote pro-life, but none of them can be counted on when Planned Parenthood funding is at stake.

A Table at the Convention—Followed by Slaps in the Face

The Democrats for Life promote ways to help mothers financially, such as paid maternity leave after childbirth and child-support enforcement when fathers fail to meet their financial obligations to their children. This approach met a good response from people who stopped by the group’s table at the 2016 Democratic National Convention. This was, Kristen Day said, the first time the party allowed the Democrats for Life to have a table there, and it was “right down the hall from Planned Parenthood.”

While some conventioners were hostile toward the Democrats for Life presence, Day said that “for the most part, people came over and talked and were respectful.” She said there were “many areas of agreement” about ways to reduce the abortion rate and that “we found a lot of common ground that way.”⁴ The pro-life Dems also received some fair-to-sympathetic media coverage, including a piece in the left-leaning *Mother Jones*.⁵

The Democratic Party establishment, though, was not interested in common ground. The 2016 party platform was the most radically pro-abortion ever. It promised to “stand up for Planned Parenthood”; said all women should have access to “safe and legal abortion”; promised to appoint judges who “will protect a woman’s right” to abortion; and demanded repeal of the Hyde Amendment, which bans federal abortion funding in the U.S. in most cases, and repeal of the Helms Amendment, which bans federal funding of abortion in other nations.⁶

The 2016 Democratic convention also featured talks by Planned Parenthood president Cecile Richards and NARAL Pro-Choice America president Ilyse Hogue. The NARAL chief told the huge convention that she once had an abortion. “I wanted a family,” she said, “but it was the wrong time.” She added that “it’s not as simple as bad girls get abortions and good girls have families. We are the same women at different times in our lives—each making decisions that are best for us.”⁷ Certainly not best, though, for the

children they reject. Nor for later children who may learn about the sisters and brothers they lost.

Start at the Top?

Marjorie Dannenfelser is president of the Susan B. Anthony List, a large and powerful pro-life political action committee. She has raised a great deal of money for successful pro-life candidates—mainly Republicans—at the congressional level. What would she advise if asked how to elect many Democrats who oppose abortion? She said that her “number one bit of advice” is to start at the top by recruiting “a pro-life Democrat to run for president.” Such a candidate, she said, could weave the pro-life position into other issues that the party backs as “the champion of the little guy.” She stressed that the candidate would have to be “a *serious* pro-life Democrat,” perhaps someone like Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana.

Dannenfelser said that “unless there is a top-down strategy in the Democratic Party . . . I don’t think you’ll ever find enough money for anybody to run. I really don’t.” She noted that she has “raised money for a long time—and at many points underestimating how hard it can be.” She said that “there are no lists out there of pro-life Democrat donors. They just don’t exist.” But she added, “I don’t mean the *donors* don’t exist” and suggested that a presidential candidate could find major donors who “might be willing to do something like this.”

Dannenfelser also suggested emphasis on candidates for state legislatures. She noted that there are many pro-life Democrats in those bodies already.⁸ She did not suggest a focus on congressional races—perhaps because she may worry about a return to Democratic control of the House. That in fact is what concerns Carol Tobias, president of the National Right to Life Committee. When asked whether her group’s political action committee would support a pro-life Democrat against a pro-abortion Republican, she replied, “It would depend on the circumstances. If that made the difference between Paul Ryan [R-Wis.] or Nancy Pelosi [D-Calif.] being Speaker of the House, we would have to take that into account.” Tobias said that “to stop abortion, we are going to need the support of both parties,” but added that “if the Democratic Party continues down its path of unrestricted, unlimited abortion for all nine months of pregnancy, tax funding of abortion, and apparently now requiring candidates to carry that same stand, the party is going to become extinct.” She said pro-life Dems should “start getting elected to office” and “fighting to change the platform.”⁹

Marjorie Dannenfelser was interested to hear about the long-ago presidential primary campaign of the late Ellen McCormack of Long Island, N.Y.

McCormack and her pro-life friends were seasoned in the rough-and-tumble of New York politics. Looking toward 1976, they hoped to recruit a professional politician to run a Democratic pro-life campaign for president. Unable to find a professional who would do it, they chose McCormack for the job. She proved to be a fine candidate—attractive, fearless, and a good speaker. Married to a police officer, she was a homemaker and the mother of four children.

Ellen McCormack Blazed a Good Trail

McCormack and her friends and supporters raised \$524,000 for her campaign. That included \$244,000 in matching funds from the federal government. (To receive those funds, campaign volunteers first had to raise at least \$5,000 in each of at least 20 states.) The matching funds were spent primarily on McCormack's many pro-life television ads.

According to Jane H. Gilroy in her book about the McCormack campaign, *A Shared Vision*, those television ads brought McCormack's "pro-life message to over 141 million households." Gilroy added: "Through radio advertisements, news coverage, and speeches, McCormack reached countless others around the country."¹⁰ Dr. Gilroy, who is now retired from teaching at New York's Molloy College, was a key leader of the McCormack campaign. In a recent interview, she said the Long Island activists were advised by the late Eugene McMahon, a first-rate elections attorney. Like the other McCormack campaigners, Mr. McMahon volunteered his time. He held his co-workers to the letter of demanding legal requirements for obtaining ballot status—and also to very strict bookkeeping. He told his fellow volunteers that other campaigns might get away with violations—"you know, the big names. They get away with it, but we will get away with *nothing*." He also told them that campaign accounting had "to be perfect." As Gilroy remarked in a recent interview, "it was good that my husband was a CPA."¹¹

The year 1976 turned out to be Jimmy Carter's year for winning both the Democratic nomination and the presidency. McCormack's best primary showing was in Vermont, where she won 9.5 percent of the vote after she attacked Carter and former Office of Equal Opportunity director Sargent Shriver as having misled voters about their positions on abortion. She also criticized Vermont's own U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy for claiming to be personally against abortion—yet supporting public funding of it. As Gilroy wrote, "Through this and other speeches, McCormack continued to bring to light the duplicity of those politicians who persistently tried to hide behind a pro-life façade, while at the same time endearing themselves to proponents of abortion by favoring their legislative agenda."¹² This exposure of political dishonesty on abortion has been missing from Democratic presidential campaigns in recent decades.

What Was Lost

Four years after the McCormack campaign, Ronald Reagan's Republican presidential campaign won huge support from pro-lifers in 1980. Reagan won, and many pro-lifers who had voted for him became ex-Democrats and never looked back. Others stayed in the Democratic Party, but did not organize a strong resistance to abortion influence there. Had there been more Democratic pro-life presidential campaigns like the 1976 McCormack one, they could have built valuable statewide networks and great lists of volunteers and donors. Strong primary and caucus showings in some key states might have prevented many Democratic politicians' defections to the abortion side. That kind of strength would have made it far easier to recruit a pro-life Democratic governor or U.S. senator to run for president.

The pro-life movement has been far too dependent on the Republican Party since the Reagan era. While this dependence has produced substantial gains in times of Republican dominance, it has produced disaster when the Democrats have retaken both the White House and Congress. The long fight over President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") is a case in point. A band of pro-life Democrats in the House, led by then-Rep. Bart Stupak (D-Mich.), agreed to vote for the Affordable Care Act in exchange for the promise of an Obama executive order to bar abortion funding in the new system. Their votes were crucial to the bill's passage. But most pro-life leaders felt that writing an abortion ban into law itself was the only real guarantee against abortion coverage. The executive order that Obama signed required that people who want abortion coverage in their insurance plan pay a separate \$2 per month fee to their insurer for it. Dannenfelser and other pro-life leaders saw this as just an accounting maneuver. They also stressed that an executive order can be revoked by a president, while a law cannot. They worked to defeat pro-life Democrats who had voted for the Affordable Care Act. As a result of that—and the fact that Republicans had redistricted some Democrats out of their seats—there are very few pro-life Democrats left in the House. There are few in the Senate, either, and none of them can be relied upon when public funding of Planned Parenthood is at stake.

Asked if she had any regrets about working to defeat pro-life Democrats, Dannenfelser said she did not. She acknowledged, though, that defeating them "was probably the hardest thing that I ever did . . ." The Democrats she helped defeat included Rep. Alan Mollohan of West Virginia. Dannenfelser previously had worked for Mollohan, and she revered him. But she said that Obama's executive order was "full of holes." She also said that, if the defeated Democrats "were still there . . . as much as I really loved a lot of them

as people, we would have a . . . weak, defensive pro-life movement.”¹³

One might conclude from all of this that well-meaning pro-life Democrats in the House were manipulated by the Obama White House, with tragic results for themselves and for the unborn. A key lesson for activists to keep in mind is that, in politics *you really must keep your eyes open and your back to the wall*.

Talking Points for Pro-life Dems

The Democrats for Life stress government programs that help women who do not have paid maternity leave or the money for prenatal care, delivery costs, baby clothes and furniture, and food for two. It would be good if they and their candidates—especially the men—put more stress on men’s responsibility for the children they father. They should emphasize not just legal and financial responsibility—though that is extremely important—but also involvement in their children’s lives. If all fathers loved their children and met their obligations to them and to their mothers, many children would have far happier lives—and the abortion rate might well drop sharply. Pro-life candidates—both Democrats and Republicans and especially the men—should stress this whenever they are asked about abortion. They also should speak to young men about their responsibilities and about the genuine joys of fatherhood. Pro-life Democrats, whether men or women, should emphasize how party support for abortion undermines other party policies that are pro-child. It also contradicts, in a radical way, the Democratic tradition of standing up for the little guy. History shows another major lapse from that tradition: The Democratic Party helped suppress African Americans for about 150 years—first under slavery, then under segregation. Finally, though, and especially during the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson, it became their champion. What we need now is for the party to welcome unborn children and to become *their* champion as well.

I still believe what I wrote in this journal some years ago: “Defending those who cannot defend themselves has long been the pride of the left. When no one else would do it, liberals and radicals stood up for the little guys and the little gals: day laborers and domestic workers, abused children, African Americans and other minorities, elderly patients with dementia, the poor, the unloved and unwanted, the down-and-outers. The unborn are the most defenseless members of the human community. Others can cry out for help, and some can defend themselves, but unborn children cannot. To abandon them is to abandon the heart and honor of the Left. Instead, liberals and radicals should stand by unborn children in the spirit of the old movement songs, ‘We Shall Not Be Moved’ and ‘We Shall Overcome.’”¹⁴

Needed: More Activists to Run for Office

One of the most important lessons of the Ellen McCormack campaign is that a pro-life activist can make a very good candidate. Many activists develop great skill in public speaking, media work, administration, fundraising, and other areas crucial to winning political campaigns and serving in public office. We need such people at every level, from city council on up to the White House. (Perhaps you, dear reader, should consider running for something?)

Rep. Christopher Smith (R-N.J.) shows what a committed prolifer can do in office. For over thirty years, he has been a brave and tireless advocate in Congress for the unborn (and also for other oppressed people). He is a Republican now, but one of his early experiences in the pro-life movement was the 1976 Ellen McCormack campaign in New Jersey. According to Brian C. Sears, who interviewed Smith in 2012, the congressman “recalled the McCormack campaign as transformational in his life. Not only did he stand as a McCormack delegate, but he also served as campaign manager for a Senate candidate inspired by Ellen McCormack’s example.” (That Senate candidate, Stephen J. Foley, had a great slogan, one that should be used again: “Let’s put Life back into the Democratic Party.”¹⁵) Having more Chris Smiths in Congress would make a huge difference to the pro-life cause.

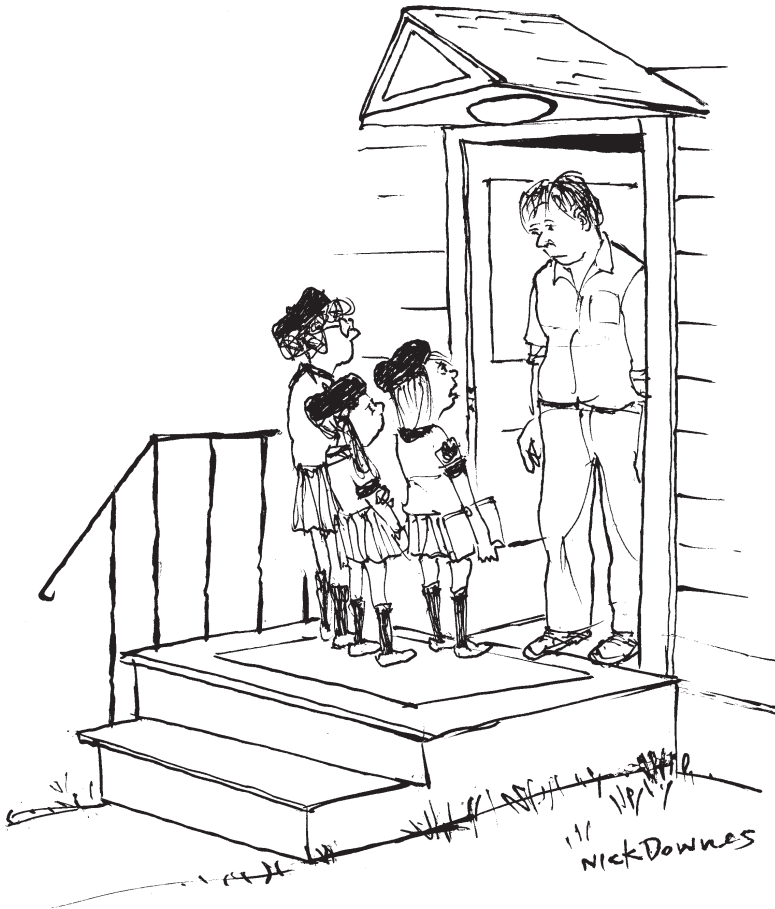
The road to restoring legal protection to unborn children often seems long and rocky. But if the pro-life movement takes full advantage of the talent already in its ranks, and if it runs brave and smart campaigns within *both* major political parties, that rough road can become a highway to victory.

NOTES

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*"The way it works now, sir, is, we've planted cookies in your computer,
and you pay us to remove them."*

The Feminist Case Against Abortion

Serrin M. Foster

Not all feminists support abortion.

Properly defined, feminism is a philosophy that embraces basic rights for all human beings without exception—without regard to race, religion, sex, size, age, location, disability, or parentage. Feminism rejects the use of force to dominate, control, or destroy anyone.

Feminists for Life continues a tradition begun by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792. Decrying the sexual exploitation of women in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, Wollstonecraft also condemned those who would “either destroy the embryo in the womb or cast it off when born,” saying: “Nature in everything deserves respect, and those who violate her laws seldom violate them with impunity.”

Wollstonecraft died from complications following the birth of her second baby girl, who was named Mary in her honor. Like her mother, the younger Mary would become a writer, producing one of the greatest novels ever to address the dangers of violating nature—*Frankenstein* by Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin Shelley.

Fifty years after Mary Wollstonecraft’s book was published, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton traveled to England to fight for the abolition of slavery. Barred from speaking at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention simply because they were women, Mott and Stanton determined to hold a convention advancing the rights of women.

At that time, American women could not vote or hold property. They could not control their own money, sit on a jury, or even testify on their own behalf. Women’s rights to assemble, speak freely, attend college, or maintain child custody after divorce or spousal death were severely limited. Marital rape went unacknowledged.

The early feminists—facing conditions similar to those in developing countries today—were strongly opposed to abortion; despite their own struggles, they believed in the worth of all human lives. As feminists, we are sons and daughters of the abolitionists. The same women who fought for the rights of slaves to be free and women to vote also fought for the unborn to be born.

Serrin M. Foster is president of Feminists for Life of America. This is the text of a speech she gave at a *Human Life Review* EXPECT event on June 1, 2017. An earlier version of the speech was published in an anthology on “Women’s Rights,” one in a series titled *Great Speeches in History*. ©2017 Serrin M. Foster. All rights reserved.

Abortion was common in the 1800s. Sarah Norton, who with Susan B. Anthony successfully argued for women's admission to Cornell University, wrote in 1870:

Child murderers practice their profession without let or hindrance, and open infant butcheries unquestioned. . . . Is there no remedy for this ante-natal murder? . . . Perhaps there will come a day when . . . an unmarried mother will not be despised because of her motherhood . . . and when the right of the unborn to be born will not be denied or interfered with.

In 1868, novelist-turned-activist Eleanor Kirk linked the need for women's rights with the need to protect the unborn. When a woman told her that suffrage was unnecessary because she and her husband were "one," Kirk asked what would become of her babies if her husband ceased to provide for them:

Why doesn't somebody ask—what *has* become of the babies? Ask [Madame] Restelle [sic] and thousands of physicians, male and female, who have been engaged in their work of destruction for years. Physicians who have graduated from our first medical colleges, physicians with high sounding diplomas, whose elegant equipages stand in front of Fifth Avenue mansions, who pocket a big fee and a little bundle of flesh at the same time, and nobody's the wiser! not even the *husband* in hosts of circumstances.

What will become of the babies—did you ask—and you? Can you not see that the idea is to educate women that they may be self-reliant, self-sustaining, self-respected? The wheel is a big one, and needs a strong push, and a push all together, giving to it an impulse that will keep it constantly revolving, and the first revolution must be Female Suffrage . . .

God speed the time, for the sake of the babies. Little ones will then be welcome . . .

Without known exception, the early feminists condemned abortion in no uncertain terms.

In the radical feminist newspaper, *The Revolution*, founder Susan B. Anthony and editor Elizabeth Cady Stanton refused to publish advertisements for "Foeticides and Infanticides." Abortion was consistently referred to as "child murder."

Stanton, who in 1848 organized the first women's convention in Seneca Falls, New York, classified abortion as a form of "infanticide" and, referring to the "murder of children, either before or after birth," said, "We believe the cause of all these abuses lies in the degradation of women."

Early feminists argued that women who had abortions were responsible for their actions, but that they resorted to abortion primarily because, within families and throughout society, they lacked autonomy, financial resources, and emotional support. A passage in Susan B. Anthony's newspaper states:

Guilty? Yes, no matter what the motive, love of ease, or a desire to save from suffering the unborn innocent, the woman is awfully guilty who commits the deed. It will burden her conscience in life, it will burden her soul in death; but oh, thrice guilty is

he who drove her to the desperation which impelled her to the crime!

Victoria Woodhull, the first woman to run for president, concurred. In her own newspaper, *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*, Woodhull wrote: "The rights of children, then, as individuals, begin while they yet remain the foetus." Woodhull and her sister Tennessee Claflin declared that "Pregnancy is not a disease, but a beautiful office of nature."

Clearly, we have a wealth of evidence contradicting the lie that feminists must support abortion.

Some who begrudgingly admit the early American feminists were anti-abortion have suggested that their stance arose from Victorian attitudes about sex. That's not true either. Elizabeth Cady Stanton shocked Victorian society by parading around in public visibly pregnant. She raised a flag to celebrate the birth of her son. Stanton celebrated womanhood. She was "in your face" about her ability to have children.

But like today's pro-life feminists, our feminist foremothers also recognized that all women need not bear children to share in the celebration of womanhood. Susan B. Anthony was once complimented by a man who said that she "ought to have been a wife and mother." Anthony replied, "Sweeter even than to have had the joy of caring for children of my own has it been to me to help bring about a better state of things for mothers generally, so their unborn little ones could not be willed away from them."

In her later years, Anthony passed on the responsibility for women's rights to a new generation, just as we must prepare to do. At the turn of the century, one young woman, Alice Paul, assumed leadership. Paul fought tirelessly for passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, which in 1920 finally guaranteed American women's right to vote.

The '70s Women's Movement and the Betrayal of Women

Much later in life, Alice Paul was asked by a friend what she thought of linking abortion to women's rights. The author of the original Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) called abortion "the ultimate in the exploitation of women."

What earlier feminists called a "disgusting and degrading crime" was, in the '70s, lauded as the most fundamental right without which all other rights are meaningless.

So how did the second-wave feminist movement come to embrace abortion?

Two of the male founders of NARAL (the National Association to Repeal Abortion Laws) were among the first to portray abortion as a "right" rather than an act of violence. Larry Lader promoted abortion as population control.

His NARAL cofounder Dr. Bernard Nathanson saw a woman who had a botched abortion in Chicago and reasoned that by making abortion legal it would be safer for women. Nathanson later became pro-life. But in the early '70s, the men traveled the country advocating the repeal of what they believed to be antiquated abortion laws. After failing to convince legislators that anti-abortion laws were "archaic," Lader saw an opportunity.

According to Nathanson, Lader approached leaders of the women's movement and advanced the argument that if women wanted to be educated like a man, hired like a man, and promoted like a man, they shouldn't expect their employers to accommodate pregnancy.

And then there was the impact on women of *Roe v. Wade* attorney Sarah Weddington's arguments in support of abortion.

In her oral argument before the Court in 1971, Weddington exposed the discrimination and other injustices faced by pregnant women who are poor, or in the workplace or school. However, she did not demand that these injustices be remedied. Instead, she demanded for women the "right" to submit to these injustices by destroying their pregnancies. Weddington repeatedly said that women need "relief" from pregnancy, instead of arguing that *women need relief from these injustices*.

What if Weddington had used her legal acumen to challenge the system and address women's needs? Women aren't suddenly stupid when they become pregnant. Women can still read, write, and think!

But by accepting pregnancy discrimination in school and in the workplace, by accepting the widespread lack of support for pregnant women and parents—especially among the poor—Weddington and the Supreme Court betrayed women and undermined the support women need and deserve.

The Failing Report Card

Planned Parenthood is the largest provider of abortions in America. According to the Guttmacher Institute, their former research arm:

- 75 percent of the women having abortions are the poor and working poor (including those in college who have little or no income).
- 66 percent are pursuing post-secondary degrees.
- 61 percent are women of color.
- 59 percent are already mothers (including those who had children in high school and during college).
- Half of all abortions are repeat abortions.

All too often, the root causes underlying these statistics are shame and fear—generated by the attitudes of parents, friends, and the fathers of children—about pregnancy.

Fatherhood has been diminished, and children are disconnected from their

fathers (who have rights as well as responsibilities). Women are impoverished because of the billions owed to mothers for child support.

Since 1973, millions of women have paid the price, struggling in school and the workplace without societal support. After all, when “it’s her body, it’s her choice,” it’s *her problem*.

For all these reasons and more, more than a million times a year in America, a woman lays her body down or swallows a bitter pill called “choice”—driven to abortion because of a lack of resources and support.

Abortion solves *nothing*.

More than four decades after *Roe*, we mourn the loss of nearly 60 million American children that we will never meet. We will never know what they might have contributed to this world. But we must also remember the *hundreds* of women and teens who have lost their lives to legal but lethal abortion because they didn’t want to inconvenience us with their pregnancies.

We mourn with the parents of Holly Patterson, who died from sepsis after she took RU-486, and with the parents of Dawn Ravenell, the 13-year-old African-American who never came home after she had an abortion without her parent’s knowledge. We grieve with the husband of Karnamaya Mongar, a poor immigrant who died as a result of her abortion at the hands of convicted murderer Kermit Gosnell. And we weep for the son of Cree Erwin. She died on his first birthday after undergoing an abortion at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Where is the outrage from women’s advocates?

Hard Cases. Exceptional Choices.

When we talk about abortion, we bring out raw emotions. Nothing is more divisive, or challenges our pro-life beliefs more, than when we talk about pregnancy resulting from rape. But just as we have challenged thinking about special-needs babies and their parents, we must help women who have conceived during rape to welcome these children conceived in violence. We must help people have the courage to look into the face of a child conceived during rape and say, you didn’t deserve the death penalty.

The circumstances of one’s conception do not determine a person’s worth.

These children should not be regarded as “exceptions.” But their mothers should be recognized as “*exceptional*.” And as advocates of life, peace, and justice, *we will never trade one form of violence for another.*

Abortion Represents Failure

Today we stand in solidarity with women coerced into abortion because *they felt they had no choice*. We stand with women who were vulnerable

because they were young, or poor, or in schools or workplaces that would not accommodate their needs as mothers.

We stand in solidarity with women who have been betrayed by those they count on the most, with women who have underestimated their own strength, with women who have experienced abortion and are silent no more, with young men and women who mourn their missing siblings. We mourn with men who weren't given a choice or who contributed to an abortion that they now regret.

In all its forms, abortion has *masked*—rather than solved—the problems women face. Abortion is a failed experiment on women. Why celebrate failure?

Address the Root Causes that Drive Women to Abortion

For decades, abortion advocates have asked, “What about the woman?” And proliferators have answered, “What about the baby?” This does nothing to address the needs of women who are pregnant.

We must *free women from abortion*.

We should start by addressing the *needs of women*—for family housing, childcare, maternity coverage, for the ability to telecommute to school or work, to job-share, to make a living wage, and to find practical resources.

As pro-life employers and educators, we must examine our own policies and practices in our own communities, workplaces, colleges, and universities. With woman-centered problem-solving, we can set the example for the nation and the world.

We must ramp up efforts to systematically address the unmet needs of struggling parents, birthparents, and victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

As we advocate unconditional support to women who lovingly place their babies into the arms of adoptive couples, we applaud birthmothers like former Feminists for Life board chair Jessica O'Connor-Petts, who tells us that “adoption can be an *empowering* option for women.”

Because six out of ten abortions are performed on mothers who already have dependents, and three out of four are economically challenged, Feminists for Life is determined to help those facing tough economic times and raise women out of poverty towards a better life through education, workplace solutions, and paternal support. WomenDeserveBetter.com is our resource to provide help for women as they “work, live, learn, and love.”

Future Leaders at Risk Today

The women on today's college campuses have never known a day without legal abortion. Forty-two percent of all abortions are performed on college-age women, women who will become our future leaders and educators in

every field. For these reasons, Feminists for Life's flagship effort is our College Outreach Program.

In addition to teaching the rich pro-life feminist history that we have uncovered, we have been moderating FFL Pregnancy Resource ForumsSM at campuses across the country. The first such panel discussion was at Georgetown University in 1997. Administrators, community leaders, and students came together in a non-confrontational setting to identify available resources on and off campus, and to set priorities for new policies, resources, and ways to communicate non-violent options.

Within two years, Georgetown's Board of Trustees set aside endowed housing for parenting students. The Hoya Kids Learning Center was established. Pregnant and parenting students had access to Health Services and user-friendly information on the school's website. Students created volunteer babysitting services. A "safety net" team of university administrators organized to ensure that no pregnant women, parents, or birthmothers fall through the cracks. And every year, Georgetown hosts a Pregnancy Resource Forum to take another look at ways they can improve.

The first Georgetown Forum started with the story of a woman who had an abortion because she didn't know where to go for help. At the 14th annual Forum, babies played on the floor. Beaming mothers told us they have "everything [they] need."

Last fall I moderated the 22nd annual Forum at Georgetown University. Because of our early efforts at Georgetown, Villanova, and Notre Dame, this is the first year that babies born with the support of administrators are now likely entering college themselves.

Other colleges have also expanded their support for student parents.

Pepperdine University created a task force to support pregnant women, adjusting policies to better suit student parents' needs and building family housing. A donor recently stepped forward to fund a housing scholarship.

Abbot Placid Solari and the monks of Belmont Abbey donated land adjacent to Belmont Abbey for "A Room at the Inn," now called *MiraVia*, so that women won't feel pressured to terminate their pregnancies *or* their educations. Pregnant women and new mothers can now have their babies and continue with school.

Pro-life and pro-choice students united at Wellesley College to hold a rummage sale benefitting a pregnant student who lost her financial aid for housing. The young woman graduated and had her baby.

A University of Virginia student started a babysitting club. Berkeley Students for Life held bake sales to pay for diaper decks. Students for Life at St. Louis University started a scholarship fund for child care. There are many

other examples like this as the ideas of Feminists for Life members and supporters go viral.

In 2010, FFL Pregnancy Resource ForumsSM findings became the inspiration for federal grants to states through the Department of Health and Human Services' Pregnancy Assistance Fund.

Clarion University held an FFL Forum in 2016, and in just two hours identified comprehensive resources for pregnant and parenting students and developed a communication plan.

After the first ten years of FFL's College Outreach Program, Planned Parenthood reported a 30 percent drop in abortions among college-educated women.

Women Deserve Better

Abortion betrays the basic feminist principles of nonviolence, nondiscrimination, and justice for all. Abortion is a reflection that we have not met the needs of women—and that women have settled for less. Women deserve better.

More than a century ago, the same women who fought for women's rights and for the rights of slaves to be free also fought to protect women and children from abortion. We continue their fight in the spirit of Mattie Brinkerhoff, who wrote in 1869 in *The Revolution*:

When a man steals to satisfy hunger, we can safely assume that there is something wrong in society—so when a woman destroys the life of her unborn child, it is an evidence that either by education or circumstances she has been greatly wronged.

Feminism was born of abolition. All people are equal. All choices are not. We envision a better day, a day when womanhood is celebrated, mothers are supported, fatherhood is honored, and every child is cherished.

If you refuse to choose between women and children, if you work to systematically eliminate the root causes that drive women to abortion, then you already follow in the footsteps of Susan B. Anthony and our other feminist foremothers, whether you call yourself a feminist or not.

Legal Abortion Threatens Health and Fertility: **Why Aren't Women Informed?**

Raymond J. Adamek

Punam Kumar Gill is a Canadian-born woman of Indian heritage who describes herself as a pro-choice feminist. In studying the topic of abortion, she noted that scientific researchers and medical professionals disagree about whether legal abortion has long-term adverse effects for some women, and whether it poses increased risks to children born after their mothers have had one or more abortions. The results of her research appear in her documentary film *Hush*. In this article, I will present some of her major findings, along with the findings of some major studies on these topics, focusing primarily on studies of women in the United States.

Gill addressed three major issues on which researchers and medical personnel seem to differ. First, does the risk of breast cancer increase for women who have one or more abortions? Second, does abortion increase the risk of premature births for subsequent children conceived by these women? Third, does abortion increase the risk of mental health problems for these women? Finally, after reviewing the data on those three questions, we will suggest answers to another: What motivates those researchers, medical personnel, and health officials who deny scientific findings on these issues?

Gill's approach was to visit and interview many of the professionals who were on different sides of these issues, and to let them and their findings speak for themselves. Since many researchers and health professionals were involved, we shall not attempt to present all of their findings. However, readers are invited to see this excellent documentary themselves.¹

Is Abortion Linked to an Increase in Breast Cancer?

In the film, Ian Gentles, Ph.D., states that there have been 108 studies world-wide regarding the possible link of induced abortion to an increased incidence of breast cancer.² Since the film's release, at least two other studies have been published, bringing the total to 110. Of the 110 studies, 81 (73.6 percent) find a link between abortion and an increased incidence of breast cancer (the ABC link), while 29 (26.4 percent) do not find a link.

Lifetime risk of breast cancer for American women increased from 1 in 12

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in 1970 to 1 in 7 in 2006, corresponding to a 6.4-fold increase in legal abortions during this time period. (Abortion was legalized in the U.S. by the *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* Supreme Court decisions of January 22, 1973.)

One study found that breast cancer rates in the U.S. climbed more than 40 percent between the mid-1980s and 1998. (The film reported that breast cancer takes about 10 years to develop; counting forward ten years from the nationwide legalization of abortion, we see the breast cancer rates beginning their climb from the mid-1980s.) Significantly, among the three age groups in the study, only the youngest generation (those under age 40 in 1973) experienced an increase in breast cancer rates.³ Sadly, as the film notes, there are some 1.7 million new cases of breast cancer in the U.S. each year. It is the leading cause of death of women between the ages of 20 and 59.

But what, we might ask, is the physiological connection between abortion and breast cancer? Joel Brind, Ph.D., a biologist and endocrinologist who has done pioneering work in this area (and who appears in the film), explains it this way: Breast lobules, which are the lactational apparatus of the breast, remain in their immature Type 1 and 2 states unless they are stimulated by a pregnancy. The pregnancy signals the mother's body to send estrogen (a potential carcinogen) to her breasts, and the lobules begin to multiply. This multiplication continues until the thirty-second week of pregnancy, when the milk cells are fully mature. If a woman has an abortion or delivers prematurely before the thirty-second week, cancer is more likely to develop in the immature cells. Mature milk cells are much less prone to becoming cancerous. Hence, abortion, premature delivery prior to 32 weeks, and paradoxically, delayed pregnancy increase a woman's risk of breast cancer.⁴ The film indicated that if a woman has her first full-term pregnancy at age 20, her chances of developing breast cancer are 1 in 12. If she delays it until age 30 and has a prior abortion, her chances of developing breast cancer increase to 1 in 5.

Dissent Regarding the Abortion-Breast Cancer Link

Not all physicians and health professionals accept the findings on the ABC link. One individual who does not is David A. Grimes, M.D., FACOG, FACPM, who has performed abortions himself. Dr. Grimes is one of a few U.S. physicians board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology and also in preventive medicine. He has quite an impressive vita that includes some nine years of service with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Dr. Grimes has published 398 peer-reviewed articles, 50 textbook chapters, and 11 books. Here is what he said about the ABC link when interviewed in the film: "The abortion-breast cancer link is an old dog that they keep on flogging.

It's time to stop." He then described those who hold this position as a small group of non-physicians who have little training in research and whose main common factor is religiosity. At two other points in the film he says: "The jury is in, there is no relationship between either miscarriage [see below] or induced abortion and breast cancer," and "Given that the issue [of abortion and breast cancer] is settled, to continue doing studies of a settled question is inappropriate. Not only is it not appropriate, it is unethical."

After denying an ABC link, Dr. Grimes identified seven health and professional organizations that, having reviewed the literature, concluded or agreed that such a link does not exist. They are the American Cancer Society, Canadian Cancer Society, National Cancer Institute, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Royal College of Obstetricians, Canadian Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and World Health Organization.

In trying to understand why Dr. Grimes and these organizations seem to be attempting to shut down research on the ABC link and to deny the findings of at least 81 published studies that found a link, Gill visited the websites of these organizations. Each one referred her to the statement of the National Cancer Institute's February 2003 Workshop on "Abortion, Miscarriage, and Breast Cancer Risk," which states, "... the National Cancer Institute (NCI) convened a workshop of over 100 of the world's leading experts who study pregnancy and breast cancer risk. . . . They concluded that having an abortion or miscarriage does not increase a woman's subsequent risk of developing breast cancer." When Gill personally visited the NCI to question them about this conclusion, they refused to answer her questions and escorted her off the premises! Joel Brind also attended that 2003 workshop and pointed out to the participants that he and other attendees had done studies showing an ABC link; in response he was merely referred to the workshop's official statement, which denied the link.

Does Abortion Result in an Increased Incidence of Problems in Subsequent Pregnancies?

There are at least 139 studies finding that induced abortion increases the risk of prematurity and low birth weight in subsequent births, thus posing health risks for future children, whether wanted or unwanted. Between 1980 and 2005, the preterm birth rate in the U.S. increased by 43 percent, coinciding with the increase in legal abortion.⁵ Prematurity is the leading cause of death among newborn babies. According to the CDC, babies who died of preterm-related causes accounted for 36 percent of all infant deaths in 2013.⁶ Moreover, those who survive may face lifelong problems. These include breathing

problems, feeding difficulties, cerebral palsy, developmental delay, vision problems, and hearing impairment.⁷ A recent analysis of 37 studies from around the world, carefully chosen for their scientific rigor, concluded that women who had undergone a first or second trimester abortion showed a 36 percent increase in the risk of prematurity, while women with more than one abortion showed an increased risk of prematurity of 93 percent.⁸ Abortion has also been associated with increased incidence of miscarriages and of ectopic pregnancies. The latter are fatal for the unborn and, if undetected, can be fatal for the mother. Between 1970 and 1989, ectopic pregnancies in the U.S. increased almost fourfold (again coinciding with the increase in abortions) and caused 13 percent of all pregnancy-related maternal deaths during this period.⁹

Although African Americans make up only about 13.3 percent of the population of the United States, the Guttmacher Institute reports that in 2014, black women had 28 percent of the abortions.¹⁰ The Centers for Disease Control, compiling data from 29 of 52 state or other jurisdictions, found that in 2013 non-Hispanic black women had the highest abortion rate among major ethnic groups, at 27.0 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44. In contrast, non-Hispanic white women had an abortion rate of 7.2 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44.¹¹ Thus, depending upon which reporting source is used, black women have abortions at a rate from 2.1 to 3.8 times greater than their numbers in the population would lead one to expect. Correspondingly, black women are three times more likely to have preterm births before 32 weeks gestation, and four times more likely to have preterm births before 28 weeks.¹²

We have already discussed the role of estrogen production in the physiological relationship between breast cancer and ending a pregnancy by abortion or early delivery prior to 32 weeks. In *Hush* Gill presents an additional mechanism that also increases the incidence of premature births following surgical abortions. (Currently, surgical abortions make up some 69 percent of legal abortions, decreasing from 94 percent of the total in 2001.¹³)

As the film illustrates, a woman's cervix is designed to remain tightly closed during pregnancy to protect the developing baby. However, in a surgical abortion, the physician introduces instruments or luminaria into the cervix to force it open to get at the baby. This action can weaken or tear the cervical muscles. Obviously, the more abortions the woman has, the greater the chance of damaged cervical muscles. As a result, in subsequent pregnancies (whether wanted or unwanted), the woman may experience "cervical incompetence," which means the cervical muscles can no longer support the baby to term, leading to a miscarriage or premature birth.

Dissent Regarding the Abortion-Premature Birth Link

As we have seen above, Dr. Grimes has stated that there is no relationship between abortion and premature birth, in spite of the fact that he must be aware of the 100+ studies that have found such a link. Moreover, another national conference of health professionals also concluded that such a link does not exist, or at least they decided not to discuss the evidence. The report of the Surgeon General's Conference on the Prevention of Preterm Birth, held in Bethesda, Maryland, on June 16-17, 2008, noted that "Nearly 12 percent of all babies born in the United States are born preterm, and this rate continues to rise." (Currently, over 500,000 premature births occur annually). Again, *Hush* notes that in one of the conference sessions a participant stated that 122 studies indicated a link between induced abortion and premature birth; the participant wondered why it was not on the slate of topics to be discussed later. The chair apparently took a hand vote to see how many participants wanted to discuss abortion's link to premature birth, and concluded that a majority was not in favor of such a discussion.

We should note that the written report of the conference discusses over 20 variables that appear to contribute to an increase in premature birth, but does not mention induced abortion. They even failed to mention induced abortion in the section of the report headlined "Intendedness of Pregnancy and Preterm Delivery." Furthermore, in doing background research for this paper, I found that the CDC's report "Premature Birth" made the same omission! Under the topic "Risk Factors," for "Medical and pregnancy characteristics," the report lists only the following: "short time between pregnancies, delivering a baby preterm in the past, carrying more than one baby." In view of the evidence presented thus far, it appears that many in the health community do not want to tell women that abortion is related to an increase in premature births, even though this may adversely affect them and their future children.

A local manifestation of the *Hush* phenomenon occurred in Akron, Ohio, in January 2016. A meeting of health professionals and state and local government representatives was held to discuss the fact that Ohio was one of the five states in the country with the highest rates of infant mortality, with black babies suffering a particularly high mortality rate. Variables such as poor prenatal care, racism, prematurity, and low birthrate were considered. But the link between induced abortion and prematurity was ignored, even though the Ohio Department of Health reported that in 2015, black residents of Ohio obtained 40.1 percent of the state's reported abortions, although blacks comprise only 12.7 percent of the population.

**Does Abortion Increase the Incidence of
Long-Term Negative Psychological Effects?**

At least 22 published studies find a link between abortion and depression. Thirty-three studies show a link between abortion and substance abuse. A 13-year study (1987-2000) of the entire female population of Finland aged 15-49 (being a small country they have excellent health records on their citizens) found the suicide rate among women who had abortions was six times higher than that of those who had given birth, and twice that of women who had miscarriages.¹⁴ David C. Reardon, Ph.D., who is interviewed in the *Hush* film, studied the MediCal records of over 173,000 California women who had given birth or aborted in 1989. Women who had state-funded abortions were 2.5 times more likely to die of suicide than MediCal women who had given birth.¹⁵ A nationally representative sample of 3,310 U.S. women found that those experiencing an abortion were 59 percent more likely to engage in suicidal ideation and 51 percent more likely to have attempted suicide than those not having an abortion.¹⁶

Priscilla K. Coleman, Ph.D. (also interviewed in the film) and colleagues studied a national sample of 5,877 U.S. women and found that for 12 of 15 adverse mental health outcomes examined, a decision to have an abortion resulted in an elevated risk. Among women who had abortions, the risk of alcohol abuse increased by 120 percent, of drug abuse by 79 percent, of bipolar disorder by 167 percent, of major depression by 45 percent, of panic disorders by 111 percent, of post-traumatic stress syndrome by 59 percent, and of agoraphobia (fear of crowds, public places, or open spaces) by 95 percent. On the other hand, spontaneous abortions (miscarriages) had an independent effect on just 4 of the 15 psychiatric problems examined.¹⁷

In September 2011, Coleman published a comprehensive review and analysis of 22 of the world's best large studies of abortion's impact on women's mental health. Chosen for their methodological rigor as well as sample size, the studies' results were combined in one meta-analysis of 877,181 women, of whom 163,831 had experienced abortion. Coleman's overall finding from the meta-analysis was that women who had undergone an abortion experienced an 81 percent greater risk of mental health problems.¹⁸

Perhaps the most methodologically and statistically sophisticated study to date used data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health and followed 8,005 American women who were interviewed three times at average ages of 15, 22, and 28. After adjusting for several demographic variables and other factors, the study found that induced abortion

was associated with a 45 percent elevation in a woman's risk of mental health disorder, while natural miscarriage raised the risk of mental health disorder by 24 percent, and childbirth slightly decreased the risk of mental disorder.¹⁹

Dissent Regarding the Negative Psychological Impact of Abortion

When interviewed in the film about the negative effects of abortion, Dr. Grimes said, "There are no long-term consequences from abortion, either reproductive or otherwise, and that includes psychological effects as well." Dr. Grimes also referred to two of three major reviews of the literature on this topic, and concluded, "There is no evidence that having an abortion impacts a woman's mental health."

The first major literature review Dr. Grimes referred to was conducted by Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and released in 1987. It concluded that there was insufficient evidence to state whether or not abortion increased the risk of negative psychological consequences for women. The second major review was published by the American Psychological Association (APA) in August 2008 and evaluated all empirical studies published in English since 1989 that compared the mental health of women who had an induced abortion to similar groups of women. The report concluded, "The best scientific evidence published indicates that among adult women who have an unplanned pregnancy, the relative risk of mental health problems is no greater if they have a single elective first trimester abortion or deliver that pregnancy," but admitted, "The evidence regarding the relative mental health risks associated with multiple abortions is more uncertain." They also noted that women who terminated a wanted pregnancy, or were pressured to have an abortion, or because of social stigma perceived a need to keep the abortion secret, were more likely to experience negative psychological reactions following abortion.²⁰

Adding six more studies to their review in 2009, the APA repeated their first finding (no relationship), found no effect for women terminating a pregnancy because of fetal deformity (compared to women who miscarried a wanted pregnancy or had a stillborn or a newborn die), and cited four other findings: 1) young women in New Zealand, Australia, and Norway who report one or more abortions have an increased risk of mental health problems; 2) abortions per se do not cause mental health problems; 3) the majority of adult women who have abortions do not experience mental health problems; 4) some women do experience such problems as depression or anxiety.²¹

The third major review was published by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleagues in 2011. They reviewed all studies published in English from 1990-2011. They concluded: 1) aborting an unwanted pregnancy increases

the risk of mental health problems, but so does giving birth in the same circumstances; 2) prior mental health problems contribute to problems after abortion; 3) partner pressure to abort or negative attitudes about abortion or the abortion experience may increase a woman's risk of mental health problems after abortion.²²

As we can see, dissent on psychological problems is somewhat more equivocal than dissent on the links between abortion and breast cancer or premature births. The reviews' conclusions focus primarily on adult women and first trimester abortions, while finding more difficulties in later abortions. They also note the role of some of the circumstances mentioned by David Reardon in the film (such as partner pressure and fear of social stigma) in contributing to mental problems after abortion. While the APA's 2009 report concluded that "the majority of women who terminate a pregnancy do not experience mental health problems," as one study mentioned in *Hush* found, 21 percent of U.S. women surveyed stated that their abortion harmed them more than it helped, so we are talking about a significant public health problem. After all, 21 percent of the 926,200 legal abortions reported by the Guttmacher Institute as occurring in 2014 would involve up to 194,502 women (some may have had more than one abortion that year) in just one year.

Women Have a Right to Know

Although *Hush* creator Punam Kuman Gill has remained pro-choice on the abortion issue, she rightly maintains that women have the right to know the possible negative physical, psychological, and social effects that legal abortion may have on them. Even Dr. Grimes agreed, saying, "I absolutely believe that women should know all the truth that we know." However, when asked about informative legislation, he said, "Women's right-to-know laws are a very overt attempt to dissuade or discourage women from exercising their right to have an abortion. The whole notion is false—the notion that we doctors are not doing a good job counseling women about abortion. We are very good at it, we've been doing it some 50 million times in the United States over the past four decades." (However, revelations by former abortion clinic staff suggest that it is typically the staff, and not the abortionist, who counsel patients. Moreover the "counselling" often consists of "selling" the abortion to the patient. It seems likely that most abortion patients see the doctor only after they are on the table.)

What might motivate professionals to suppress the possible negative effects of legal abortion? At least five motivations come to mind, two of which were mentioned in the film.

1. As noted in the film, researchers need to be aware of the preferences of

organizations that fund them, such as the National Cancer Society, the National Institute of Health, or the March of Dimes. A survey of researchers found that 1 in 5 admitted to changing the design, methodology, or results of a study because of pressure from a funding source.²³ Scientists may also “spin” the results of their work, as was illustrated in the film by three studies which concluded that there was no relationship between abortion and breast cancer, while their own data showed there was indeed a relationship when the women’s ages or the timing of the abortion were considered.

2. More pressure may be put on researchers from professional organizations. In her recent article dealing with post-abortion mental health research, Priscilla K. Coleman states, “Virtually all mainstream professional organizations in psychology and medicine have embraced an unwavering pro-choice political stance on abortion.” She argues that “well-entrenched, seldom-discussed professional gatekeepers . . . encourage agenda-driven research and ignore fundamental scientific principles in order to fill journal articles with ‘evidence’ that abortion poses no risk to women’s health.”²⁴

3. The fact that women are least likely to have breast cancer (other things being equal) if they have their children at an early age and have several children does not comport well with current feminist ideology, according to which women should delay childbirth as they complete their education and pursue careers to achieve financial independence. (Simultaneously achieving these goals is not impossible, but admittedly more difficult in today’s society than postponing child-bearing.) Hence, those in agreement with this ideology are less likely to accept scientific findings that run contrary to it.

4. The fourth reason medical professionals, particularly doctors, might be reluctant to inform patients of the abortion breast cancer link (as well as the link between hormonal contraceptives and cancer) was suggested by the authors of a recent study that found a strong positive correlation ($r = .84$) between abortion rates and breast cancer rates over a 38-year period in England and Wales:

Each prescription for hormonal contraceptives has a doctor’s signature. Every abortion notification form . . . needs two doctors’ signatures. In the UK, claims under medical professional liability insurance are largely in the area of obstetrics and gynecology . . . it is understandable that British medical journals are reluctant to publish papers that report a link of breast cancer to induced abortions.²⁵

5. Finally, while I have not studied the organizational memberships of those who deny the relationships between abortion, breast cancer, premature births, and adverse mental health outcomes, they call to mind population control advocates—who have developed a world-wide program to spread abortion and contraception in developed and undeveloped countries, while

not fully informing men and women of their negative consequences.²⁶ Apparently, they are willing to violate individual human rights for a perceived greater good.

As the *Hush* film noted, scientific questions are seldom “closed.” Women deserve to know what the state of scientific knowledge is on these issues. If abortion “is a woman’s decision,” it ought to be an informed decision.

NOTES

1. *Hush* is available online at Hush, Mighty Motion Pictures.
2. Gentles is co-author with Angela Lanfanchi, M.D. and Elizabeth Ring-Cassidy, M.A. of *Complications: Abortion's Impact on Women*, Toronto, Canada: The deVeber Institute for Bioethics and Social Research, 2013 (433 pp.).
3. H. L. Howe, et al. “Annual Report to the Nation on the Status of Cancer, 1973-1998, Featuring Cancers with Increasing Trends,” *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* 93 (2001): 824-842.
4. For a more detailed explanation of the physiological process, see Angela Lanfranchi, M.D., “The Reasons Hormonal Contraceptives and Induced Abortion Increase Breast Cancer Risk,” *The Linacre Quarterly* 76:3 (August 2009) 236-249.
5. Brent Rooney et al. “Does Induced Abortion Account for Racial Disparity in Preterm Births, and Violate the Nuremberg Code?” *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* 13:4 (Winter, 2008) 102-104.
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Premature Birth,” www.gov.Features/PrematureBirth/ Page last updated November 7, 2016.
7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Preterm Birth.” This fact sheet also notes, “Preterm births may also take an emotional toll and be a financial burden for families.” Online.
8. P.S. Shah and J. Zao, “Induced Termination of Pregnancy and Low Birthweight and Premature Birth: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.” *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*. (May 19, 2009) Online.
9. Tatiana E. Goldner, et al. “Surveillance for Ectopic Pregnancy—United States, 1970-1989,” *MMWR* Vol. 42, No. SS-6 (December 17, 1993).
10. Guttmacher Institute, “Induced Abortion in the United States,” Fact Sheet (January, 2017).
11. Tara C. Jatlaoui, et al. “Abortion Surveillance—United States, 2013,” *Surveillance Summaries*. 65:12 (November 25, 2016) 1-44.
12. Brent Rooney et al. (see note 5 above).
13. Guttmacher Institute (see note 10 above).
14. Mika Gissler, et al. “Injury, Deaths, Suicides and Homicides Associated with Pregnancy, Finland 1987-2000” *European Journal of Public Health* 15:5 (2005) 459-463.
15. David C. Reardon, et al. “Deaths Associated with Pregnancy Outcome: A Record Linkage Study of Low Income Women,” *Southern Medical Journal* 95:8 (August, 2002) 834-841.
16. Natalie P. Mota, et al. “Associations Between Abortion, Mental Disorders, and Suicidal Behavior in a Nationally Representative Sample,” *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 55:4 (April, 2010) 239-246.
17. Priscilla K. Coleman, et al. “Induced Abortion and Anxiety, Mood and Substance Abuse Disorders: Isolating the Effects of Abortion in the National Comorbidity Survey,” *Journal of Psychiatric Research* 42 (2008). Online.
18. Priscilla K. Coleman, “Abortion and Mental Health: Quantitative Syntheses and Analysis of Research Published 1995-2009,” *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 199 (December, 2006) 180-186.
19. Donald Paul Sullins, “Abortion, Substance Abuse and Mental Health in Early Adulthood: Thirteen-Year Longitudinal Evidence for the United States,” *Sage Open Medicine* (July, 2016).
20. American Psychological Association, “APA Task Force Finds Single Abortion Not a Threat to Women’s Mental Health” (August 12, 2008). Online.
21. Brenda Major, et al. “Abortion and Mental Health: Evaluating the Evidence,” *American Psychologist* (December, 2009) 863-890.
22. Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, “A Systematic Review of the Mental Health Outcomes of

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- Induced Abortion, Including Their Prevalence and Associated Factors,” London, 2011.
23. Brian C. Martinson et al. “Scientists Behaving Badly,” *Nature* (9 June 2005) 737-738.
24. Priscilla K. Coleman, “Post-Abortion Mental Health Research: Distilling Quality Evidence from a Politicized Professional Literature,” *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* 22:2 (Summer, 2017) 38-43.
25. Patrick S. Carroll et al. “The British Breast Cancer Epidemic: Trends, Patterns, Risk Factors and Forecasting,” *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* 22:1 (Spring, 2017) 8-15. As the *Hush* film notes, the International Agency for Research of Cancer of the World Health Organization (WHO) has classified hormonal contraceptives as a Group 1 carcinogen. It states, “artificial contraceptives are carcinogenic on a par with cigarettes and asbestos.” The National Cancer Institute has also stated, “The risk of endometrial and ovarian cancer is reduced with the use of OC’s [oral contraceptives] while the risk of breast and cervical cancer is increased.”
26. See Jacqueline Kasun, *The War Against Population: The Economics and Ideology of World Population Control*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999.



“Do you own a good set of worry beads?”

Until Death Do Us Part (1994)

John Muggeridge

In *Enemies of Eros*, published five years ago, Maggie Gallagher claims that you can't get married any more. No-fault unilateral divorce, she argues, has turned marriage into officially sanctioned concubinage. And I must say that's the way it looks from the perspective of a college English teacher. The ex-wives who pass through my classes (every year brings a younger and more numerous crop of them) could well be mistaken for dumped concubines.

As far as I can tell, they have no hang-ups about matrimony. For them, breaking up with husbands is a nasty but unsurprising consequence of marrying them. You get over it. Meanwhile, the whole world seems bent on persuading you to try again. Newspapers advertise dating services; singles clubs offer travel packages; churches hold dances for widows, widowers, and divorcees, while colleges help out with condom vending machines for the hesitant and a general-interest course called "Creative Divorce" for the doubtful. No wonder those newly unweds in my English class take such pains with their eye makeup.

Age, moreover, seems to be no object. A colleague of mine with an estranged wife and four grown-up children to contend with still has his hat in the dating ring. During the lunch break matronly teachers of business report writing *ooh* and *aah* over his latest conquest, and archly inquire whether Mabel or Cynthia will be accompanying him to the annual retirement banquet. No one, however, mentions remarriage. Some topics don't bear being discussed in public. Another colleague, who had recently left his wife of twenty years and moved in with someone else's, once took me aside—this sort of thing is always happening when one is a faculty's token practising Catholic—to tell me confidentially that he and his new roommate were getting married: "Everyone's being very mature about it," he assured me; "We're doing it for the children, you know."

Not, however, for the first wife. The only recourse she had was to persuade as many of her children as possible to stay away from the ceremony. Two did; one didn't. That's as much clout as she could hope for. How could it be otherwise? Spouses who have been set aside must stay set aside; otherwise, the truth that no-fault divorce is a contradiction in terms may have to

John Muggeridge, who died in 2005, was a longtime senior editor and contributor to the *Human Life Review*. This essay, which can also be accessed in the *Review's* online archive (www.humanlifereview.com), was first published in the Fall 1994 edition.

be faced up to. Today's marriage laws can work only when society gives a free rein to cads. Some five years ago, this city's director of public education divorced his wife and married his mistress. Nothing daunted, he went on directing the moral and intellectual lives of our children. The local newspaper even published a letter from him—professionally he was conservative—in praise of getting back to basics. As for his wronged wife, however hurtful his behaviour had been towards her, their no-fault divorce had rendered it innocuous. The last occasion on which she saw her husband was their daughter's wedding. At it, he danced cheek-to-cheek with her supplanter. Why not? Shouldn't a man be allowed to show public affection for his new wife? And how was he to blame if his old one happened to die of cancer and a broken heart eighteen months later? True, he had once vowed before a clergyman to love her, comfort her, honour and keep her in sickness and in health. But what could such promises mean to either of them now that by virtue of a statute passed by the Parliament of Canada they were man and wife no longer?

Nevertheless, this respectably philandering educationalist deserves some sympathy. Even after a second marriage, which could only have been for love, happiness continued to elude him; he got in dach with the local school board, resigned, and died tragically, not long after the woman whose last years he had done so much to darken. As with so many other short-term husbands, he must have come to realize too late that divorce is a far more complicated and painful process than the world would have us believe. Putting away a wife is simplicity itself; all you have to do in Canada is stay away from her for twelve months, and then hire the best lawyer you can find for winning property settlements. What hurts is putting away a family. The story is told of a ninety-year-old couple who filed for divorce; their lawyer wondered why they hadn't done so earlier. "We were waiting for the children to die," they explained. But even then they may have acted precipitously. Somewhere, no doubt, there lurked great-grandchildren on whom this last gallant attempt at pleasure-seeking would inflict traumas. The truth is that the victims of family breakup receive wounds which time does not heal. In 1971, the sociologist Judith Wallerstein began studying how divorce affects American families. According to the then-prevailing view, divorce was, as she recalled eighteen years later, "a brief crisis that would soon resolve itself." Accordingly, she obtained a grant for a one-year study of sixty divorcing families with 131 children between the ages of two and eighteen, all of whom lived in a white middle-class community in San Francisco. Eighteen months later, her subjects remained in crisis. Most of the adults continued to

display symptoms of anger, humiliation, and rejection. A surprisingly large number of their children “were on a downward course.”

Not wishing to leave any stray ends, Wallerstein next got funding to conduct a five-year follow-up study of fifty-six of the original sixty families. But still the storm would not subside. Most of the children Wallerstein interviewed after five years still hoped that their parents would get back together; even if there had been a remarriage, “they held on to reconciliation fantasies based on the logic that ‘if they can get divorced once, they can do it again.’” Despite—or perhaps because of—this longing to be part of a united family again, they remained “intensely angry at their parents for giving priority to adult needs rather than to their needs.” Well over a third of them “were clinically depressed,” doing badly in school, and messing up their social lives.

So she applied for yet more funding, this time to help her conduct a *ten-year* follow-up. Wallerstein’s latest findings simply confirm what had already become apparent to her: Divorce is more devastating than bereavement. At least death puts an end to uncertainty. Not so divorce. Unlike departed ones, absentee parents telephone, visit, issue invitations to their weddings and, most heart-wrenchingly of all, announce that they are re-divorcing. So, for children, the cruel waiting game goes on. They experience, in Wallerstein’s words, “a persistent, gnawing sense that the loss of the intact family is not final,” which serves only to keep alive the resentment they had first felt when their parents broke up. In one of Wallerstein’s case studies, a woman whose parents have been divorced for thirty years still dreams that they might get back together again. In another, “Eloise,” a victim of incurable melanoma, tells her mother: “I want Dad to know that I’m still angry with what he did to you.” The action she refuses to forgive him for is deserting her mother ten years before.

Husband and wife may hope that breaking up will give them a second chance at happiness; their children know that it won’t. For them, divorce, in Wallerstein’s words, is “a price *they* pay”—and they want their money back. Notice how often their language implies that, despite appearances, the old order hasn’t changed. One wonders, for example, why Wallerstein should have been so surprised to hear a nine-year-old refer to her prospective stepfather as “Mr. O’Brien.” The girl knew who her father was and saw no point in pretending he was Mr. O’Brien. A friend of ours, having been walked out on three years ago, has since remarried; her eight-year-old daughter, like Karen, insists on addressing the new husband as a stranger. Of course she does. To her, he *is* a stranger. Her father is the man who used to live with them, and even though, like Eloise, she may never forgive him for betraying her mother, he is still her father.

Literature as well as life abounds in stepchildren who refuse to accept the new dispensation. Consider *Hamlet*. In Scene Two, Hamlet is mourning the death of his father. Claudius, Hamlet's stepfather, who wants him to stop doing so, asks: "How is it that the clouds still hang on you?"—to which Hamlet makes the telling reply "Not so, my Lord, I am too much in the 'son.'" Or how about Electra? Of no one can it more truly be said that she was too much in the daughter. Her mother's lover Aegisthus murdered her father Agamemnon (killing the spouse one wants to replace is Greek tragedy's closest equivalent to no-fault divorce) on his return from the Trojan Wars. Electra spends the next thirty years living in her mother's house, reminding her of what had happened to Agamemnon, and dreaming of revenge. Her moment comes with the secret and unexpected return of her brother, Orestes, who duly dispatches mother and stepfather after a harvest festival. And even the gods speak understandingly of him. In a production I once saw of Sophocles' great tragedy, when the guilty couple finally pay for their crime, their house, which up until then had been tilting to one side, straightens.

No; children of divorce don't give up. Here one understands the deep social conservatism that Wallerstein discovered in them. The word *faithful* came up again and again in their conversations with her. For wasn't unfaithfulness what had caused all the trouble for these disillusioned young adults in the first place? Attacking contemporary permissiveness was their way of keeping alive hope. If all else failed, perhaps they could moralize their families back together. One disillusioned young adult referred to his parents' "mistakes"; no doubt he had in mind that mistakes can be rectified. Unlike his parents, he wanted "a long-term relationship" because, as he told Wallerstein, "sex without love is animal passion." Love lasts, so his argument ran, and animal passion doesn't; therefore, since animal passion was what had driven his parents apart, sooner or later he could expect to see them reunited. Another of Wallerstein's subjects announced his belief in the goodness of marriage and fidelity and the badness of cheating and splitting up; if only he could get *that* message across to his parents, all would be well again. And a third sought to satisfy himself that his parents' second marriages were invalid by explaining to Wallerstein that he was looking for someone to settle down with forever, because "marriage should be a permanent thing."

For him, of course, his parents' marriage *was* a permanent thing. Maggie Gallagher may rightly claim that you can't get married anymore, but what Wallerstein shows is that, once your marriage is fruitful, you can't get divorced anymore. "And they two shall be one flesh." Bringing children into the world makes this prophecy come true, whether in the form of a curse or a blessing.

It's not a question of having to stay together for the sake of the children; divorcing husbands and wives can't disentangle themselves from each other *because* of the children. They find themselves exchanging insults, slamming doors in each other's faces, even hitting each other, under the frightened gaze of their own flesh and blood. Sometimes the husband would turn to a five-year-old and scream: "See what she is doing to me!" This is matrimonial hell. One divorcee told Wallerstein that when total war finally broke out between her and her husband, she felt as if she were dying.

Such enmity between man and woman must end in bloodshed. And so it does—on the kitchen floor, but most extensively in abortion clinics. No-fault divorce and no-fault abortion have always gone together. For one thing they date from the same time. *Roe v. Wade* was handed down in 1973, precisely when state legislatures were falling over each other to let Americans renege on their marriage vows. Might not this be because divorce and abortion really are complementary? Certainly the men and women who procure them seem to be driven to do so by the same furies. According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute's *Abortion Factbook 1992 Edition*, over 82 percent of U.S. abortions in 1987 were performed on spinsters, widows, divorcees, and women separated from their husbands or lovers. Leave out spinsters and widows, who have no marriages to break up, and what you are left with is that section of America's female population most likely to be involved in divorce. Their very introspectiveness and despair recall the mood of those who have fought in the divorce trenches. Guttmacher researchers persuaded 1,900 customers at 37 abortion clinics across the country to rank in order of importance twelve reasons they might have for being there; 76 percent of the 1,900 attached most importance to "Woman is concerned about how having a baby could change her life"; 51 percent put at the top of their list "Woman has problems with relationship or wants to avoid single parenthood"; 31 percent cited "Woman doesn't want others to know she has had sex or is pregnant" and 23 percent "Husband or partner wants woman to have abortion." "Woman was victim of rape or incest" loomed largest for only 1 percent, "Woman has health problem" for 7 percent and "Fetus has possible health problem" for 13 percent. Not even Guttmacher's people had the gall to ask how these mothers-about-not-to-be would rate "Abortion will make woman happy."

The forgotten victims of divorce are grandparents. The literature treats them with affectionate condescension. They are expected to rally round, go on baking cookies, and taking boys to baseball games as if nothing had happened. Wallerstein even criticises them for being a support group that is not

up to snuff. But where is *their* support group? This is a serious question. Orthodox Jews object to abortion chiefly on the grounds that it murders posterity. But doesn't divorce do much the same thing? Suddenly in-laws stop being in law, and the family becomes an institution which no longer spans generations; meanwhile, the great divorce war rages on, with weddings and funerals providing the demilitarized zone in which to discuss Truce violations.

And everyone gets older—twenty-five years older, to be exact, if you count 1970 as the starting point for no-fault divorce. Once the big question for divorcees had been: Who should have custody of the children? Most often the answer was an obvious one—their mother, even though it might cost her the family's summer cottage to keep them. But now another question is looming: Who should provide care for grandparents? This *is* a tricky one, even trickier, perhaps, than deciding whether or not to sacrifice the summer cottage. For one thing, the whole grandparent problem has got out of hand. If each member of the originally divorcing couple remarries only once, that makes eight elderly parents and parents-in-law potentially in need of being looked after, and four relatives of varying degrees of consanguinity from which to find a caregiver. But who of them is going to want this job, or even feel an obligation to take it? I don't see anyone trading real estate for the privilege of looking after her ex-husband's mother.

A *Newsweek* article reports that most elderly Americans in need of care are still being looked after by their daughters or daughters-in-law. The key word here is "still." Certainly my mother's experience in the long-term care ward in which she spent her last fourteen months confirms *Newsweek's* assertion. The place thronged with daughters, not to mention sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. But I wonder if there were any ex-daughters-in-law there. My generation should be all right. Our families go back to the matrimonially stable Fifties and early Sixties. The children of divorce from the Seventies, whose troubled early adulthood Judith Wallerstein has so poignantly documented, are another story. They yearned for a stable family life, but most of them as recently as nine years ago still had not achieved one. Wallerstein talked to one eighteen-year-old in 1985 who had already had three abortions as well as a succession of love affairs. Moving on to yet another man, she explained, helped ease the pain of being finally separated from her father. Who will care for her in her declining years? Or for the more than three million American women who as of 1990 live alone?

Not the state. As the editor of this magazine pointed out in the last issue, only 21 years separate the handing down of *Roe* and Jack "Doctor Death" Kevorkian's acquittal. Not that he finds the speed with which this descent

down the slippery slope has taken place surprising: “Consequences,” he writes, “come swiftly in post-Christian America.” Certainly the consequences of no-fault divorce have come swiftly: first the destruction of the family, then abortion, now euthanasia.

Yet divorce itself remains sacrosanct. Wallerstein won’t hear of making it more restrictive. Nor will Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, whose article, “Dan Quayle Was Right,” about the disastrous consequences of divorce and single parenthood, appeared in the April 1993 *Atlantic*. Whitehead warns against what she calls the “regime effect” of university social-science departments, which pressures all of us into believing that changes currently taking place in the family are moving American society to ever higher levels of personal freedom and self-fulfillment.

But not to worry. Whitehead remains persuaded that reason can be made to prevail over political correctness. In her opinion, we don’t need a counter-revolution, because there hasn’t been a revolution. What we do need is sensible, scientifically tested reform. With that in place, marriage will thrive again, children will get back both parents, and old people will die surrounded by their loved ones. In other words, *Atlantic*’s brand of “conservative liberalism” will triumph.

No it won’t. God is not mocked. Those whom He hath joined together let no man put asunder.

The Death of Eros

Mark Regnerus

Something strange is going on in America's bedrooms. In a recent issue of *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, researchers reported that on average, Americans have sex about nine fewer times a year than they did in the late 1990s. The trend is most pronounced among the young. Controlling for age and time period, people born in the 1930s had the most sex, whereas those born in the 1990s are reporting the least. Fifty years on from the advent of the sexual revolution, we are witnessing the demise of eros.

Despite all the talk of the “hookup culture,” the vast majority of sex happens within long-term, well-defined relationships. Yet Americans are having more trouble forming these relationships than ever before. Want to understand the decline of sex? Look to the decline in marriage. As recently as 2000, a majority—55 percent—of Americans between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four were married, compared with only 34 percent who had never been married. Since then, the two groups have swapped places. By 2014, 52 percent of Americans in that age group had never been married, while only 41 percent were married. Young Americans are now more apt to experience and express passion for some activity, cause, or topic than for another person.

A decline in commitment isn't the only reason for the sexual recession. Today one in eight adult Americans is taking antidepressant medication, one of the common side effects of which is reduced libido. Social media use also seems to play a part. The ping of an incoming text message or new Facebook post delivers a bit of a dopamine hit—a smaller one than sex delivers, to be sure, but without all the difficulties of managing a relationship. In a study of married eighteen- to thirty-nine-year-old Americans, social media use predicted poorer marriage quality, lower marital happiness, and increased marital trouble—not exactly a recipe for an active love life.

If these were the only causes, the solution would be straightforward: a little more commitment, a little less screen time, a few more dates over dinner, more time with a therapist, and voilà. But if we follow the data, we will find that the problem goes much deeper, down to one of the foundational tenets of enlightened opinion: the idea that men and women must be equal in

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every domain. Social science cannot tell us if this is true, but it can tell us what happens if we act as though it is. Today, the results are in. Equality between the sexes is leading to the demise of sex.

To understand why this is, we need to turn to Gary Becker, an economist who won a Nobel Prize for his study of the economic principles behind human interactions. He documented how the benefits of marriage receded as women's earning power rose relative to that of men. The years between 1973 and 1983 were decisive. In that decade, young women's wages climbed steadily while men's actually fell, never to recover. Women had less reason to marry, and they had less attractive mates should they nonetheless decide to. Though women had often entered marriages for financial reasons, many nonfinancial benefits followed, including the formation of a stable, intimate relationship with a spouse and the sense of purpose that comes with raising a family. These are things that no job—however lucrative—can deliver.

The introduction of the Pill has not changed what men and women value most, but it has transformed how they relate. The marriage market before the Pill was populated by roughly equal numbers of men and women, whose bargaining positions were comparable and predictable. Men valued attractiveness more than women, and women valued economic prospects more than men. Knowing that men wanted sex, but realizing that sex was risky without a corresponding commitment, women often demanded a ring—a clear sign of his sacrifice and commitment.

Not anymore. Artificial contraception has made it so that people seldom mention marriage in the negotiations over sex. Ideals of chastity that shored up these practical necessities have been replaced with paeans to free love and autonomy. As one twenty-nine-year-old woman demonstrated when my research team asked her whether men should have to “work” for sex: “Yes. Sometimes. Not always. I mean, I don’t think it should necessarily be given out by women, but I do think it’s okay if a woman does just give it out. Just not all the time.” The mating market no longer leads to marriage, which is still “expensive”—costly in terms of fidelity, time, and finances—while sex has become comparatively “cheap.”

For every one hundred women under forty who want to marry, there are only eighty-two men who want the same. Though the difference may sound small, it allows men to be more selective, fickle, and cautious. If it seems to you that young men are getting pickier about their prospective spouses, you’re right. It’s a result of the new power imbalance in the marriage market. In an era of accessible sex, the median age at marriage rises. It now stands at an all-time high of twenty-seven for women and twenty-nine for men, and is

continuing to inch upward. In this environment, women increasingly have to choose between marrying Mr. Not Quite Right or no one at all.

For the typical American woman, the route to the altar is becoming littered with failed relationships and wasted years. Take Nina, a twenty-five-year-old woman my team interviewed in Denver. Petite, attractive, and faring well professionally in her position with an insurance company, Nina was nevertheless struggling when it came to relationships. She had a history of putting men she valued as confidantes in the “friend zone.” With these men, a sexual relationship seemed too risky. If it went awry, she’d lose not only a potential mate but also a valued friend. On the other hand, if she didn’t know the man well, she was willing to have casual sex while hoping for something more.

After several years, this approach had taken its toll: an abortion, depression, and a string of failed relationships. Nina now believed that a marriage ought to begin as a friendship, and for the first time in years, she had someone in particular—David—in mind. Though she had been raised by liberal parents to be open-minded about sex and wary of traditional household roles, she had come to see things differently. She was blunt: “I’m dead serious. . . . I would marry him, I would raise his kids, raise a family.”

In her 2013 book *Hard to Get*, Leslie Bell, a sociologist and psychotherapist, tries to understand the lives of women like Nina. She laments that the skills they developed “in getting ahead educationally and professionally have not translated well into getting what they want and need in sex and relationships.” When it comes to relationships, their “unprecedented sexual, educational, and professional freedoms” have led to “contradictory and paradoxical consequences.”

Nonsense, I say. The only contradictory and paradoxical thing here is the unrealistic expectation of so many that the financial independence of women would have wholly positive effects on the dance of the sexes. Women and men still want each other, but the old necessities that once brought them together have disappeared. Many are going it alone, apparently. Since 1992, there has been a 100 percent growth in the share of men and nearly 275 percent increase in the share of women who masturbate at least weekly.

Even those who marry are having trouble in the bedroom. According to the study, the frequency with which married couples had sex fell 19 percent between 2000 and 2014. An even steeper decline is evident in the just-released 2016 data. It’s not just married couples, either; cohabiting Americans are also reporting a drop in sexual activity. In their 1994 landmark sex study, University of Chicago sociologist Edward Laumann and his colleagues

reported that 1.3 percent of married men and 2.6 percent of married women between the ages of eighteen and fifty-nine had not had sex within the past year. Twenty years later, 4.9 percent of married men and 6.5 percent of married women in the same age range report that it has been more than a year since they have had sex with their spouses. How do we account for this?

Here, too, equality is the enemy of eros. Differences between men's work and women's work—between breadwinner and homemaker, father and mother—are increasingly viewed as arbitrary and oppressive. And yet this loss of everyday oppositions between men and women has made Americans less, not more, attractive to each other. It was not supposed to be this way. Some sociologists have guessed—or perhaps hoped—that men who are willing to take on traditionally female household tasks might enjoy more active sexual lives with their wives—quid in the kitchen for quo in the bedroom. The authors of a recent analysis of the National Survey of Families and Households conjectured that women would use the promise of sex to convince men to do more domestic tasks. Despite the transactional way of framing the problem, the researchers harbored a fond hope: that more equal relationships would also be more erotic ones. So, do men who do a greater share of the housework enjoy more sex? No. In fact, they're penalized in the bedroom. Husbands who do little or no housework had sex with their wives nearly two more times per month than did husbands who do all of it. Meanwhile, doing a greater share of traditionally male work around the house—mowing the lawn, fixing things—correlates with more sex. Men and women are not attracted to sameness, but to difference. We long for what is missing in ourselves. Needing each other makes us want each other.

Recognizing this doesn't mend everything between men and women, however. The cheap sex that was made possible by the Pill, further discounted by pornography, and made more efficient by Tinder has proven to be a bad bargain for women, leaving them (and, in turn, men) lonelier and less connected than they once were. I see it in the statistics and I hear it in their stories.

"Equality," Israeli sociologist Eva Illouz writes in her 2011 book, *Why Love Hurts*, "demands a redefinition of eroticism and romantic desire that has yet to be accomplished." Indeed. Egalitarianism promised the flourishing of eros, but by abolishing the difference between the sexes, it has made sexual acts self-referential—even those that are not performed alone. Men and women are not interchangeable, and our effort to make them so has only increased the loneliness and disaffection of American life. We cannot have both eros and strict equality between the sexes. Saving one requires sacrificing the other.

Christopher Dawson and the Embattled Family

Edward Short

When I was a boy, back in the last century, my father would often speak at the dinner table of his favorite authors. In his lovely, deep, tobacco-suffused voice, he would read aloud from the various writings of Max Beerbohm, including that imperishable bagatelle, *Zuleika Dobson* (1911), as well as from the authors of the Catholic revival of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, writers such as John Henry Newman, G. K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, Ronald Knox, and Evelyn Waugh. Yet of all these authors, the one about whom he spoke with the most admiration was the great Catholic historian Christopher Dawson (1889-1970). After all, in those faraway days, the Cold War was still on, and no one articulated the stakes of that struggle with Dawson's admonitory precision. For Dawson, the showdown between totalitarian Russia and the liberal West had had instructive dress rehearsals. First, in the ancient world, there had been the successful struggle mounted by the free Greek city-states to resist the tyranny of Persia. Then, there was the rise of the Catholic Church and its struggle with the Roman Empire, which, Dawson recognized, "had lost the ideals of citizenship and political freedom and was rapidly becoming a vast servile state like those of the ancient East." No one can read Dawson's characterization of this struggle without seeing its pertinence for the Cold War. Here was a battle, like the one Stalin waged against dissenters in his gulags, "fought out under the shadow of the executioners' rods and axes in praetoria and amphitheatres and concentration camps from Germany to Africa and from Spain to Armenia, and its heroes were the martyrs . . ." Thus, for Dawson, the Christians opposed the Romans to witness to their love of their Saviour, but, in doing so, they also fought for what those in the liberal West fought for against the Bolsheviks—the "idea that men possess rights even against the state and that society is not a totalitarian political unity but a community made up of a complex variety of social organisms, each possessing an autonomous life and its own free institutions." And, for Dawson, at the heart of this "autonomous life," properly understood, was the family, within whose relations, under God, men and women were uniquely free to embody the life-affirming, religious culture that makes civilization possible. In this essay, I shall revisit Dawson's life and work to show how vital the family was to his understanding of history

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and how prescient this understanding became when he turned his thoughts to the repudiation of the moral law, especially as it relates to the family, which constituted in his own time and continues to constitute in ours, the greatest threat to the Christian civilization he so deeply prized.

Yet before I delve into these lively, involved matters, I should say a few words about Dawson's life, because his personal fortunes had an abiding influence on how he saw not only the world but the history of the world.

Christopher Henry Dawson was born in 1889 at Hay Brecknockshire in Wales, the only son of Colonel Henry Philip Dawson (1850-1933), a Yorkshire country gentleman, and his wife Mary Louisa, the eldest daughter of Archdeacon William Lathan Bevan of Hay Castle, which, as I write, is being meticulously restored. Dawson was educated at Winchester and Trinity College, Oxford, where he left with a second class degree in history in 1911. Although at Winchester, he enjoyed the liberty he was given to read what he pleased, and at Oxford, he formed his lasting friendship with the Catholic historian E. I. Watkin, he did not acquire his love of learning from either of these redoubtable institutions. In an autobiographical fragment vividly describing his Victorian childhood, which can be found in the appendix of his daughter Christina Scott's excellent biography of the historian, Dawson makes plain that he was educated mostly by his father (as I was by mine) and by his appreciation of the history of place. "I got nothing from school, little from Oxford, and less than nothing from the new post-Victorian urban culture," he declared in 1925; "all of my 'culture' and my personal happiness came from that much-derided Victorian rural home life." In other words, it was his family, first and foremost, that educated him. This, and that ineradicable sense of place that always accompanies and reinforces the tutelage of family. "There is something about running water that appeals to a child's mind," Dawson recalled about the days he spent as a child beside the river Wharfe in Yorkshire.

On summer days the brown waters giggling and chattering among the rocks were a constant companion and friend, but better still were the days of sudden storm, when it was changed into a roaring torrent, rising foot by foot and hour by hour until the whole appearance of the valley was transformed. I think these early impressions of the elemental force of nature have a great importance in one's education . . . Moreover this love of the river had a certain literary and religious significance. For it was in the Old Testament, and there only, that I found these things written about, and it seemed to me that in those days they felt about these things as I did. 'Deep calleth to deep . . .'

The place where his childhood was spent was significant for another reason for the child who would grow up to write such brilliant Catholic history.

“The fragments of the Anglian high crosses and the ruins of the great northern abbeys recalled the times when the Church had been more of a power here than in most parts of England,” he noted. “Nowhere was the destruction of the monasteries more bitterly resented than in Craven.” In his father’s decision to leave Wales to build his own country house, Hartlington, next to the gloriously scenic Yorkshire dales, Dawson saw a curiously Catholic impulse. Although fond of Dante and such Catholic devotional writers as St. Ignatius Loyola and Jean Baptiste Avrillon, Dawson’s father had remained loyal to the Church of England, convinced as he was that no man had a right to leave the church of his fathers; yet, for his son, Henry Philip Dawson was hardly consistent “in his social traditionalism,” since “his return to Craven was in part a deliberate reaction against the Protestant tradition and an attempt to recover lost spiritual roots in a past which he felt to be Catholic.”

In light of these torn affinities, it is noteworthy that when Dawson converted to Catholicism, shortly after leaving Oxford, it was his father who accepted his secession from the National Church, while his mother, the daughter of an Anglican church historian, always regarded it as an unaccountable betrayal. The division in his own family would always impress upon Dawson, as it had impressed upon Newman, how deep-seated the English aversion was to the Church of Rome, which gave so much of his own work its personal and its public purpose. If the English and, indeed, the Welsh needed to be reacquainted with the historical richness of their traditional faith, he was the man to do it.

Many factors contributed to Dawson’s conversion. In 1909, he had visited Rome during Easter Week and, like Newman before him, he was impressed by the unexpected appeal of the ancient faith. Then, again, his close friend Edward Watkins was a Catholic, and he introduced Dawson to other Catholics, including the Catholic priest Father Francis Burdett, who, according to Dawson’s daughter, may have “looked like an Edwardian aesthete” in youth but in old age “resembled an eighteenth-century French abbé, with a flowing mane of white hair.” Like Dawson, Burdett was highly original in his thinking and fastidiously learned. Finally, listening to Newman’s biographer Wilfrid Ward expound on Newman’s *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1864) also pointed Dawson in the direction of Rome.

Yet it was his extraordinary wife, Valery Mills, a bright, beautiful, dedicated lady, the daughter of the Oxford architect Walter Edward Mills, whom he had met in Oxford at a party given by friends in their house on Folly Bridge (from which Zuleika’s young admirers jump to their deaths in *Zuleika Dobson*), who finally prevailed upon Dawson to convert. (He was received at what was then the Jesuit Church of St. Aloysius on the 5th of January,

1916.) After the couple had become engaged, Dawson wrote his fiancée: “I loved you before I knew you . . .” which in his case, was the literal truth. Even before meeting Valery, Dawson had seen and fallen in love with her in a photograph in which she was dressed as Joan of Arc. Apropos their eventual courtship, Dawson’s daughter nicely observes: “It was a romantic attachment but love and courtship were never so romanticized and idealized since the ages of chivalry than they were in the years before the First World War before the arrival of the Bloomsbury cult, the Jazz Age and the sexual revolution.”

A good deal less convincingly, his daughter claims that “Personal reasons, even the influence of his future wife, counted for little in his conversion in comparison with intellectual and historical ones.” On the contrary, I would argue that since the future historian’s love for his Catholic fiancée and his respect for the historical and theological grounds for conversion were inseparable, it is likelier that Valery did play a decisive role. After all, if he had somehow lost his nerve and *not* converted, he would have lost the girl of his dreams. As one of his friends noted: “When [Dawson] was a boy of thirteen or fourteen, the writings of Catholic saints and mystics, mediated through the Anglo-Catholic tradition, made a profound, indeed an indelible impression on his mind.” For young Dawson, Valery dressed as St. Joan was the very embodiment of this irresistible sanctity. Moreover, as a good student of Newman, Dawson was never unduly reliant on what Newman himself characterized as “the aggressive, capricious, untrustworthy intellect . . .”

In making sense of his conversion after the fact, the historian in Dawson pointed to Newman’s *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845), which the antinomian Cardinal Walter Kaspar and his friends continue to misrepresent. For Dawson, “There were but two paths: the way of faith and the way of unbelief, and as the latter led through the halfway house of Liberalism to Atheism, the former led through the halfway house of Anglicanism to Catholicism.”

Yet one must also keep in mind that before marrying Valery, Dawson sent her a copy of *Aucassin and Nicolette*, a charming thirteenth-century tale of courtly love about the misadventures that the son of a Christian count has to endure before rescuing and marrying his one true love, Nicolette, a captive of the Saracens. In all events, the couple married in 1916, after Dawson’s father settled a modest income on his scholarly, frail son, a competence which would allow him to write his books outside the academy without distraction or fear of want.

Once the Great War broke out, Dawson duly presented himself at Cowley Barracks but was turned down for active service for health reasons. Afterwards,

he took a teaching post in the Cowley Road, not far from a bicycle shop run by a man named Morris, who would later go on, as Lord Nuffield, to make Cowley the site of his famous automobile factory, which transformed sylvan, sequestered Oxford into the tawdry city that it remains today. In what one of his friends recalled as his hermitical seclusion, Dawson read uninterruptedly for fourteen years before publishing his first book, *The Age of the Gods* (1928), an immersion in his chosen field of ancient and modern history that gave him a well-nigh inexhaustible fund of learning on which to draw for the rest of his life.

Yet, here again, Valery played an indispensable role, which shows how formative family was in the education of the great historian. As Dawson's daughter writes: "His marriage . . . was linked with [his] destiny, for only with the love and devotion of a wife such as Valery could he have supported the lonely life of a freelance scholar and writer. In fact, it was a harder life for her than for him. For while she was completely devoted to him and his work, she was not mentally equipped to share the intellectual side of it with him. For most of her married life she was deprived also of the social life to which she was naturally inclined." It was only after Dawson was given the Charles Chauncey Stillman Chair of Roman Catholic Studies at Harvard in 1958, when he was sixty-eight, that Valery began to enjoy something of this formerly elusive social life. She was also instrumental in joining her husband in seeing to the happiness of their own family, providing her two daughters and one son with a joyous, loving home. Nevertheless, throughout the scholarly career of the inveterately impractical Dawson, it was Valery who ensured that the lights were kept on by attending to the practicalities of their various households in England and America—never an unimportant portion of the familial division of labor. At Harvard, Valery told Chauncey Stillman how amused she was by the deference she was shown by the intellectuals of the place. Obviously, they thought she must be a high-brow too. "But I am not," she said. "I just like music and laughter."

Thanks to Catholic University of America Press, and to the editor-in-chief of their edition of *The Works of Christopher Dawson*, Prof. Don J. Briel, who holds the Blessed John Henry Newman Chair of Liberal Arts at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota, most of Dawson's works are available in deftly annotated, reasonably priced editions. All of his best works are featured in this edition, including *Progress and Religion* (1929), *The Making of Europe* (1932), *Enquiries into Religion and Culture* (1933), *The Judgement of the Nations* (1942), *Religion and Culture* (1948), and *The Gods of Revolution* (1972). Ignatius Press has also published his Harvard lectures

in two volumes, one entitled *The Formation of Christendom* and the other, *The Dividing of Christendom*, the latter of which comes with an excellent overview of Dawson's work by the great monastic historian, David Knowles (1896-1974). Apropos the still underrated historian, Knowles observed: "His mind had the clarity of wisdom, not the simplicity of the superficial, and his style was lucid and free." After cutting short his Harvard appointment for poor health reasons, Dawson died in Devon in 1970 at the age of eighty-one. It was a mark of how unappreciated his life's achievement was in his own country that it was only acknowledged by the editors of the *Dictionary of National Biography* in their *Missing Persons* volume of 1993, more than twenty years after his death.

In nearly all of his works, Dawson shows how religion is the key to history because it is the key to culture, without which there can be no civilization, and in this the primacy of family is always patent. He is especially insightful on how both religion and culture animated the rise of Christianity before and after the fall of the Roman Empire, a necessary riposte to the great Enlightenment historian Edward Gibbon, whose *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88) still hornswoggles readers into imagining that the rise of Christianity can be properly treated in rationalist terms. No one can read Dawson without appreciating the spiritual and transcendent character of that unprecedented historical reality.

Dawson is also a good guide to the threats that Christian civilization received not only from Luther's Reformation but from precisely the forces of revolutionary rationalism unleashed by the Enlightenment, whether in the guise of the French or the Russian revolution.

Like his friend T.S. Eliot, Dawson was convinced that the West could only withstand the challenge of atheist totalitarianism by reacquainting itself with its own Christian culture. In this respect, we can hear Dawson's appreciation of the consequences of the West losing its Christian inheritance in Eliot's musings on this melancholy subject. "I know very little about Russia," Eliot wrote in a piece entitled "Christianity and Communism" (1932).

I do not know whether the experiment being made there will turn out to be, in the worldly sense, a failure or a success. If the system can be made to work, and if the Russians can be adapted to it, or bred into the sort of being who can flourish under it, that is their affair. But I should not like it any the better for that: for Russian communism is a religion, and a religion which is not mine. Of course, other and better qualified critics—among them Mr. Maynard Keynes—remarked this fact before; and it is indeed patent enough; but the full implications do not seem to me to have yet come home to all. If you like the Russian religion, I cannot expect to make any impression upon you. But if you do not like it, then you must keep in mind that you can never fight a religion except with another religion.

Of course, in our own age, we face a similar threat from the culture of death. The question is whether we will fight that peculiarly satanic religion by returning to our Christian roots and reasserting the Church's commitment to the moral law, or whether we will repudiate those roots and, in effect, acquiesce in the very dehumanizing antinomianism that gives the culture of death so much of its unique menace. No one recognized the centrality of this battle more keenly than Pope John Paul II. "The family is placed at the centre of the great struggle between good and evil, between life and death, between love and all that is opposed to love," the great saint wrote in his *Letter to Families* (1994). "To the family is entrusted the task of striving, first and foremost, to unleash the forces of good, the source of which is found in Christ the Redeemer of man."

Dawson saw the primacy of the family mostly in the ways in which it embodied what Pope John Paul II called "the civilization of love and life." And he saw it as clearly as he did as a result of his lifelong study of the rise of Christianity. "The reconstitution of Western civilization was due to the coming of Christianity and the re-establishment of the family on a new basis," he wrote in "The Patriarchal Family in History" (1933), which can be found in *The Dynamics of World History* (1956), a collection of his essays spanning nearly his entire career.

Though the Christian ideal of the family owes much to the patriarchal tradition which finds such a complete expression in the Old Testament, it was in several respects a new creation that differed essentially from anything that had previously existed. While the patriarchal family in its original form was an aristocratic institution which was the privilege of a ruling race or a patrician class, the Christian family was common to every class, even to the slaves. Still more important was the fact that the Church insisted for the first time on the mutual and bilateral character of sexual obligations. The husband belonged to the wife as exclusively as the wife to the husband. This rendered marriage a more personal and individual relation than it had been under the patriarchal system. The family was no longer a subsidiary member of a larger unit, the kindred or "gens." It was an autonomous self-contained unit which owed nothing to any power outside itself.

Dawson rightly recognizes that it is the family's very autonomy that makes it obnoxious to the state and those who wish to organize society entirely under the insatiate authority of the state. For Dawson, "It is precisely this character of exclusiveness and strict mutual obligation which is the chief ground of objection among the modern critics of Christian morality. But whatever may be thought of it, there can be no doubt that the resultant type of monogamous and indissoluble marriage has been the foundation of European society and has conditioned the whole development of our civilization."

Tragically, even in the twenty-first century, this is something that some in the Catholic episcopate have still to learn.

What is striking about Dawson's analysis of the threats that face marriage and family life is how prescient it is. After all, he wrote this in 1933, decades before it became evident what the sexual revolution had up its pernicious sleeve. And yet how eerily accurate they are!

The problem that faces us today is . . . not so much the result of an intellectual revolt against the traditional Christian morality; it is due to the inherent contradictions of an abnormal state of culture. The natural tendency, which is even more clearly visible in America than in England, is for the Puritan tradition to be abandoned and for society to give itself up passively to the machinery of modern cosmopolitan life. But this is no solution. It leads merely to the breaking down of the old structure of society and the loss of the traditional moral standards without creating anything which can take their place. As in the decline of the ancient world, the family is steadily losing its form and its social significance, and the state absorbs more and more of the life of its members. The home is no longer a centre of social activity; it has become merely a sleeping place for a number of independent wage-earners. The functions which were formerly fulfilled by the head of the family are now being taken over by the state, which educates the children and takes the responsibility for their maintenance and health. Consequently, the father no longer holds a vital position in the family: as Mr. Bertrand Russell says, he is often a comparative stranger to his children, who know him only as "that man who comes for week-ends." Moreover, the reaction against the restrictions of family life which in the ancient world was confined to the males of the citizen class, is today common to every class and to both sexes. To the modern girl marriage and motherhood appear not as the conditions of a wider life, as they did to her grandmother, but as involving the sacrifice of her independence and the abandonment of her career.

Of course, there are passages in Dawson's analysis that clearly reflect his time. For instance, he observes how, "The only remaining safeguards of family life in modern urban civilization are its social prestige and the sanctions of moral and religious tradition. Marriage is still the only form of sexual union which is openly tolerated by society, and the ordinary man and woman are usually ready to sacrifice their personal convenience rather than risk social ostracism." Still, such references underscore how degraded our own society has become in comparison. In this regard, they recall something Knowles noticed about the twentieth-century historian: "To some Christopher Dawson may seem to 'date' but when truly assessed he is dateless." Indeed, such references give Dawson's warnings their authority. If he was living in a society that could still see "social prestige" in marriage, he was truly prophetic to see how the fledgling sexual revolution would not only remove that prestige but imperil marriage itself.

Tolstoy was fond of saying that historians are in the habit of asking questions to which no one is interested in learning the answer. Yet this could

never be said of Dawson, certainly not by those in our own age who see the desolation and the anarchy to which the methodical destruction of the family has given rise. Dawson was convinced that “if we accept the principles of the new morality,” marriage will be effectively “destroyed” and “the forces of dissolution” will be “allowed to operate unchecked.” He also saw that other consequences would follow the abandonment of marriage.

It is true that Mr. Russell, at least, is willing to leave us the institution of marriage, on condition that it is strictly demoralized and no longer makes any demands on continence. But it is obvious that these conditions reduce marriage to a very subordinate position. It is no longer the exclusive or even the normal form of sexual relations: it is entirely limited to the rearing of children. For, as Mr. Russell is never tired of pointing out, the use of contraceptives has made sexual intercourse independent of parenthood, and the marriage of the future will be confined to those who seek parenthood for its own sake rather than as the natural fulfilment of sexual love. But under these circumstances who will trouble to marry? Marriage will lose all attractions for the young and the pleasure-loving and the poor and the ambitious. The energy of youth will be devoted to contraceptive love and only when men and women have become prosperous and middle-aged will they think seriously of settling down to rear a strictly limited family.

For most of Western society today, this scenario is only as it should be. According to its unabashedly selfish lights, there can be nothing wrong with marriage and parenthood being a minority interest. Dawson, however, thought otherwise.

It is impossible to imagine a system more contrary to the first principles of social well-being. So far from helping modern society to surmount its present difficulties, it only precipitates the crisis. It must lead inevitably to a social decadence far more rapid and more universal than that which brought about the disintegration of ancient civilization. The advocates of birth-control can hardly fail to realize the consequences of a progressive decline of the population in a society in which it is already almost stationary, but for all that their propaganda is entirely directed towards a further diminution in the birth rate.

Today, in many influential quarters, there are individuals who wish somehow to sanction the “situation ethics” that the culture of death deploys to justify birth control. John Paul II was not unaware of these “situation ethics.” In *Evangelium Vitae* (1995), he concedes that “while the climate of widespread moral uncertainty can in some way be explained by the multiplicity and gravity of today’s social problems, and these can sometimes mitigate the subjective responsibility of individuals,” he is also adamant that “it is no less true that we are confronted by an even larger reality, which can be described as a veritable structure of sin.” Sin may not be a popular concept in our strenuously Pelagian culture—the word *adultery*, for example, is not

used once in *Amoris Laetitia*—but it certainly is one that Pope John Paul II found useful, especially when trying to describe the same peril in which Dawson found the family.

This reality is characterized by the emergence of a culture which denies solidarity and in many cases takes the form of a veritable “culture of death”. This culture is actively fostered by powerful cultural, economic and political currents which encourage an idea of society excessively concerned with efficiency. Looking at the situation from this point of view, it is possible to speak in a certain sense of a war of the powerful against the weak: a life which would require greater acceptance, love and care is considered useless, or held to be an intolerable burden, and is therefore rejected in one way or another. A person who, because of illness, handicap or, more simply, just by existing, compromises the well-being or life-style of those who are more favoured tends to be looked upon as an enemy to be resisted or eliminated. In this way a kind of “conspiracy against life” is unleashed. This conspiracy involves not only individuals in their personal, family or group relationships, but goes far beyond, to the point of damaging and distorting, at the international level, relations between peoples and States. In order to facilitate the spread of abortion, enormous sums of money have been invested and continue to be invested in the production of pharmaceutical products which make it possible to kill the fetus in the mother’s womb without recourse to medical assistance. On this point, scientific research itself seems to be almost exclusively preoccupied with developing products which are ever more simple and effective in suppressing life and which at the same time are capable of removing abortion from any kind of control or social responsibility.

The recent vote of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists to abolish nearly all of the restrictions governing abortion in England certainly bears out Pope John Paul II. The college’s president, Lesley Regan, stated that abortions should be treated like procedures as “mundane as bunion removal.”

Here, we can see the stark barbarism of the culture of death and a threat to the family that the family will have all it can do to withstand. Dawson, for his part, anticipated *Evangelium Vitae* in seeing the antidote to such barbarism in terms that St. John Paul II would richly approve.

The power of the Spirit is the only power that is strong enough to overcome it. In its strength Christians in the past faced and overcame the pagan civilization of the Roman Empire and the pagan savagery of their barbarian conquerors. The new paganism that we have to face today is more terrible than either of these in its cold inhumanity and its scientific exploitation of evil. But if we have faith in the power of the Spirit we must believe that even these evils can be conquered. For the powers of the world, formidable as they appear, are blind powers, which are working in the dark and which derive their strength from negative and destructive forces. They are powerless against the Spirit who is the Lord and Giver of Life.

BOOKNOTES

WOMEN AGAINST ABORTION: INSIDE THE LARGEST MORAL REFORM MOVEMENT OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Karissa Haugeberg

(University of Illinois Press, 2017, Cloth, \$95, Paper \$24.95, 240 pp.)

Reviewed by George McKenna

Almost from its beginnings in the mid-1960s, the pro-life movement has been a women's movement. At first its public face was male—Catholic bishops, priests and male physicians—but even then it was women who were doing most of the work behind the scenes, everything from secretarial chores to setting up and running the planning meetings.

By the end of the '60s, women were no longer content to be the worker bees. They were demanding and getting leadership positions, appearing before congressional committees and in the media in opposition to the pre-*Roe* campaign to “reform” (weaken) existing abortion restrictions in various states. The National Right to Life Committee, founded in 1968, had a strong female presence, and by 1972, Feminists for Life, a breakaway group from the National Organization for Women, had emerged, to be followed later by other feminist pro-life groups like the Susan B. Anthony List, named after the feminist leader of the nineteenth century who (like many feminists of her time) outspokenly opposed abortion. After *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, many more women came forward to lead the fight against abortion, including Nellie Gray, founder of the annual March for Life on Washington, and Dr. Mildred Jefferson, the first black woman to graduate from Harvard Medical School, who served as president of the National Right to Life Committee from 1975 to 1978.

With this in mind, I looked forward to deepening my knowledge of women in the movement when I picked up Karissa Haugeberg's *Women Against Abortion* (U. of Ill. Press, 2017). Its subtitle promises to bring us “Inside the Largest Moral Reform Movement of the Twentieth Century.” It is adapted from Haugeberg's Ph.D. dissertation and has all the accouterments of scholarship: footnotes, bibliography, the latter broken down into dissertations, primary and secondary sources, congressional hearings, and so forth. On the back cover are some complimentary blubs from readers, including one from feminist historian Linda Gordon calling the book “a serious, feminist, and *respectful* [her italics] history of women in the anti-abortion movement.”

But, as I discovered soon after getting into the book, its scholarship is tainted throughout by polemics. Far from according “respectful” treatment

to pro-life women, Haugeberg sees them as “part of a larger patriarchal project devoted to disciplining women into becoming wives and mothers.” Mildred Jefferson, the black physician who neither married nor became a mother, is explained away by assigning her the Uncle Tom-ish role of affirming “her white male colleagues’ beliefs about gender and sexuality.” She views the work of Marjory Mecklenburg, one of the early mainline Protestant leaders of the pro-life movement, as a malign historical force: “Marjorie Mecklenburg’s work to diminish girls’ reproductive autonomy . . . set the stage for the narrowing of women and girls’ reproductive rights for several decades.” Men joined the pro-life movement “because it provided them with opportunities to control the bodies and choices of their wives and daughters.” As if channeling *The Handmaid’s Tale*, she regards women who participated in the pro-life movement as obedient servants of their male masters. I can find in this book no appreciation or even recognition of how *the pro-life women themselves* viewed their movement. It is not as though there are no reasoned arguments against abortion, no arguments that life in the womb deserves protection and that destroying it is a serious moral offense. Whether correct or not, this point of view, which is held by approximately half the nation, deserves better treatment than simply being fitted into the stereotypes supplied by pro-choice feminists.

This is all the more unfortunate because there is actually some solid information in this book. Haugeberg has put time and effort into it and has pulled together a lot of material from published and archived sources and interviews with pro-life activists. She seems particularly impressed by the intelligence and wit of one of her interviewees, Juli Loesch (now Juli Wiley), a Catholic civil rights and peace activist who brought her passion for justice into the pro-life movement in the early ’70s. She notes that Loesch and other liberal Catholic women of that period “influenced the antiabortion movement with an intellectual vibrancy shaped by their commitments to social justice and to feminism. . . .”

But then she adds a “yet” to the sentence: “yet they also laid the foundation for the escalation of violence within the movement.” Here we see the virus that infects this book and damages so much of its substance.

Haugeberg spends an entire chapter and part of her epilogue on “women and lethal violence.” Lethal violence has long been eschewed by every branch of the pro-life movement, from long-established organizations like National Right to Life down to grass-roots groups that picket and pray in front of abortion clinics. No public, organized branch of the pro-life movement has ever associated itself with violence against persons, and pro-life spokesmen have denounced such violence. Yet she spends nearly a third of her book on

murder, attempted murder, and other forms of violence committed against abortionists and clinic personnel. Why should a book, a book professedly about a “moral reform movement,” provide such expansive coverage of acts committed by a handful lunatics?

She hints at her answer in various places early in the book, suggesting in her introduction that the borders between the legal and the violent factions in the pro-life movement “were always porous,” and that there was a “symbiotic relationship” between them. But it is in her closing chapters that she becomes explicit. She sees three “wings” of the movement: first, the “conventional activists,” political insiders who worked within a legal and political framework; second, crisis pregnancy centers, which she calls “pseudo-medical clinics,” where pregnant women could receive sonograms and counseling; third, “violent extremists,” who went so far as to murder abortionists. Her conclusion is that these three wings “worked in tandem.” The political operatives got legislatures to hand out taxpayers’ money to fund the crisis pregnancy centers, which in turn offered meeting places for covert operations and “provided cover” for the violent extremists. So they’re all in it together, regardless of whether or not they profess to be peaceful. At no point does Haugeberg offer any empirical evidence for this outrageous conspiracy theory.

It is possible that at some point in the writing of this book she reached the conclusion that she didn’t really need to prove any actual complicity between the pro-life movement and violence. Near the end she recounts the attempt of a woman named Shelley Shannon to kill Kansas abortionist George Tiller in 1993. Tiller was wounded in the attack and, sixteen years later, killed by another extremist. During the intervening years pro-life leaders persuaded Kansas authorities to investigate Tiller’s business to see if he had violated state law by failing to report abortions following statutory rape. Charges were brought but dismissed by a judge; later, additional charges were brought, but after a long jury trial Tiller was found not guilty. Here is how Haugeberg ends the tale: “[B]y harnessing the power of the state *in their aim of finishing the job Shelly Shannon did not* [my italics], pro-life activists demonstrated how ruthless and unflappable the movement had become.” In other words, pro-life leaders, even though acting nonviolently and using perfectly legal means, were aimed at “finishing the job” Shelley Shannon had in mind when she shot Tiller—in effect, to finish him off.

This slanderous hint that nonviolent proliferers in Kansas might have been accomplices to murder is the ultimate fruit of the following reasoning: anyone trying to stop or limit abortion—in her phrasing, “to prevent women from obtaining abortions” or “to erode women’s right to abortion”—is guilty of coercion, and, since coercion ultimately entails violence, it follows that no

matter what lawful means proliferers use to seek an end to abortion, whether through courts or legislatures or referenda, their whole “project,” as she calls it, is inherently violent. Readers of this book will be left with its conclusion that “the largest reform movement in the twentieth century” was a violent movement. If they accept that conclusion they will have to ponder what should be done about it in the twenty-first century.

—*George McKenna is professor emeritus of political science, City College of New York, and author of The Puritan Origins of American Patriotism (Yale University Press).*

**THE TRIAL OF KERMIT GOSNELL:
THE SHOCKING DETAILS AND WHAT IT REVEALED
ABOUT THE ABORTION INDUSTRY IN AMERICA**

Cheryl Sullenger

(World Ahead Press, 2017, \$20.99, 324 pp.)

Reviewed by Charles K. Bellinger

Readers of this journal are almost certainly aware of the story of Kermit Gosnell, the Philadelphia abortionist now spending the rest of his natural life behind bars for snipping the spinal cords of babies born alive after botched abortions. Those whose knowledge of Gosnell’s house of horrors is limited to news accounts or opinion pieces, however, will find a fuller picture of what happened in Cheryl Sullenger’s book-length treatment. Sullenger, who works for Operation Rescue, attended most of the Gosnell trial and wrote news accounts which helped publicize its importance both in the pro-life community and the wider world.

The basic facts of the story, widely known by now, are truly horrific. Kermit Gosnell performed illegal late-term abortions—primarily in Pennsylvania and Delaware—for roughly four decades before he was arrested and put out of business in 2010. The initial police raid on his abortion mill in Philadelphia was not triggered by concerns about abortion, however, but by evidence that he was operating a phony prescription drug racket. What the police discovered when they entered the clinic was the stuff of nightmares. There was a horrible stench from blood stains on the floors, walls, and furniture, and from cat urine and feces. The severed feet of fetuses were found floating in jars of formaldehyde—medical experts who testified in the trial could find no rational explanation for that practice. The bodies of abortion victims, some who

obviously would have been viable at the time of the procedure, were found frozen in medical waste bags, milk cartons, and other odd containers. Ominously, many of them had slits in the back of their necks.

The building itself was a bizarre warren of hallways and rooms that left no way of quickly moving a patient into an ambulance in case of medical emergency. That fact took on great importance when detectives developing the case learned that one of Gosnell's patients had died in 2009 as a result of an anaesthesia overdose; paramedics had to carry her out of the clinic bodily because they could not get a gurney inside.

Detectives who interviewed the employees of the clinic discovered that many of them had obvious mental problems. Not one of them was an officially licensed nurse or doctor; one was a high school student. These employees were administering strong drugs to the patients haphazardly and without accurate record keeping. The medical equipment in the clinic was outdated and in poor working order. Plastic suction tubes meant to be used once and discarded were reused over and over, spreading venereal diseases to the patients. Gosnell had an ancient sonogram machine that allowed him to deliberately falsify the age of the fetus, if he suspected it was beyond the legal age for abortion.

The core of Gosnell's criminality was that he had decided at some point that the easiest way to perform late-term abortions was to deliver the babies and then kill them by snipping their spinal cords with scissors. He taught his employees how to do the procedure, which they performed in his absence. Gosnell's claim that he had killed the babies in the womb by injecting them with Digoxin was false. Medical experts who examined the remains of the victims found no puncture wounds consistent with such injections and detectives who inventoried all the drugs used in the clinic found no Digoxin.

Gosnell had convinced himself that he was providing a beneficial service to the poor, primarily African-American, community that he served. As Sullenger notes, he lived in a bizarre psychological state—part serial killer and part cult leader. The serial killer aspect is clearly evident in the keeping of severed feet as trophies; the cult leader aspect is seen in his need to find employees who were psychologically damaged and dependent on him for the maintenance of their extremely fragile continued existence.

Sullenger's book has some notable flaws. It is repetitive and suffers from unnecessary digressions and a general lack of philosophical and cultural analysis. Its main strength is that it presents information about other abortion clinics across the United States that have been found to employ some of the same unsanitary and dangerous practices seen in Gosnell's clinic, thus undercutting the standard pro-choice narrative that Gosnell was simply a

“bad apple” among otherwise excellent providers of a “medical” service. (It is worth noting that the main argument employed by Gosnell’s defense lawyer was that he should be acquitted precisely because he was *not* a bad apple, but just another abortion provider in an intrinsically bloody business.)

There is another book-length treatment of the Gosnell case, Ann McElhinney and Phelim McAleer’s *Gosnell: The Untold Story of America’s Most Prolific Serial Killer* (Regnery, 2017). It is a more polished and professional effort, conveying a much deeper analysis and critique of the triple layers of malfeasance that this case exposed. The first was Gosnell’s own criminality, the second the utter lack of oversight of abortion clinics by Pennsylvania state health agencies, and the third the mainstream press’s failure to cover the Gosnell trial until they were shamed into doing so by certain key opinion pieces, such as the column published by Kirsten Powers in *USA Today* on April 11, 2013. The veteran Irish journalists eviscerate the American press for its non-coverage of a trial that ought to have made front-page headlines and been the lead story on television news broadcasts. The seats reserved for journalists in the courtroom were mostly empty. Sullenger was there, and her personal account of the trial is a valuable contribution, but I would steer potential readers in the direction of the other book first, with this seen as supplemental.

In my own book, *Jesus v. Abortion*, I include a chapter on Kermit Gosnell titled “The Grand Inquisitor of Philadelphia.” I gesture there in the direction of the deeper sort of philosophical reflection and historical-analogy-framing that is needed to understand not just Gosnell, but the legalization of abortion in the late modern West more generally. The powerful message conveyed through Dostoevsky’s legend of the Inquisitor is the revelation of the perennial temptation in the nominally Christian West to reject the way of Christ and go over to the side of the “dread spirit” who tempted him in the wilderness. Whenever human beings think that they can employ acts of killing other human beings as a way of addressing the malformed psychological needs of a sick society, there is a demonic element that enters in. Scapegoats—who are always weak and vulnerable—are killed, and the killing is facilitated by society’s elite “managers” and “social engineers,” who take on themselves the burden of the guilt of the killing so that the common people can be “happy.” Gosnell was indeed a bad apple, but he was from a bad tree, namely the legalization of abortion by *Roe v. Wade*, which has brought into existence what Sullenger aptly calls “the abortion cartel” in America. Observers have noted that Gosnell went through the whole trial with a “smirk” on his face because he was so confident that he would be exonerated and that his practice was exactly what *Roe* had in mind. If my reader thinks that comparing Gosnell

with a religious leader from the Middle Ages is odd, it needs to be noted that Gosnell was raised as a Christian and maintains that he was acting as a Christian doctor throughout his four decades of child killing. This aspect of his bizarre self-understanding is conveyed more clearly in Steve Voll's short ebook *Gosnell's Babies: Inside the Mind of America's Most Notorious Abortion Doctor* than it is in either of the other two books under consideration.

The Grand Inquisitor's three key words were miracle, mystery, and authority; for contemporary pro-choice ideologues it is progress, control, and individual autonomy. What cannot be acknowledged, without causing the pro-choice worldview to implode, is that this "progress" is built on othering, scapegoating, a sacrificial economy, within which the medical profession has been subverted at the deepest level. Talk of apples is appropriate, because we are seeing a reenactment in our time of the eating of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, and that eating has led to so-called "doctors" who are continually deluding themselves that they are performing a beneficial "medical" service for society, while they are actually exposing the reality that our culture is Cainite. In the fourth chapter of Genesis we read that the Lord heard the voice of Abel's blood crying out from the ground. In our days the voice of the victims is crying out from garbage disposals, medical waste incinerators, and in Gosnell's case, possibly even the crab pots that he used at his beach house to make the evidence of his crimes disappear.

—Charles K. Bellinger is associate professor of theology and ethics at Brite Divinity School/Texas Christian University. His most recent book is *Jesus v. Abortion: They Know Not What They Do* (Cascade).

FROM THE HUMAN LIFE REVIEW BLOG:

Searching for the Soul of R2-D2

Ellen Wilson Fielding

My familiarity with *Star Wars* is largely confined to the first few releases of the franchise back in the late 1970s. In the initial *Star Wars* film, aside from the romantic weirdness of this “galaxy far, far away” and the David-and-Goliath quality of the battle of Good against Evil, several of the characters charmed and attracted fans. Yoda, of course, with his wrinkled wisdom and inverted English, and Obi-Wan Kenobi, played by the incomparable Alec Guinness. And also, R2-D2 and C-3PO—”who” (or which) exuded individualized human personality despite their electronic origins.

Anthropomorphizing machinery has a long and rich history. In our daily lives we name our cars and curse or coax our malfunctioning appliances, and in fiction, humans are threatened by malevolent machines in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and *Smart House*, while their benevolent counterparts aid us in movies like *WALL-E* and *The Brave Little Toaster*. (Meanwhile, what the heck was going on with the Tin Woodsman in *The Wizard of Oz*?)

The metaphysical confusion of those members of the Silicon Set that talk of preserving human minds indefinitely through downloading their contents onto computers, or alerting us to the dangers of computers taking control of the world, however, seems to occupy a higher (or lower) level. Perhaps these confusions of identity and category owe something to the muddleheaded materialism that reduces all things to physical causes—including mind and emotions. Another explanation may lie in our age-old desire to “be like gods”—certainly the hubris of human cloning and other exercises in genetic engineering, such as the “creation” of chimeras, demonstrate this. From this perspective, the problem with Dr. Frankenstein’s monster is that it was done poorly, and not that it was done at all.

But Mary Shelley, author of *Frankenstein*, chose to present a different lesson from her novel. To begin with, its full title, *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, sends mixed signals. It harks back to Prometheus’ theft of fire from the Greek gods to benefit mankind, leading to his punishment by Zeus. As human benefactors of that theft (which among other things makes possible the fashioning of metals and other substances into ancient and modern forms of technology), we are surely meant to be grateful. Additionally, Mary Shelley was the lover and (later) wife of Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, who authored *Prometheus Unbound*. This poetic drama painted Prometheus

(in good Romantic style) as a hero of human freedom, a rebel against the tyranny of the gods. Percy Shelley described Prometheus as “the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature, impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends.” In the words of one of the poem’s characters, Prometheus, though a Titan, exemplifies mankind’s heroic duty “To defy Power, which seems omnipotent . . . Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent.”

However, the actual plot of *Frankenstein* presents us with devastation, murder, and an ambiguous end that leaves open the possibility of more of the same. The author’s version of the Prometheus myth is consequently closer in tone and implication to Adam and Eve’s fall in the Garden of Eden than to, say, the French Revolution or the nineteenth-century movements for abolition or women’s rights.

Mary Shelley’s version also does not paint her Promethean figure, Dr. Frankenstein, in a very favorable light. His errors of technique in forming the monster might theoretically have been ameliorated if he had made future attempts, but his great error is attempting creation at all, when he does not—cannot—possess the capacity to predict and control what he sets in motion, or protect those endangered by his attempted trespasses into the Creator’s territory. Far from being a noble Titan, Dr. Frankenstein more closely resembles the Sorcerer’s Apprentice—but without the happy ending of the sorcerer’s return to the scene in time to prevent disaster.

What has all this got to do with the likes of cute little R2-D2? This robot and the rest of the robotic assembly line, though presenting engaging personalities and seeming loyalty to their owners, are in their “loyalties” and behaviors at the mercy of their programmers. They are whatever their programmers wish them to be—even their memories can be erased. So when they are lovable and endearing, and attempt to fulfill the (good) purposes of their (good) owners, they are reflecting the desires of those owners/programmers. On the other hand, like any tool, they could be used for evil. In either case, having been designed and programmed by human beings, they are not themselves the source of evil (or of good) in the Star Wars world.

There are other engaging robotic film characters, including the star of the 2008 animated film WALL-E (which also confronts us with mal-programmed and mutinous robots that frighteningly attempt to destroy the first seedling from a rejuvenating Planet Earth). In the film, WALL-E has inexplicably (to me at least) evolved into sentience over the centuries he has been at work clearing and compacting garbage on our now-deserted planet. Equally inexplicably, his love interest, a robot on the spacecraft investigating current conditions on Earth, manages to be infected by his capacity for feeling. How

on earth (so to speak) WALL-E's evolution would occur by mere length of time and proximity to human garbage is as difficult for me to understand as how Dr. Frankenstein could spark into life an assemblage of rotting body parts by force of lightning. (And both of these are only slightly more mysterious and improbable than the spontaneous development of life from the primordial "soup" of matter the secularists point to.) In short, WALL-E's development of the capacity to love is the beneficent counterpart of the nightmares of machines seizing control over human beings—and equally unlikely if we are truly talking about machines rather than the people who design, construct, and program them.

In the end, all this talk of computers and machines and robots taking control is camouflage for certain people taking control of other people (or at most, for certain people setting in motion processes they have not properly thought out that turn out to be harmful and impede the freedom of other people).

Because we humans are ingenious, ambitious, imperfect, and unable to perceive all consequences of our actions, there is almost no end to the havoc we can wreak. However, when we do so, we do it as human beings affecting other human beings, whether or not we use technological intermediaries. And when human beings use human imaginations (and clever design) to invest inanimate objects of various kinds with personality and feeling, it is again human beings, not their cars or computers or film robots, that provided the personality and emotions. Reality is harder to truly augment than the tech companies seem to think.

So will some sort of Frankenstein's monster—whether through genetic engineering or supercomputers or some perverse combination of the two—ever threaten life as we know it on our planet? Maybe, but if so, the responsible party or parties will not be a variation on HAL or WALL-E's robotic opponents or Frankenstein's monster or a human clone, but the human beings who, intentionally or unintentionally, with good or ill intentions, sow the wind, setting us up to reap the whirlwind.

—*Ellen Wilson Fielding is a senior editor of the Human Life Review.*

Our Haunting Insecurities and the Human Weeds

David Mills

Modern cosmetics tells us something about our culture's desire to abort the unborn and euthanize the sick and elderly. In our desire to beautify the body, writes Zygmunt Bauman, "the appearance of the remedy as a rule preceded awareness of the deficiency that clamored to be remedied."

The Polish sociologist-philosopher, who was expelled from his native communist Poland in 1968, wound up teaching in England. He wrote an amazing number of books. Best known for his description of our age as one of “liquid modernity,” he died in early January, at the age of 91.

Bauman’s words on cosmetics come from one of his later books, *Living on Borrowed Time*. He continues:

First comes the good news: “It can be done.” Thereafter came a commandment: “You must do it!” And thereafter the threat of terrifying consequences for those who might choose to ignore the commandment.

You suddenly feel that the remedy will free you of “an abominable defect.” You might have worried about it before, but now you *know* you’re defective. You’ve got to buy the remedy. If you don’t, you will expose “your unforgiveable incompetence, ineptitude, or sloth.”

Our Haunting Insecurities

You see this on display in your grocery store’s check-out lane. Men’s and women’s magazines try to make their readers feel anxious and inferior. That seems a weird way to get readers, but they play upon the average person’s haunting insecurity. Many of us fear that we don’t measure up, and the magazines tell us we don’t. They also promise the answer. Down on the conveyer belt goes *Cosmopolitan* or *Men’s Health* along with the milk and soap. It’s not so much an impulse as a panic purchase.

The magazines want their readers to feel the need for whatever their advertisers are selling. The advertisers want to sell things no one has sold before, or new versions of the things they have been selling, which have become harder and harder to sell in their old versions. They have the remedies, their products. They only need to invent the deficiencies.

They do that very well. The once normal-sized woman is now fat. Her hair is too curly. Or too straight. She needs a better bra. Or new breasts. She finds she has a “personality type,” and it’s a problem.

The man who would have been thrilled to sleep with any woman now worries about his technique in case he ever gets the chance. He laments his lack of a six-pack, and a car that tells the world he’s a success. His grey hairs make him look old, or he’s not grey enough to look mature. He finds that he has only two of the ten things women want in a man, and he’s not sure he really has those. “The magazine says women like men with a sense of humor. At least I have that! Wait, am I really funny? The guys think so. But they’ll laugh at fart jokes. Hell, I’m *not* funny. I’ll *never* get a date.”

That’s the way the consumer society works. It makes you want stuff, makes you think you *need* stuff, to fix yourself. But the deeper problem, as Bauman

describes it, is worse. The remedy our technological development and our commercial enterprises have to offer is a radically new man. He points to the promises of genomics as one source of this desire.

If that's the remedy, what is the deficiency that must be invented? The deficiency is us. The problem is man as he has been understood and celebrated, as "a person or personality whose proper, unique, and irreplaceable worth resides all in her or his singularity." A creature with inviolable human dignity is another way of saying this.

Remaking man through genetic engineering is "the ultimate dream of *homo consumens*." Soon, Bauman writes, "you will have to buy yourself the gene of your choice that will make you . . . enjoy the kind of happiness of your choice."

Man himself becomes a "virgin land" for businesses to exploit. That virgin land looks "infinitely vast," because there is no limit to what we can want. "There is no pre-determined level to which the dreams and desires of successive generations of humans cannot be lifted when it comes to tinkering with their own bodies and looks—and the borderline between the 'healthy' and the 'pathological' has already been all but washed away."

The Unborn, the Sick, and the Elderly

What has this to do with the unborn, the sick, and the elderly? Those who want to recreate man and remake themselves will always try to remake the world. To do that, they will remake morality as they've remade themselves. Nothing binds them but their own vision of the perfect world.

The world must serve their search for perfection. It must be as perfect as they are. How easy it will be for this *homo consumens* to justify the removal of imperfections, like unwanted unborn babies, annoyingly sick people, and the elderly who've lived beyond their usefulness. Why have imperfect men and women in a world moving to perfection? Especially when you can tell yourself you're doing them a favor?

Bauman describes this attitude as the "gardening stance." The gardener pursues a vision of order and that vision requires uprooting and poisoning the weeds. "Treating humanity as a garden crying out for more beauty and harmony inevitably recasts some humans into weeds," he writes. Especially when we see ourselves as flowers. Flowers who want to see only other flowers and feel the weeds will be better off uprooted.

The world already has experience of this. Bauman points to the mid-twentieth century. There we saw gardeners who "excelled in the extermination of human weeds."

—David Mills, a former editor of *First Things*, is editorial director of *Ethika Politica*.

Ask Me Anything

Ursula Hennessey

Sometimes word games can become mind games.

My 11-year-old daughter has Down syndrome. My instinct has always been to put it exactly that way—Down syndrome is something she has, not something that has her or something she is. Does that seem obvious? These are actually hotly debated questions. People who think and write about disability have wildly different opinions about whether to promote the use of “people-first language”—e.g., a person *with* autism—or “identity-first language”—an autistic person. Depending on who you ask, there is only one way to show respect. The other is a terrible insult.

It took a decade for me to learn when I was supposed to be incensed about the words people use to refer to my daughter. Of course I already knew that “retarded” and “mongoloid,” which were regularly used when I was young, were out-of-date and off limits. But then I learned some new things: I must *never* let the phrase “Down’s child” pass without launching into a lecture denouncing “people-first” language. Further, I was supposed to push back any time I heard someone say “most kids with Down syndrome do X,” because that formulation minimizes my daughter’s unique individuality. She has “special needs” and needs “support,” I learned, but she is not “a blessing” or an “inspiration” because those terms don’t do justice to the complexity of her personality and her diagnosis. It was a period of intense education, but after 10 years I was getting the hang of it.

Come to find out, I was all wrong.

Earlier this year, *Sesame Street* introduced—after much research and discussion with diverse families—the character Julia, “a 4-year-old with autism.” The Twitterverse struck back. “#ActuallyAutistic people (like me) prefer identity-first language,” wrote Twitter user April Spectrum, “Julia is an autistic four-year old.”

Surely, I thought, this was a minority view. Apparently not. Many of those with autism do, in fact, prefer identity-first over person-first language. Lydia Brown, a Georgetown graduate who writes the AutisticHoya blog, seems to be one of the most quoted self-advocates on the matter. Here’s a key passage from Brown’s popular post:

[W]hen people say “person with autism,” it *does* have an attitudinal nuance. It suggests that the person can be *separated* from autism, which simply isn’t true. It is impossible to separate a person from autism, just as it is impossible to separate a person from the color of his or her skin. It is impossible to affirm the value and worth

of an Autistic person without recognizing his or her identity as an Autistic person. Referring to me as “a person with autism,” or “an individual with ASD,” demeans who I am because it denies who I am.

This way of thinking leaves me deeply conflicted. While I will always strive to be respectful in my conversations about disability, policing speech is not my top priority. I’m more interested in interaction. Only interaction can change minds. Experience has taught me that people who are worried about getting scolded for saying the wrong thing often avoid interaction altogether.

I’m not so naïve as to think that everyone who meets my daughter will come away with a different attitude toward Down syndrome, disability, or the dignity of human life. But what is the alternative? Honestly, I would rather someone say “Is this your retarded child?” than not speak to me out of fear of using inappropriate language.

I know people are curious about us. When I’m out and about with my family, they often stare at my daughter. She has some unusual tics and behaviors, so kids especially are prone to gawk. But adults do it too, turning back furtively to size us up. I know that at least some of them would like to ask questions, or introduce their kids to my kids, but are afraid that they’ll get the terminology wrong or somehow offend me. It’s a pity. Is this what advocates for the disabled were hoping for when we started reproaching people for not using the right words?

The author of another recent blog post demands that we now banish “special needs” and use only “disability” or “disabled.” Not only is it hard to keep up with the new rules on language, but this kind of aggressive “advocacy” frightens and confuses people, many of whom are sincerely interested in supporting our families. Some writers recommend that we ask people how they would like to be addressed as a preventive against hurting their feelings. But if I have to work up the nerve to ask someone what non-intuitive words I’m supposed to use in order not to give offense, isn’t it likely I will just shy away from any conversation in the first place? Most people don’t think about these things as often as self-advocates, parents, and loved ones do.

I give the last word to the disability advocate Cara Liebowitz:

Though person-first language is designed to promote respect, the concept is based on the idea that disability is something negative, something that you shouldn’t want to see. After all, no one tells me that I should call myself a *person with femaleness* or a *person with Jewishness*. I’m a Jewish woman. No one questions that. Yet when I dare to call myself a disabled person, it seems the whole world turns upside down. That’s because gender and religion are seen as neutral, if not positive, characteristics. The idea of separating the disability from the person stems from the idea that disability is something you should *want* to have separated from you, like a rotten tooth that needs to be pulled out.

This is a tidy little argument. I'm almost convinced, except for the clear implication that the only safe choice to make in this busy, crazy world is never to notice, acknowledge, or discuss a person's unique—and perhaps obvious—differences lest you reveal yourself as a terrible person who couldn't possibly be an ally because you are too indifferent to remember what you may or may not have been told about which words to use.

Here's another idea: How about we treat every human life as a dear soul, equally beloved by God (if you so believe), who deserves our full attention. Not to mention a second, third, or even fourth chance at choosing the right words. Sound good?

—*Ursula Hennessey lives in Connecticut with her husband and five children. She is a former sports journalist and elementary school teacher.*



"Remember, Ted, the next time you feel the need for a heart to heart, please go through the proper channels."

LETTERS

The following letters were received in response to the symposium “Whole Life v. Pro-life” which was featured in the Summer 2017 edition.

TO THE EDITOR

... I believe that corrections should be made that address the following distortions [in Anne Hendershott’s symposium contribution]:

1. *Millennial* is not the online journal of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good. It has received some funding from CACG but it is independently run and operated. I have 100% editorial control. And it currently does not receive funding from CACG.

2 [Hendershott] says I relegate abortion to just another issue. It is listed *first* under issues that “demand a place at the center of the movement.” *First*.

3. “many whole-life movement leaders—including Robert Christian—are committed to convincing Catholic voters that pro-choice Democratic nominees for public office actually will do more than Republicans to reduce abortion.” I have never made this claim. Ever. That is why there is no citation.

4. “Robert Christian’s own George Soros-supported Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good.” I don’t work for Catholics in Alliance. And to my knowledge they haven’t received funding from Soros for many, many years (long before they provided *Millennial* any funding). In addition, CACG was attacked by Catholics for Choice precisely *because* of its opposition to abortion.

5. “Christian, Shea, Bratten Weiss, and others seem to have missed the fact that the pro-life movement is already helping to change the culture surrounding abortion by winning many battles at the state level—over waiting periods, ultrasound and parental notification requirements, and restrictions on late term abortion.” I work with Democrats for Life to help pass these types of restrictions at the state level. I am an anti-abortion activist. . . .

Robert Christian

Graduate Fellow, Institute for Policy Research and Catholic Studies

Senior Fellow, Democrats for Life

Washington, DC

Editor’s Note: As I explained to Mr. Christian, while we are concerned to correct any errors in our journal, the connections Professor Hendershott highlights concerning the past history of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good are accurate to the best of our knowledge. CACG’s executive director, Christopher Hale, was a co-founder of Millennial. Mr. Christian writes to inform us about the current, independent status of Millennial.—MMM

TO THE EDITOR:

Here's my own take on broad versus narrow pro-life:

Encouraging and enabling mothers to dismember their children violates every moral religious and social tenant of any known left or right ideology or religion I've ever heard of, except perhaps some kind of far right survival of the fittest idea.

Therefore, all it should take for abortion to be the fundamental and most prominent human rights issue is for the unborn to be taken into consideration.

But this means that all-inclusive concern and respect for the dignity of every human being is the best way to defend the unborn. For example, if we pray at church for an end to violence against all people, born and unborn, every honest person should be able to see that the greatest violence is against the unborn. Thus the Catholic Left, which wants inclusivity, and the Catholic Right, which wants a focus on abortion, are fully reconciled.

Here is my slogan to sum things up: "Equal concern for every human being doesn't mean equal concern for every human issue."

Richard Stith

Senior Research Professor

Valparaiso Law School

Indiana

TO THE EDITOR:

The *Human Life Review's* recent symposium on *Whole Life v. Pro-Life* featured a number of insightful essays from an ideologically diverse group of proliferers. As such, I wanted to take this opportunity to participate.

Proliferers who describe themselves as Whole Life are certainly making some unique and important contributions to the pro-life movement. I wish them well in their efforts to reach out to Democrats and other political liberals. In an ideal world, the two major political parties would be competing with one another to see who could do the most to protect the unborn. Furthermore, proliferers with a background in the peace movement, feminism, and civil rights may be able to reach different audiences than politically conservative proliferers.

That said, I am concerned that some who identify as Whole Life are susceptible to being misled by those who do not represent the best interests of proliferers. As the pro-life position has made gains in the court of public opinion, sophisticated political candidates who support legal abortion realize that they need to win the support of some pro-life voters. As such, in every election, "pro-choice" candidates make a strong attempt to win the support of pro-life liberals. Their surrogates argue that 44 years of pro-life activism has failed to reverse *Roe v. Wade*. Furthermore, they argue that generous welfare programs, universal health care, and contraception programs represent a superior strategy for protecting the unborn.

To some who are frustrated with pro-life progress, these arguments have some

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appeal. However, in reality, these arguments are very misleading. There is not one reputable peer-reviewed study which shows that spending money on welfare, health care, or contraception programs reduces the incidence of abortion. Conversely, there are a number of studies which show that a variety of pro-life laws including public-funding restrictions, parental involvement laws, and properly designed informed-consent laws all reduce abortion rates.

I certainly respect the diversity of opinion that exists in the pro-life movement about issues pertaining to foreign policy and the role of government in the economy. That said, I encourage those who identify as Whole Life to ignore the media narrative about the ineffectiveness of the pro-life movement. Since 1980, the U.S. abortion rate has fallen by over 50 percent. This is because proliferers have passed protective laws, changed hearts and minds, and provided for the material needs of women facing crisis pregnancies. Overall, those who identify as Whole Life should prioritize the defense of the unborn in both their voting and activism.

Michael New

Associate Professor, Economics, Ave Maria University, Florida

Associate Scholar, Charlotte Lozier Institute, Washington DC

APPENDIX A

[Edward Mechmann is Director of Public Policy for the Archdiocese of New York. The following commentary was posted on his blog, “Stepping Out of the Boat” ([http://blog.archny.org/stepping out/](http://blog.archny.org/stepping_out/)) on Sept. 7, 2017, and is reprinted with his permission.]

A Great Victory for Life

Edward Mechmann

The New York State Court of Appeals has unanimously upheld our state ban on assisted suicide. The decision is a tremendous victory for life, and will strengthen our efforts to hold off legislation that seeks to legalize assisted suicide.

The lawsuit involved was filed by persons who had terminal illnesses and several doctors. They argued that they had a fundamental right under our state constitution to what they euphemistically call “aid-in-dying.” They also argued that it violated equal protection to allow patients to decline life-sustaining treatment but deny assistance to others who wish to commit suicide. Their arguments were supported by many organizations that filed amicus curiae briefs, including groups of doctors and law professors, as well as the New York Civil Liberties Union.

The Attorney General of New York opposed the lawsuit very ably. The New York State Catholic Conference filed amicus curiae briefs in opposition, written by myself and my colleague Alexis Carra. Several other amicus briefs were filed on our side, by Catholic and Christian doctors, our allies in Not Dead Yet (a leading disability rights group), and Agudath Israel.

The case was very well argued on both sides, both at oral arguments and in the briefs. The lower courts all rejected the plaintiff’s arguments in opinions that were very thoughtful and well done. But in the end, it was all up to the Court of Appeals, the highest court in our state and the final authority on our New York State Constitution.

Thanks be to God, the court categorically rejected all of the plaintiffs’ arguments. With strong opinions—the unanimous opinion of all five judges and several concurrences—the court firmly rejected the absurd notion that “aid-in-dying” was somehow excluded from the current definition of suicide. They also followed the United States Supreme Court’s holding in the 1995 *Quill v. Vacco* case that neither the Due Process Clause nor the Equal Protection Clause supported the creation of a fundamental right to assisted suicide.

Most significantly, the court strongly upheld the strong and unequivocal state interest in prohibiting assisted suicide. The various opinions cited major concerns that were raised by our side, including the risk of expanding assisted suicide to voluntary or even involuntary euthanasia, the stigmatization of disabled persons, the degradation of the medical profession, the need to protect vulnerable populations, and the risk of abuse and misuse of medications. These opinions will be of great assistance to us in opposing further efforts to legalize assisted suicide in the Legislature.

It’s easy sometimes for pro-lifers to get discouraged, especially in a state like New York where the deck seems stacked against us. Victories are few and far

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between, and defeats are all too common. This lawsuit was the most significant battle that we have had in the pro-life cause in New York in the last twenty-plus years.

God has been good to his people of New York by granting us a victory in this case. We can legitimately say, with Psalm 98, “O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory!”



**The Human Life Foundation graciously
thanks the members of
the Defender of Life Society:**

Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Bean	Fr. Kazimierz Kowalski
Mr. Robert G. Bradley	Ms. Eileen M. Mahoney
Mrs. Martha Brunyansky	Rev. Myles Murphy
B G Carter	Dr. Michael McKeever
Miss Barbara Ann Connell	Mrs. Elizabeth G. O'Toole
Mr. Patrick Joseph Gorman [†]	Rev. Robert L. Roedig [†]
Ms. Mari Lou Hernandez	Rev. Francis X. Wallace
Mr. Paul Kissinger	

**The individuals listed above are remembering the
Human Life Foundation in their estate plans.**

*To learn more about the Defender of Life Society, and how you can leave a legacy
for the Human Life Foundation, contact us at 212-685-5210.*

APPENDIX B

[Richard M. Doerflinger is retired from the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, where he worked for thirty-six years. He is an Associate Scholar with the Charlotte Lozier Institute and a Public Policy Fellow at the University of Notre Dame's Center for Ethics and Culture. This essay was published Sept. 29, 2017, by Public Discourse (www.thepublicdiscourse.com), the online journal of the Witherspoon Institute, and is reprinted with permission. ©The Witherspoon Institute. All rights reserved.]

New York Courts Rule Against “Aid in Dying” and Warn of Its Dangers

Richard M. Doerflinger

The New York Court of Appeals has dealt a resounding blow to the state's assisted suicide lobby.

New York's highest court, the Court of Appeals, ruled on September 7 that there is no state constitutional “right” to what supporters call “aid in dying” for the terminally ill. News media reported this as a defeat for the physician-assisted suicide lobby. Less widely understood is what a complete defeat this ruling was—and what it suggests for the future.

The basic facts are these. Plaintiffs first filed suit in a trial court, a division of what is called the Supreme Court in New York. In 2015, the trial judge approved a motion by the state attorney general to dismiss the suit. Plaintiffs appealed their case to the state Appellate Division, where a panel of four judges in 2016 unanimously affirmed the trial court's ruling and added explicitly that the state law against assisting a suicide can “prohibit a licensed physician from providing aid-in-dying” without violating the state constitution. Finally, plaintiffs brought their case to the Court of Appeals, where a five-judge panel, again unanimously, concluded: “Our Legislature has a rational basis for criminalizing assisted suicide, and plaintiffs have no constitutional right to the relief they seek herein.”

The Court of Appeals noted that claims of a state constitutional right to assisted suicide have lost everywhere else they have been tried—in Alaska, California, Florida, Michigan, and New Mexico. (In 2009, the Montana Supreme Court issued an odd interpretation of that state's ban on assisted suicide that makes it difficult to enforce, but it has not addressed the constitutional issue; bills to legalize the practice outright have failed in the legislature there ever since.)

But this new defeat in New York is especially devastating to the assisted suicide cause. New York is considered a bellwether “progressive” state. Eleven of its distinguished legal officials—ten judges and the Attorney General—have *unanimously* rejected an aggressive effort by “Compassion & Choices” (C&C) and its allies to establish a constitutional “right” for their agenda. And *all eleven* were appointed by liberal “pro-choice” Democrats: current governor Andrew Cuomo (who named all the judges on the Court of Appeals), his father Mario Cuomo, or the state's first African-American governor, David Paterson. This confounds C&C's talking point that only benighted religious believers and right-wing politicians stand in its way.

There is No Right to Assisted Suicide

All eleven legal officials also firmly rejected a central claim of C&C's public campaign—namely, that what it calls “aid in dying” for the terminally ill is not suicide or assisted suicide. To plaintiffs' claim that the state law, passed in 1965, could not have intended to foreclose C&C's new and compassionate agenda, the trial court briskly stated that this law “is clear and concise, therefore analysis of the legislative intent is irrelevant.” Both higher courts pointed out that giving patients a lethal overdose of drugs to help them take their own lives is exactly what dictionaries mean by assisting a suicide. As the Court of Appeals said: “Aid-in-dying falls squarely within the ordinary meaning of the statutory prohibition on assisting a suicide.” C&C's claim was dismissed as what it is: an effort to obfuscate the issue by substituting euphemism for reality. This agenda is about doctors intentionally giving people the means to kill themselves.

It may be worth nothing here that the Court of Appeals has seven judges. But chief judge Janet DiFiore recused herself because, as district attorney for Westchester County, she was a defendant in the original lawsuit. And Judge Paul Feinman could not join in the court's decision because he was appointed too recently to take part in the briefing and oral argument in the case. He was named this summer because his predecessor had died, apparently from suicide. It is possible that this judge's untimely death helped to concentrate the other judges' minds on the tragic reality of suicide. In any case, the fact that five judges on the seven-judge Court of Appeals signed the same opinion in this case, and have terms that extend for the next four to fourteen years, suggests there is no point in renewing this kind of legal challenge any time soon.

Having established that this suit involves helping people to actively cause their deaths, the Court of Appeals had no problem rejecting the plaintiffs' “equal protection” claim. That claim argues that some patients have a right to end their lives by rejecting life-sustaining treatment, while others are deprived of that right because they need a more active means to achieve the same goal. But as the U.S. Supreme Court said when it rejected a federal claim of this kind in *Vacco v. Quill* in 1997, the right to refuse treatment is not a right to kill yourself. Rather, it is a right to be free of unwanted bodily invasions, especially where the treatment may be of limited benefit and cause physical or psychological hardships. New York courts, like federal courts, have never accepted the implausible idea that refusing a life-sustaining procedure—or accepting aggressive medication aimed at relieving pain rather than causing death—is suicide.

The court also rejected the claim that a right to assisted suicide is a fundamental constitutional freedom. The judges found no reason to think that New York's Due Process clause provides any greater protection for assisted suicide than the U.S. Constitution's similar clause, which the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously found not to support such a claim in the 1997 case of *Washington v. Glucksberg*.

The Government Has an Interest in Prohibiting Assisted Suicide

Having rejected these constitutional claims, which would have required an exacting standard of review for any law limiting “aid in dying,” the Court of Appeals only had to find that the state’s current law is rationally related to legitimate governmental interests. Here the court could draw not only on the U.S. Supreme Court’s review of these interests, but also on the state’s own New York State Task Force on Life and the Law—a diverse panel of experts in law, medicine and ethics appointed in 1985 by then-Gov. Mario Cuomo to study such issues.

That panel *unanimously* concluded in 1994 that legalizing assisted suicide for terminally ill patients would endanger far more vulnerable people than it would help. In a 1997 supplement, the Task Force reaffirmed that “legalized physician-assisted suicide would be profoundly dangerous for large segments of the population,” and found especially grave implications in the argument that this practice is comparable to withdrawal of life support or the administration of pain medications. That argument threatened to undermine the acceptance and availability of these legitimate practices that many patients urgently need.

In 1997, the U.S. Supreme Court summarized the interests served by laws like New York’s that forbid assisted suicide without exception: “prohibiting intentional killing and preserving life; preventing suicide; maintaining physicians’ role as their patients’ healers; protecting vulnerable people from indifference, prejudice, and psychological and financial pressure to end their lives; and avoiding a possible slide towards euthanasia.” The New York judges cited this summary, and highlighted their own concern about preventing suicide, which they called “a serious public health problem” (possibly remembering the fate of their esteemed colleague), and about “guarding against the risks of mistake and abuse” (especially when many lethal overdoses in states like Oregon are never used by the patient but released into the population).

A Forceful Judicial “No”

Four judges on the Court of Appeals showed special interest in the assisted suicide issue by signing concurring opinions in the case.

Judge Fahey reiterated the distinction between assisted suicide and other practices, such as palliative sedation intended to ease a patient’s suffering near the end of life rather than to cause death. He also focused on the grave risk of a “slippery slope” from assisted suicide to euthanasia (in which the patient is killed directly by another person). He noted that the two have advanced side by side in Canada, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands. In the last two of these, he showed, this has led to documented cases of *non*-voluntary euthanasia, as well as to the expansion of euthanasia to non-terminal patients, people suffering from mental illness, seniors who say they are “tired of life,” and young children. He observed that the slide to euthanasia has begun in Oregon, where slipping the lethal overdose into a patient’s feeding tube is seen as a form of “aid in dying.”

Judge Fahey said these trends pose special dangers to the poor and the debilitated elderly, for whom assisted suicide and euthanasia could become the “cheaper” alternative to medical treatment, and to people with disabilities: “Legalizing physician-assisted suicide would convey a societal value judgment that such ‘indignities’ as physical vulnerability and dependence mean that life no longer has any intrinsic value . . .” Changing the law to convey this message, he said, “would be a profound mistake.”

If Judge Fahey presented a compelling argument for retaining New York’s legal ban, Judge Rivera’s concurrence at times sounded like a dissent. She was less sure that assisted suicide is clearly distinct from other end-of-life practices, and would have entertained a narrower claim that personal autonomy outweighs the government’s interests in preventing assisted suicide for patients who face “certain, imminent, excruciating death,” meaning patients who would certainly die within hours or days. Acknowledging that palliative sedation to unconsciousness is also available in these rare cases, she argued that assisted suicide could be a “less intrusive” option that would free families from having to wait for death from natural causes.

However, Judge Garcia, joined by Judge Stein, filed a concurring opinion expressly to reject Judge Rivera’s “more particularized” version of a right to assisted suicide. These judges were skeptical that the amorphous standards cited by Rivera—How imminent is imminent? How much pain is intolerable? How inconvenient do other options have to be?—could effectively be defined or regulated. As noted by the U.S. Supreme Court, they argued, it is eminently rational to conclude that only an absolute ban effectively serves the government’s important interests—and some of those interests, such as protecting “the integrity of the medical profession” by ensuring that doctors will never accept the role of helping to kill their patients, are equally valid at every “stage of the dying process.”

On one point, the justices had inadequate data. Judge Rivera claimed, and Judge Fahey conceded, that the Oregon law had not yet shown many of the “slippery slope” abuses demonstrated in other countries. Unfortunately, both judges relied on a decade-old article by assisted suicide supporter Margaret Battin. Later studies show a trend in Oregon toward financial coercion, the inclusion of chronically ill patients and those suffering from dementia or clinical depression, and a reduced commitment to palliative care.

So five judges on this seven-judge court have rejected the claims of assisted suicide proponents, and a four-judge majority has done so absolutely, with three judges being especially forceful and eloquent on the issue. Two judges’ views on the issue are unknown, but they would not change this result. In effect, New York’s entire judicial system has said to the assisted suicide lobby: “What is it about the word ‘No’ that you don’t understand?”

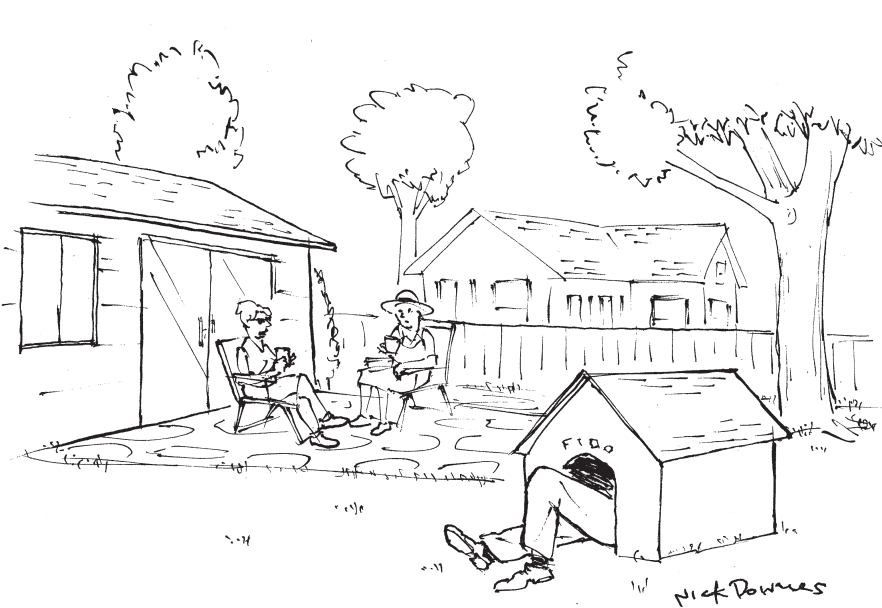
Legislative Battles Ahead

That leaves of course the state legislature, where legalization bills have been rejected before but may be considered again in 2018. As they did after suffering

their 9-to-0 loss in the Supreme Court in 1997, assisted suicide groups have tried to make these lemons into lemonade, implying that the courts have invited the legislature to act.

It is true that, having forcefully cited the grave dangers of this agenda, the Court of Appeals said: "The Legislature *may* conclude that those dangers can be effectively regulated and specify the conditions under which it will permit aid-in-dying." But it immediately added: "At present, the Legislature of this State has permissibly concluded that an absolute ban on assisted suicide is the most reliable, effective, and administrable means of protecting against its dangers." The court has also effectively stated that the 1994 arguments and conclusions of the state's Task Force have continued validity—and those arguments were raised not only against constitutionalizing physician-assisted suicide, but against legalizing it at all.

Already this year, legislatures in twenty-three other states have considered the arguments on both sides and defeated assisted suicide proposals or allowed them to expire without action. Having declared that the assisted suicide agenda poses "dangers," and that these are addressed by the state's current law, New York's highest court has now placed the burden of proof on those pursuing legalization to show how those dangers would equally well be prevented by a regime of "limited" assisted suicide. It is a burden they will find difficult or impossible to meet.



"We finally had to put Dad in a home."

APPENDIX C

[Wesley J. Smith is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute's Center on Human Exceptionalism and a consultant to the Patients Rights Council. The following was published by First Things on Sept. 29, 2017 (www.firstthings.com), and is reprinted with permission.]

Euthanasia for Alzheimer's Patients?

Wesley J. Smith

The medically vulnerable have rarely been in greater jeopardy. Alzheimer's disease patients are at particular risk. In a recent poll from Quebec—where lethal injection euthanasia is legal—a chilling 72 percent of caregivers favor permitting Alzheimer's patients to be euthanized, even if the afflicted person never requested euthanasia. If the patient requested euthanasia in writing upon becoming incompetent, the percentage of caregivers approving is a horrific 91 percent.

Both scenarios are against the law, though perhaps not for long. With lethal injection euthanasia now legal throughout Canada, predictable efforts are underway to permit patients to create binding written orders to have themselves killed if they lose mental capacity.

This approach is already legal in the Netherlands and Belgium, two countries that seem to be competing with each other to craft the most radical euthanasia policies. What if the Alzheimer's patient, having lost the ability to make his own decisions, is not suffering terribly after all? Tough. His former desire is deemed controlling over his current state of happiness. Indeed, in an awful case from the Netherlands, a struggling elderly Alzheimer's patient was held down by her family as she fought against being lethally injected. Dutch authorities determined that the homicide was permissible, since “the doctor acted in good faith.”

If only euthanasia advocates could be sued for false advocacy. For years, they have soothingly assured wary societies that only those with the capacity to choose to be killed would have access to facilitated death. That promise was always highly questionable. “Choice” has never been the point of euthanasia—otherwise euthanasia should be available to anyone, sick or well, who wants to die. Rather, the goal is to normalize killing as an acceptable remedy to suffering, even—as we are seeing with the Alzheimer's policy—when the patient is incapable of making a rational decision.

Where assisted suicide is legal in the United States, it is still not allowed for people who lack decision-making capacities. This restriction may be a matter of political tactics, rather than of bedrock principle. A few years ago, Barbara Coombs Lee, head of the assisted suicide advocacy organization Compassion and Choices, said that assisted suicide for Alzheimer's patients was “an issue for another day, but no less compelling” than legalization for the competent terminally ill—strongly implying that allowing life-terminations of people with dementia would follow once the country accepted the Compassion and Choices agenda.

Indeed, Compassion and Choices already targets the elderly with instruction in suicide by self-starvation, known in euthanasia movement parlance as “voluntarily

stopping eating and drinking” (VSED). From its how-to guide:

Many people struggle with the unrelieved suffering of a chronic or incurable and progressive disorder. Others may decide that they are simply “done” after eight or nine decades of a fully lived life.

Alarmingly, the American Nursing Association adopted a policy in support of the right to commit VSED without intervention, stating, “A patient’s decision regarding VSED is binding, even if the patient subsequently loses capacity.”

VSED is, presumably, legal. But what if an incompetent dementia patient who willingly takes food and water had instructed in an advance directive that he wanted to be denied sustenance when incompetent? Increasingly, prominent bioethicists contend that caregivers should be forced to withhold spoon-feeding, which is to say, should be required to starve patients to death. For example, in the May-June 2014 Hastings Center Report, Paul T. Menzel and M. Colette Chandler-Cramer argue:

The principle behind [advance medical directives] is that people do not lose their rights when they become incompetent; someone else just has to exercise those rights for them. The driving element behind VSED is that forcing people to ingest food is as objectionable an intrusion on bodily integrity, privacy, and liberty as imposing unwanted medical treatment. Thus, if incompetent people do not lose their rights to refuse life-saving treatment, then people do not lose their right to VSED when incompetent either.

This is rank bootstrapping. Advance directives govern the provision or refusal of medical treatments. A patient may refuse a feeding tube in advance, because “artificial nutrition and hydration” is considered a medical treatment in law. But spoon-feeding isn’t a treatment, it is humane care—no different ethically from turning a patient in order to prevent bed sores, or providing proper hygiene. Just as an advance directive instructing that a patient should not be kept clean must be disregarded, so too should a directive instructing that a patient should be starved to death.

There’s one more point to which we must attend. Suffering due to Alzheimer’s disease sometimes falls heavier on caregivers than on patients. True, many say at the end of the difficult road that it was an honor to care for their incapacitated loved ones. But we shouldn’t sugarcoat it: Caregiving can be exhausting and heart-breaking, and in some cases perilous to caregivers’ health. I know this up-close and personal. My wife and I cared for my aged mother in our home—whose Alzheimer’s was then biting deep—for the last five months of her life. Believe me, memory loss is the least of it.

Caregivers are properly allowed to refuse intensive life-extending medical treatment. Then, when death comes, it is a matter of nature taking its course. But allowing caregivers to order doctors (or nurses) to end the patient’s life is a bridge too far. At least in some cases, such a license would allow caregivers to put a patient out of their misery. Add potential conflict-of-interest issues, such as inheritance

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and the costs of treatment, and we see the potential for elder abuse.

As bad as Alzheimer's can be, the severely afflicted often experience moments of clarity and joy. Even when that becomes impossible, these helpless people remain full and equal members of the moral community, entitled to the best care we can offer. If a society is judged by the way it treats its most vulnerable members, we will reject the let's-kill-Alzheimer's-patients agenda out of hand and focus on improving our capacities to care.

APPENDIX D

[The following is the text of President Donald Trump's Statement on Down Syndrome Awareness Month, issued on October 1, 2017 (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/10/01/statement-president-donald-j-trump-down-syndrome-awareness-month>).]

Down Syndrome Awareness Month

President Donald Trump

During Down Syndrome Awareness Month, we celebrate the significant contributions that people with Down syndrome make to their families, to their communities, and to our Nation. We also salute the family members, caregivers, medical professionals, and advocates who have dedicated themselves to ensuring that these extraordinary people enjoy lives filled with love and increasing opportunity. As a result of these remarkable efforts, people with Down syndrome are living longer, more enriching lives than ever before.

This month, we renew our Nation's strong commitment to promoting the health, well-being, and inherent dignity of all children and adults with Down syndrome. Through sustained advancements in education, research, and advocacy, we will further empower those with Down syndrome to pursue the American Dream of independence, pride in work, and full participation in civil society. We will also continue to increase public awareness regarding the true nature of this condition, and to dispel the stubborn myths about the degree to which it is disabling.

Sadly, there remain too many people—both in the United States and throughout the world—that still see Down syndrome as an excuse to ignore or discard human life. This sentiment is and will always be tragically misguided. We must always be vigilant in defending and promoting the unique and special gifts of all citizens in need. We should not tolerate any discrimination against them, as all people have inherent dignity.

The approximately 250,000 Americans with Down syndrome truly embody the great spirit of our Nation. They inspire joy, kindness, and wonder in our families, our workplaces, and our communities. We will always endeavor to make sure that their precious gifts are never maligned or taken for granted.

APPENDIX E

[The following press statement was issued by David Albert Jones, director of the Anscombe Bioethics Centre in Oxford, England, on August 3, 2017.]

Editing human embryos: Unethical research with eugenic goals

David Albert Jones

On 2 August 2017, scientists published the results of the first experiments conducted on human embryos using the gene editing tool CRISPR/Cas9 in the United States.¹ These experiments have shown greater efficacy in editing embryos than previous attempts. At first glance, it might seem like efforts to prevent the inheritance of genetic disease, or treat it at an early stage, are a good thing to pursue. Nonetheless, some elements of these experiments—including both methodology and intentions—raise serious ethical concern.

Reproductive exploitation of women

In order to conceive human embryos for these experiments, the scientists needed human eggs. They therefore recruited healthy women who were paid to undergo ovarian stimulation to produce eggs for the research. Ostensibly these women did not “sell” their eggs but were “compensated” for their “time, effort, and discomfort” and presumably also for risks associated with the process. The ethical concern here is not just whether this practice constitutes buying and selling of body parts and whether such trade fails to respect the dignity of the human body. The greater concern is that women are being encouraged by financial inducements to part with their reproductive potential. The short term risks of ovarian stimulation are well known,² and in this case the risks were incurred not in the hope that a baby would be born but purely to produce human embryos for scientific research.

Embryonic research subjects

In the present study, embryonic human beings were conceived purely for their use as experimental subjects. They did not exist prior to the research and they were never given any chance of being born or of growing up. From conception, they were appreciated only for their potential usefulness. The control embryos and the genetically-modified embryos were then disassembled so that their constituent cells could be examined to see whether all their cells were identical or whether they were mosaics. In the process, these human embryos were destroyed and their short lives came to an end.

Eugenic purposes

Part of the purpose of the research was to determine the most effective time to modify the embryo. Hence, in some, the tool that modified these embryos, CRISPR/Cas9, was injected into the egg together with their father’s sperm. In others, the CRISPR/Cas9 was injected into the newly formed zygote, after the mother’s egg had been fertilised by the father’s sperm, but before the cell had begun to divide.

In the first case, which proved more effective, the modifying of the gene was

part of the process of conception. The embryo never existed in an unmodified state and so the modification cannot be said to be therapy. It is simply the production of an individual with a desired characteristic or, rather, without an undesired characteristic.

In the second case the embryo exists and is subsequently modified. It might seem, therefore, that injecting the CRISPR/Cas9 is therapeutic for that embryo. It is gene therapy on an individual who just happens to be very young. However, a key difference between this process and somatic gene therapy is that, here, the very existence of the individual is linked to his or her modification. The two processes, of in vitro fertilisation and genetic modification, are coordinated and are parts of the same plan of action. The embryo is conceived with the intention that it will be modified. Hence, whichever method is used the aim is the same: to produce a modified embryo.

This aim is the essence of eugenics: not to make people better but to make “better” people. Currently it would be illegal in the United Kingdom to use this technique to produce a genetically modified baby, and the scientists acknowledge that the technique is too risky for clinical use, and that existing techniques for eugenic selection (screening out embryos using preimplantation genetic diagnosis) would have the same effect without the added risks. However, the whole rationale for this experiment is to take a step towards genetic modification as an assisted reproductive technology.

O brave new world

In short, the destruction of dozens of embryonic human beings and the subjecting of women to risks in the selling of their eggs to produce these embryos were not even done for an unambiguously good cause. Instead of treating existing human beings in ways that respect their rights and do not pose excessive risks to them or to future generations, we are manufacturing new human beings for manipulation and quality control, and experimenting on them with the aim of forging greater eugenic control over human reproduction. This is not a case of using bad means for a good end, but of bad means to a worse end. Historic examples, not only in Germany but in Sweden and in the United States show vividly how easily programmes for the eradication of defects in the human stock can undermine principles of equality, solidarity and respect for people with heritable conditions. Eugenics involves not only scientific experimentation but social experimentation and we have seen the results of such experiments. They do not end well.

NOTES

1. Hong Ma et al. ‘Correction of a pathogenic gene mutation in human embryos’. *Nature*, 2017; doi:10.1038/nature23305.
2. See, for example, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists’ patient information leaflet on ‘Ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome’, 2016: https://www.rcog.org.uk/globalassets/documents/patients/patient-information-leaflets/gynaecology/pi_ohss.pdf. 33% of women develop mild ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome as a result of ovarian stimulation, while 1% develop it in its moderate or severe form.

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[David Quinn, a columnist with The Sunday Times and The Irish Catholic, is the founder and director of The Iona Institute (ionainstitute.ie). This article first appeared in the September 29, 2017, issue of the Catholic Herald and is reprinted with permission.]

Who's Funding Ireland's Abortion Lobby?

David Quinn

The great and the good internationally have a big interest in the outcome of Ireland's looming abortion referendum, planned for next year. They want Irish voters to erase from their constitution the so-called Eighth Amendment, which gives the unborn child the same right to life as every other human being.

Abortion is only permitted in Ireland when the life of the mother is at real and substantial risk. This amendment was inserted into the constitution following a referendum in 1983 which passed by a two-to-one margin.

Ever since then secular liberal opinion has been bent upon overturning that referendum. When liberals lose a referendum they do not take no for an answer and Irish liberals have found plenty of allies abroad in their quest for change.

Among those allies is the Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau, various United Nations committees, including the UN Human Rights Committee and the UN Committee against Torture (yes, torture), in addition to the billionaire George Soros.

Through his Open Society Foundations, the Hungarian-born Soros has already provided three pro-abortion groups in Ireland, including Amnesty International's Irish branch, with a combined total of around \$400,000 (£295,000). The other two groups are the Irish Family Planning Association and the Abortion Rights Campaign.

A leaked document from the Open Society Foundations revealed the reasons behind the funding. It said it was so that the three groups could "work collectively on a campaign to repeal Ireland's constitutional amendment granting equal rights to an implanted embryo as the pregnant woman."

It continued: "With one of the most restrictive abortion laws in the world, a win there could impact other strongly Catholic countries in Europe, such as Poland, and provide much needed proof that change is possible, even in highly conservative places."

That pro-abortion groups in Ireland are receiving foreign funding has received very little media coverage and almost no political reaction. This is despite journalists and politicians showing a permanent interest in alleged foreign funding of Irish pro-life organisations. The lack of curiosity in foreign funding of pro-choice outfits says a lot about the double standards of the Irish media and many politicians.

In any event, the reason the Open Society Foundations gives for providing the funding—namely that turning a once strongly pro-life country into a pro-abortion country would serve as an example to other countries—is also the reason why Justin Trudeau and the UN see fit to comment on our pro-life law.

When Trudeau met the new Irish prime minister, Leo Varadkar, in Canada recently, he brought up the Eighth Amendment and indicated that Ireland should

repeal it in the name of “human rights.” There is no indication that he met with any resistance from Varadkar or that the Taoiseach criticised Canada’s extremely permissive law, which allows abortion for any reason right up to birth and gives scant conscience protections to doctors and nurses.

Varadkar describes himself as “pro-life” but favours repeal of the Eighth Amendment where a woman’s health is considered to be at risk. This ground will be very familiar to British readers who know it has led to abortion on demand in their country and almost 200,000 terminations per annum.

The UN has regularly been putting its oar in, encouraged by Irish pro-abortion groups. Ireland, like Britain, is a signatory to numerous UN treaties, and again like Britain, must periodically appear before this or that UN committee to report on how well it is implementing various treaties.

Again and again we are told that we must permit abortion. These UN committees are very ideologically biased. They have long since been co-opted by the pro-abortion Left and they are more than happy to dance to whatever tune Irish abortion groups choose to play. The committees never consider the rights of the unborn child. They pretend that whatever UN treaty or convention they are charged with overseeing permits abortion. This is despite abortion getting no mention in any UN treaty or convention. These same committees then give the false impression that their opinions carry a legal weight they simply do not have.

Depressingly, Irish governments tend to tip the hat to these committees and treat them with a wholly undeserved deference. This suits the present government, of course, because it wants to see our pro-life law overturned. It is therefore convenient for it to pretend to the Irish people that “we are letting ourselves down” in the eyes of the international community, led by the UN, and that the UN is somehow the unbiased and objective arbiter of morality. In fact, the UN acts as a sort of Magisterium to those of a secular liberal persuasion. It cannot be questioned. The UN has spoken, the matter is closed.

Why are these international figures really so determined to see us change our abortion law? The charitable explanation is that they genuinely believe in the right to abortion and that the child in the womb has few if any rights. Many do obviously believe this.

But the less charitable explanation is that they know that Ireland’s law, and Ireland’s still reasonably strong pro-life culture, is a standing rebuke to the abortion laws and the pro-choice culture that exists in practically every other Western country, including Britain.

In the UK, one pregnancy in every five ends in abortion. In Sweden, it is one in four. The Irish rate is about 1 in 18 pregnancies, even allowing for the roughly 3,500 Irish women who travel to Britain each year to have an abortion. In other words, Ireland shows that when a country has a highly restrictive abortion law, far fewer abortions take place even when a near neighbour permits abortion and women can easily travel there.

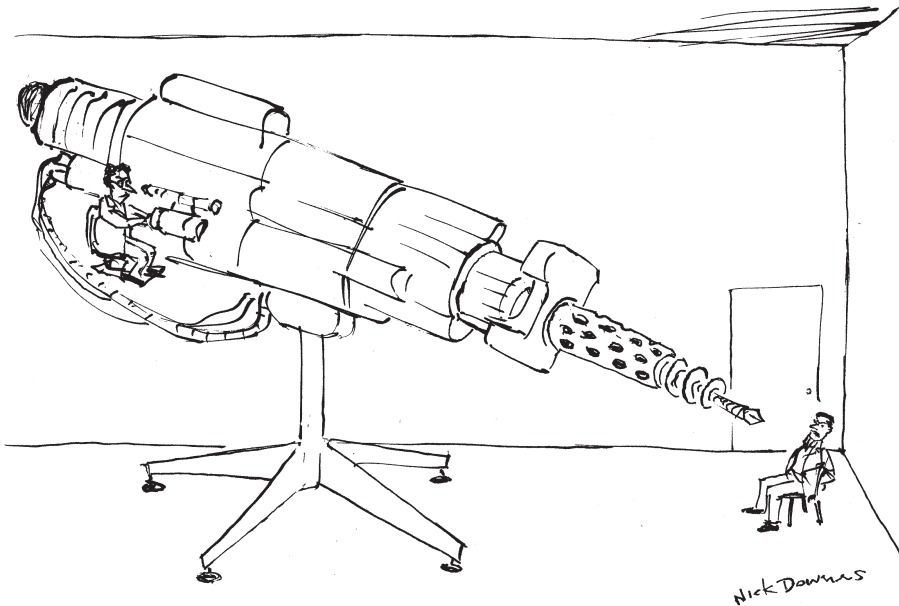
But surely, some say, our abortion law means that more women die in pregnancy?

This is not the case. The Irish maternal death rate is somewhat lower than the British one.

Against this, you may have read about the tragic death of Savita Halappanavar, who died in an Irish hospital in 2012 after being refused an abortion. But it transpired that she died of sepsis and the hospital had not spotted the deadly infection until it was too late. If it had known she had sepsis, it could have ended the pregnancy, which was miscarrying in any case. In British hospitals pregnant women also die from sepsis on rare occasions. Britain's very permissive abortion law does not save them.

Given that the Irish law is such a challenge to the abortion regime in most Western countries, you can see why big international players want Ireland to change its law. The Irish law has saved the lives of countless unborn babies while also protecting the lives of pregnant women. That is a win-win. Ireland should be proud of its law. Other countries should be ashamed.

Will we be able to resist internal and external pressure to change our pro-life culture? We are likely to know by next summer because the referendum will have taken place by then.



"Take away your thermal infused photon blasting polarized proton anti-matter disintegration gun and you're just a cheap, two-bit hood."

APPENDIX G

[Elizabeth Kirk is a lawyer, writer, and consultant with a special interest in adoption law and policy. This essay was published Oct, 3, 2017, by Public Discourse, the online journal of the Witherspoon Institute (www.thepublicdiscourse.com) and is reprinted with permission. © The Witherspoon Institute. All rights reserved.].

Forcing Faith-Based Organizations Out of Foster Care and Adoption Hurts Children

Elizabeth Kirk

Driving out those child welfare providers that have been at the forefront of caring for children for centuries fails to respect the rich and diverse religious pluralism of our nation. Their absence will not benefit same-sex couples, but it will harm children.

What does a bigot look like? According to a recent ad created by the Movement Advancement Project (“MAP”), bigots are lurking in child welfare organizations disguised as seemingly normal social workers. Beneath their kind exteriors, these people conceal a dark agenda to force gay or transgender children into conversion therapy, to impose corporal punishment with a leather belt, and to allow children to languish in foster care rather than be adopted by gay couples. The ad concludes with the dire warning, “When states allow decisions to be based on a worker’s individual beliefs, rather than the best interests of children, it’s children who pay the price.”

What is going on here? Are rogue child welfare workers stealthily imposing private prejudices on the children in their care?

In short: no. In reality, the situation is something quite guileless. In the wake of *Obergefell*, and given the increasing number of sexual orientation non-discrimination laws, many states (including Michigan, Virginia, Texas, and South Dakota) have passed legislation to make clear that faith-based child welfare organizations may continue to provide services to families and children as they always have done, without sacrificing religious beliefs, such as the notion that the best placement for a child is with a married mother and father. This belief is indeed a theological one, but it is also an anthropological one, supported by millennia of human experience, and a scientific one, supported by sound, contemporary social science.

Equating traditional views on marriage with racism, MAP and its allies find laws protecting faith-based organizations morally repugnant and claim that they are unconstitutional. In support of their position, the ACLU has filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of Michigan’s statute, arguing that private agencies that perform a public function through a government contract (i.e., providing foster care and adoption services for children in the foster care system) may not discriminate based on religion or sexual orientation. The legal argument permitting generous religious exemptions is a well-worn one, and similar protections have long been upheld. Nevertheless, legal intimidation has worked well; some of the

nation's oldest child welfare providers voluntarily ceased adoption and foster care services in Illinois, Boston, and San Francisco in the face of legislation with no conscience protections.

What's the Concern?

Lawsuits such as this one are a colossal waste of time and resources. To explain, let us first be quite clear about the nature of the concern raised in MAP's ad and the ACLU's lawsuit. There is no concern that same-sex adoption is prohibited. Indeed, it is allowed in all states. There is no concern that same-sex couples are unduly burdened and unable to find willing agencies or adoption professionals to serve them. The lawsuit acknowledges that the state agency itself cannot turn away same-sex couples. There is no concern that same-sex couples will be discouraged from adopting waiting children. In fact, according to a study by the Williams Institute at UCLA, same-sex couples raising children are four times more likely than their different-sex counterparts to be raising an adopted child, and six times more likely to be raising foster children. There is no concern that faith-based providers are imposing their values on the state or other private providers. There is no concern that families in the foster system are forced to work with faith-based providers against their own moral or religious convictions.

The essence of the argument is that if *some* faith-based organizations are allowed to operate in the public square according to their convictions, it will make it hard for all foster children to find loving "forever families." Thus the tag line: "the children pay the price." But, is this the case? Let's look at some facts.

There are over 400,000 children living in the US foster care system. In 2015, 111,820 of those children were waiting to be adopted. The average age of a waiting child is 7.6 years. The average time the waiting child has been in foster care is almost three years. In the same year, 20,789 children aged out of the foster care system, having never been reunited with their families or adopted. Sadly, any contact with the foster care system often serves to perpetuate cycles of poverty, crime, neglect, and abuse.

Having over 100,000 children in foster care waiting to find a permanent home is a national tragedy, and it is right to demand that it be as easy as possible to match them with loving families. However, it is also the case that there are over two million couples in the United States waiting to adopt, and an estimated two million LGBT people interested in adoption. Given the millions of people waiting to adopt, there should be more than enough prospective adoptive parents—same-sex and opposite-sex couples—to welcome these children. And yet, the children wait, and they suffer. But it is not because of lack of loving, qualified "forever families," and it is not because some faith-based providers prioritize married, heterosexual couples.

The Real Crisis

To blame the number of children lingering in foster care on religious discrimination against same-sex couples is to completely sidestep the pressing,

urgent crisis that exists in the foster care system. For starters, children are abandoned by a society that does not do enough to support families in crisis so that they do not fall into the foster care system in the first place, especially through circumstances of preventable neglect. Other children are ill-served by an overburdened system in which they are often not removed from irremediably broken and even dangerous families in a timely fashion.

Once in the system, many children languish there, moving from home to home while parents are given every chance to regain custody. Adoption, in a system that (rightly) prioritizes family reunification, is explicitly a last resort. But this means that children often are not made eligible for adoption by safe and stable families while they are still “adoptable.” Having experienced removal from their families under circumstances of trauma, abuse, or neglect followed by years in the foster care system, many children require a “forever family” with special resources who can meet the resulting needs, which are often profound. Many other children, regardless of the length of time in foster care, are hard to place because they have significant medical needs or are part of a sibling group. The reality is that many otherwise loving and qualified families, of whatever sexual orientation, are not well-equipped to parent these vulnerable children. Those who are willing to adopt children from foster care often do so without adequate resources or community support.

The ACLU lawsuit seeks to remedy none of these real ills, instead creating a false problem to further an ideological campaign. Meanwhile, children will suffer further while vast resources are deployed in a crusade to eliminate the very organizations that serve the most vulnerable among us. One has to wonder *why* MAP and its allies want to drive those organizations out of the public square instead of embracing them as effective partners in serving children and families. The existence of faith-based organizations does not unduly burden same-sex couples or reduce the availability of other foster care and adoption professionals who are willing to serve them. The presence of such organizations ensures a diverse group of providers to serve all families, including those of religious backgrounds.

Long before a young Galilean woman walked into the hill country to help her pregnant cousin in her hour of need, and long after, people of faith have served and will continue to serve the most vulnerable among us—the widow, the orphan, the abandoned, the expectant mother, the addict, the elderly. And, as they have done for millennia, they will do so with or without government assistance and approval.

Rather than filing lawsuits attacking one another, perhaps we could devote the considerable passion and resources of all providers—religious, humanitarian, and governmental—to tackling the pressing and real causes of the foster care crisis: poverty, unemployment, and the opioid epidemic, to name but a few. Driving out those child welfare providers that have been at the forefront of caring for children for centuries fails to respect the rich and diverse religious pluralism of our nation. Their absence will not benefit same-sex couples, but it will harm children.

APPENDIX H

[Fr. Francis Canavan (1917-2009), a longtime professor of political science at Fordham University and the author of several books, contributed many articles to the Human Life Review over a four-decade period. The following column appears in Fun Is Not Enough, a new anthology edited by Dawn Eden Goldstein which brings together the commentaries Fr. Canavan wrote for the newsletter catholic eye between 1983 and 2008.]

Why Anything Goes

Francis Canavan, SJ

One can say—if only for the sake of starting an argument—that liberal democracy in a pluralistic society is an endless but fruitless search for the lowest common denominator that can serve as society’s moral bond. The more pluralistic the society, however, the more difficult it is to find a common denominator.

Let us try to explain the problem crudely and over-simply, but not entirely inaccurately. We did away with state churches in this country so that all Protestants could feel at home in it. We de-Protestantized the country so that Catholics, too, could feel at home in it. We have de-christianized the country to make Jews feel welcome, then de-religionized it so that atheists and agnostics may feel equally welcome. Now we are de-moralizing the country so that deviants from accepted moral norms will not feel excluded. The lowest common denominator, we have discovered, is like the horizon, always approached but never reached.

As our consensus on basic principles of belief and morals evanesces, we fall back on shared material welfare as the sole social bond that it is both possible and necessary to maintain. We are a national community because we guarantee that no member of society will lack the minimal resources for living, but we leave the goals of life to individual judgment and choice. Freedom of choice in all matters that do not directly and seriously affect society’s material welfare becomes society’s highest ideal. As Justice Harry A. Blackmun put it in his dissenting opinion in the 1986 Georgia sodomy law case, “depriving individuals of their right to choose for themselves how to conduct their intimate relationships poses a far greater threat to the values most deeply rooted in our Nation’s history than tolerance of nonconformity could ever do.”

Contemporary liberalism thus manages to be at once both individualistic and statist. This ambivalence explains the otherwise puzzling spectacle of liberals who are simultaneously furiously indignant at anyone who is judged suspect of imposing his moral beliefs on others and grimly determined to use the agencies of the state to impose their vision of welfare on all the institutions of society. Their vision is of a religiously, spiritually, and morally neutral welfare state which confers its benefits equally on all the members of society without distinction of race, creed, age, sex, or sexual preference, and which prevents private institutions from making such distinctions either. Liberals will compel us to be free and equal—on their terms, not ours.

In criticizing this liberal conception of the welfare state, however, I do not

reject the welfare state as such. I happen to think that George Will was right when he wrote in his *Statecraft as Soulcraft* that conservatism needs “an affirmative doctrine of the welfare state.” The issue today is not whether we should have a welfare state, but what kind of welfare state, aiming at what goals and operating on what principles. The disease of contemporary liberal democracy is not its concern with the welfare of its citizens but the shallowness of its understanding of welfare.

Theodore J. Lowi, writing in the *Political Science Quarterly* (1986, no. 2), discusses this problem. “Liberalism,” he says, “tries its best to take no position on the morality of conduct,” and as a liberal himself he agrees that this is “the most reasonable approach to government in a pluralistic society.” But he also argues that liberalism tends to make the ethic of the welfare state unworkable.

The older, pre-welfare-state American ethic, he explains, had emphasized personal responsibility. The person who was primarily responsible for an injury (it could be either the injured but negligent employee or his negligent employer) was expected to bear the cost of the injury. If a person became dependent on the help of others, the question whether he himself had brought about his condition of dependency was considered highly relevant. The new welfare ethic replaced personal responsibility with a different principle: “All injuries and dependencies became part of the social system, and all costs related thereto became *social costs*,” to be borne by society at large through a variety of insurance and entitlement programs. Liberal refusal to make moral judgments, combined with the new welfare ethic, says Lowi, has put liberal government in a bind: “Once the new social ethic removed blame and replaced it with socialized responsibility, everything became good to do, because all injuries and dependencies, regardless of source or cause, became ‘social costs.’” Liberal government, he tells us, “has already become obliged to respond to any and every argument putting forward a case that a connection can be established between a particular conduct and some injurious consequence. This is why modern liberal government became a gigantic magnet of open-ended commitments without priorities.”

Lowi urges liberals to face the problem they have created in the welfare state, because others are eager to do it for them by liquidating the welfare state. The solutions he suggests, however, remain purely technical and legal. They do not address the real problem, which is that the neutral state in a pluralistic society, having no moral priorities, can hardly avoid becoming “a gigantic magnet of open-ended commitments without priorities.”

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—Serrin M. Foster, “The Feminist Case Against Abortion”