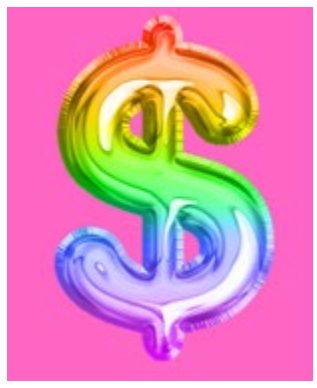
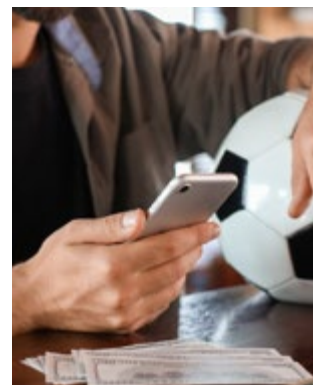
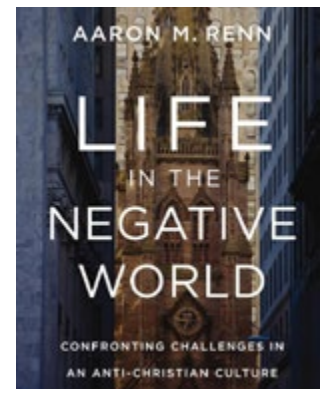
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The Interim

Canada's Life and Family Newspaper

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Trudeau gives $600 million for LGBQT promotion

Gideon Spevak

The Canadian government in 2023 awarded more than 300 grants or contributions to pro-LGBT groups, totalling over $665 million, according to a June 12th blog post.

Run With Life is a pro-life and pro-family blog by Patricia Maloney. In a post published on June 12, Maloney stated that over $665 million of taxpayer funds were spent on LGBT ideology in 2023, surpassing the $108 million total in 2022 by over 600 per cent, according to the Government of Canada's Grants and Contributions Database, which lists all grants and contributions given to third-party organizations and includes grants to provincial governments.

These funds were given out in order to promote LGBT education, advance "LGBT equality," and promote "reproductive health" practices including abortion and contraception.

More than 90 per cent of these grants were provided by Women and Gender Equality Canada, through which Justin Trudeau launched Canada's "first Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan" to "continue building a more inclusive future, with pride" alongside Cabinet Minister Marci Ien in 2022.

Of the roughly 300 grants doled out, 80 per cent ranged between $100,000 and $1,000,000, with about eight per cent being over $1,000,000 in value. Women and Gender Equality Canada continues to award grants and contributions to pro-gender ideology organizations to the tune of millions of taxpayer dollars in 2024.

The federal government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has always been committed to advancing LGBT ideology in Canada and around the world. This dangerous ideology which takes aim at the traditional nuclear family structure is being introduced by manufacturing consent among the Canadian people through our daily consumption of media, participation in all levels of the education system, and all the while socially stigmatizing those who refuse to go along with the regularly scheduled programming and recognize the destruction of traditional values in our country.

Through these grant programs, the Trudeau government funds radical left-wing organizations which can accomplish the LGBT agenda under the guise of "independence" from the government, despite often receiving hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding, creating a financial incentive for private organizations and provincial governments alike to push the radical LGBT agenda.

Many of the lobbying groups that seek money from the federal government to promote their left-wing agendas have particularly dubious intentions. One such group is the Canadian Anti-Hate Network (CAHN), which has received more than $900,000 from the federal government since 2020. With these funds, they have collaborated with American anarchists and Antifa activists, attacked the political enemies of the government (from Pierre Poilievre to groups like Campaign Life Coalition, LifeSiteNews, and Action4Canada with smears of white nationalism, homophobia, and hatemongering), and creating a Marxist "anti-racist" curriculum that was rejected by the Saskatchewan government for its failure to be "high quality" and "free from bias." They also used government funding to promote the practice of "doxing" the "far-right" by publishing illegally obtained personal information online in their "40 Ways to Fight the Far-Right" guide.

Despite the clear agenda behind these sorts of grants, some seem to have been given out based on how many buzzwords were used in the application. A grant of $194,000 was given to "The African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) LGBTQ2S+ Sex Worker Empowerment Project" despite the purchasing of sexual acts being illegal in Canada. The supposed reason for the application was to "increase awareness of Canadian history and institutions; Canadian values; cultural diversity."

Some of these funds don't even stay within Canada, but instead promote the LGBT agenda worldwide, with a particular focus on Africa in communities that lead traditional lifestyles. The Trudeau government, in 2024, announced $1.7 million in funding for overseas pro-LGBT groups. Canada also does this through its lobbying at the United Nations. With the help of other Western nations, they attempt to ideologically colonize areas of the world that do not align with their radical left ideology. In the UN's "Agenda 2030," the international organization demands all member states commit to funding contraception instead of encouraging chastity and abstinence, call for the end of anti-sodomy laws, and include "gender affirmation care" and transgender mutilation surgeries as essential health services.

Governments, as well as non-governmental, intergovernmental, and private organizations who promote a radical sodomy agenda are not acting in the best interest of the citizens of the world, nor the societies that are sustained by them. Strong societies in the old world often collapsed when sodomite practices became pervasive and "normal" and we can observe similar things occurring in our world today. The term "sodomy" itself is derived from the Old Testament city of Sodom which incurred the wrath of God for its wickedness, as the acts they committed were, and are an abomination.

Many Canadians are becoming sick of the manufactured division over the LGBT issue by the Trudeau government and nearly every major institution, as well as the seemingly constant barrage of gay propaganda, especially that which targets young children who are incapable of consent. They observe the Christian morality that our country was founded upon being kicked to the curb in favour of perverts who wish to teach explicit sexual content to Canadian children. Not to forget, much of this is being funded by hard-working Canadian taxpayers. Canadians were promised better than this at Confederation.

Quebec approves advance request for euthanasia

Paul Tuns

On Sept. 7, the Quebec government announced that it would allow advanced directives for Medical Assistance in Dying, when Quebec Justice Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette directed Crown prosecutors' offices to not file charges against doctors and nurses who carry out the procedure.

As of October 30, patients will be able to make advance requests for the procedure before their condition renders them incapable of giving consent despite the fact that euthanasia federal law does not permit it. Previously, the Coalition Avenir Québec government of Premier François Legault said it would wait for the federal government to change the Criminal Code to permit advance directives so that health care workers would not violate federal law when carrying out such medicalized killing. A spokesman for Jolin-Barrette said the federal government has dragged its feet on the issue.

Alex Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, said, "Even though Canada's federal government has radically promoted euthanasia, they have not approved euthanasia by advanced request."

The Directeur des poursuites criminelles et pénales (Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions) said the DPCP will tell prosecutors that a criminal prosecution in cases of MAiD would "not be in the public interest" when patients consent.

Schadenberg said that one problem with advance directives is that they can result in euthanizing patients who might have changed their minds about being killed.

Dr. Catherine Ferrier of the Physicians Alliance Against Euthanasia said, "Advance consent to MAiD at the time of diagnosis has very little in common with the free and informed consent that medical ethics requires."

Ferrier said "people's lives will be ended without their requesting it and without their consent." She explained, "consent, the pillar of the campaign for MAiD ten years ago, is being flouted in the case of our most vulnerable citizens, seniors with impaired cognition." Ferrier added, "They should not be euthanized when they are most in need of protection."

The DPCP said it will require that it be notified when a prosecutor considers a MAiD case to ensure "the appropriate decision-making process."

Jolin-Barrette said the government is taking "necessary steps" to ensure that "the collective choices of the Quebec nation are respected." The Quebec government claims that citizens of Quebec support advance directives for euthanasia. "The issue of advance requests for medical assistance in dying is widely supported in Quebec," Jolin-Barrette said. Sonia Bélanger, the minister responsible for seniors, said that the number of euthanasia deaths in Quebec – the highest in the country – indicates the population's support for Medical Assistance in Dying.

Schadenberg said that Canada has two euthanasia laws – one for Quebec and one for the rest of Canada.

Veterans Affairs tried to cover up euthanasia scandal euthanasia

Paul Tuns



Rebel News's Sheila Gunn Reid reported that Veterans Affairs Canada attempted to hide its paper trail relating to case workers who suggested that veterans access Medical Assistance in Dying.

Gunn Reid, who obtained the more than 1200 pages of documents by filing access to information requests, published her findings at Rebel news on August 20. She revealed that nearly a dozen veterans experiencing acute post-traumatic stress disorder or asking for assistance to live with injuries incurred while on duty were directed to euthanasia services.

Veterans Affairs Canada and Lawrence MacAulay, Minister for Veterans Affairs, initially claimed that there was only one case worker responsible for suggesting veterans seek an assisted suicide to deal with their issues, but Gunn Reid reveals that multiple individuals in several offices were involved in the scandal.

Gunn Reid said, "We can see attempts to cover up and then to backtrack. On page 21, we can see in the media lines that Veterans Affairs officials were planning to claim there were no other incidents of Veterans Affairs staff telling veterans to kill themselves. They had to remove that from their talking points because other veterans came forward."

The access to information requests also revealed staff claimed that veterans were inquiring whether accessing euthanasia would affect their benefits since it could count as self-harm.

In June, Veterans Affairs released its report reviewing all 402,000 files of its clients going back to June 2016 when euthanasia was legalized. Veterans Affairs exonerated itself by noting that only four incidents, all reported in the media, involved MAiD being "raised inappropriately." Veterans Affairs Canada, the report stated, "has concluded these were four incidents completely isolated to a single employee" and that "The employee no longer works for the Department." The report stated that prodding veterans towards euthanasia "is not a widespread, systemic issue, nor is it a reflection of the work of hundreds of case managers and Veteran service agents who interact with the utmost care, compassion and respect with Veterans every single day."

However, a review of the written files might not cap-

See 'Department' p. 13

Think tank warns demographic change will have massive fiscal implications

Paul Tuns

The C.D. Howe Institute, a right-of-centre economic think tank based in Toronto, published a study that warns that lower fertility rates and rapid aging "creates challenges for public finances."

The study, "Another Day Older and Deeper in Debt: The Fiscal Implications of Demographic Change for Ottawa and the Provinces," by William B.P. Robson and Parisa Mahboubi, warn that the inverted pyramid of Canada's population structure means lower economic growth as people age out of the workforce and increased government spending on senior supports and health care as the population gets older will combine to be a drag on provincial finances.

Canada's "changing demographics matter for public finances" say Robson and Mahboubi, because increased spending, especially by provincial governments responsible for delivering health care, will impact taxes and other spending.

An aging society impacts government finances in two ways: decreasing taxable income as workers retire and increasing spending on seniors' benefits and health care, to say nothing of pension liabilities. Most of the higher health care costs for seniors fall into one of three categories: senior-based drug programs, hospital stays, and long-term care provisions.

The authors point out that the old-age dependency ratio – the number of people older than 64 compared to those 18-64 – rises from 30 per cent today to

See 'Canada' p. 8

Two Georgia mothers die after taking abortion pill

Media blames pro-life laws for tragic deaths of women

Oswald Clark

A pair of Georgia residents, Amber Nicole Thurman and Candi Miller, are dead after taking the abortion pill, mifepristone. Media reports three days apart in September claimed these women died due to the state's pro-life law.

Thurman, 28, died in 2022, due to complications from mifepristone which left parts of her twin preborn babies inside her following her chemical abortion. Thurman obtained the abortion pills legally in North Carolina to kill her twins in utero and was admitted to hospital for a serious infection when she returned to her native Georgia. The infection was caused by the incomplete expulsion of some of her preborn babies' remains.

Physicians at Piedmont Henry Hospital in suburban Atlanta monitored her condition which worsened before a scheduled procedure to remove the remains left by the incomplete chemical abortion. The dilation and curettage procedure in these cases are not considered an abortion and is legal when used to remove a child after a miscarriage or the remaining parts of a preborn child following an incomplete abortion.

Media outlets such as the *New York Times,* Slate, and People picked up the story originally reported in the left-leaning *ProPublica*, with all reporting that Georgia's restrictive abortion law that outlaws prenatal homicide after embryonic cardiac-cell activity can be detected, is typically at five to six weeks gestation. Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris tweeted "Trump Abortion Bans prevent doctors from providing basic medical care."

Dr. Christina Francis, CEO of the American Association of Pro-life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, wrote in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* that the state's pro-life heartbeat act was not responsible for Thurman's death because the law allows physicians to intervene in medical emergencies or in cases where there is no detectable heartbeat in the preborn child. Michael J. New of the pro-life Charlotte Lozier Institute commented, "Both of these clearly applied in Thurman's case." A fact sheet produced by the Institute dated Sept. 13 stated, "All pro-life state laws allow doctors to exercise their medical judgment to treat women with pregnancy emergencies. No law requires 'imminence' or 'certainty' before a doctor can act to save the patient's life."



Amber Thurman, left, and Candi Miller, right, died after taking the abortion pill. Pro-abortion activists are claiming the two mothers died because of Georgia's pro-life law that bans abortion once a heartbeat is detectable at six weeks.

News of Miller's death came three days after *ProPublica* reported that in November 2022, Candi Miller, 41, ordered abortion pills online and experienced an incomplete abortion, leaving parts of her preborn child inside her. She, too, qualified for a dilation and curettage procedure, but did not seek medical care at a doctor's office or hospital emergency room. Her teenage son said she was moaning in agony for days after taking the abortion pill and her husband found her unresponsive in her bed alongside her 3-year-old daughter. The official autopsy of Miller's death, reported discovering finding "products of conception" following her incomplete abortion as well as a lethal combination of painkillers and fentanyl.

SBA Pro-Life America's state policy director Katie Daniel said that, "We mourn the senseless loss of Amber, Candi, and their unborn children" … "We agree their deaths were preventable. But let's be absolutely clear: Georgia's law and every pro-life state law calls on doctors to act in circumstances just like theirs."

Daniel said, "If abortion advocates weren't spreading misinformation and confusion to score political points, it's possible the outcome would have been different." Pro-abortion activists claim that laws that outlaw or restrict abortion also prevent health care providers from treating pregnancy complications or miscarriages.

SBA Pro-Life America president Marjorie Dannenfelser said, "The common factors in the tragic deaths of Amber Thurman and Candi Miller are dangerous abortion drugs and inappropriate care for their complications." Dannenfelser said that "abortion drugs send one in 25 women to the emergency room," a fact acknowledged by the Food and Drug Administration's own labeling for mifepristone.

The Charlotte Lozier Institute's New said that "better reporting would show that chemical abortions pose serious health risks for women" but instead, ideologically committed journalists misrepresent the tragic deaths of pregnant women and call for rescinding pro-life laws.

Live Action responded to the ProPublica report by observing it did not inform readers of important facts such as dilation and curettage procedures are legal "in Georgia unless used to intentionally kill a child in the womb," that "sepsis is a known risk of the abortion pill," that its blaming of the pro-life law was pure "speculation" and that there was no medical explanation for why the D&C was not performed in a timely fashion.

Britain's trans population exaggerated by official stats

Paul Tuns

The Office for Statistical Regulation (OSR) in England said there was "sufficient evidence" calling into question the results of the 2021 Census for England and Wales when it came to the gender identity question.

The 2021 Census reported that there were 262,000 people who self-identified as transgender, or about one in every 200 people in the country. The 2021 census was England's first one to ask about gender identity by asking whether respondents identified as a gender different from their registered birth sex; 0.5 per cent answered yes.

OSR said that the gender identity question was "more likely than others" to be misunderstood by respondents whose first language was not English.

OSR came to its conclusion after reviewing the Census data collected by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and discovering that people whose first language was not English were four times more likely to say they were trans than English-as-first-language speakers.

On Sept. 12, the ONS reclassified their data on transgender identification from "accredited official statistics" to "official statistics in development."

Michael Biggs, a sociologist at Oxford University, said it was "disgraceful" that ONS took 18 months to straighten out their numbers on transgender identity, noting that of more than "100 questions in the 2011 and 2021 census, this is the first to have been downgraded" by the Office of National Statistics.

ONS deputy national statistician Emma Rourke said the organization had confidence in its findings while admitting there was "potential for bias in how the gender identity question was answered by those who responded that they did not speak English well." She explained that her office has confidence in the national estimates because they were in line with similar figures in Scotland's census findings, while admitting less accuracy in the local data.

OSR said that the national estimate was not likely to be "materially misleading" and the problem was mainly with drawing conclusions for local areas. Anomalies such as higher transgender populations in more ethnic neighbourhoods reinforce the concerns about conclusions for local populations. The London Borough of Newham, for example, had the largest proportion of people who identify as trans (1.5 per cent), but it also has about four times the national average of non-English speakers in the country (35 per cent).

Oxford's Biggs said although ORS "found no evidence of ideological bias, I suspect that the ONS's close relationship with (gay activist) Stonewall (group) and deference to its LGBTQ+ and Allies Network, contributed to this question being developed without proper scrutiny." He noted that the Annual GP Patient Survey uses the same question and gets the same "implausible results."

Biggs said that while people whose first language is not English represent 10 per cent of the English population, they represented 29 per cent of the total number of transgender people.

Canada was the first country to survey gender identity in its official census in May 2021. Statistics Canada found that 0.33 per cent of the population identified as either transgender or non-binary, a figure slightly lower than England's. There has been no public review of the figures and how non-English and non-French speakers might have misinterpreted the questionnaire.

Congress hears Army taught soldiers pro-lifers are terrorists

Oswald Clark

Over the past seven years, Fort Liberty has trained about 10,000 soldiers in the U.S. army, during which they classified pro-life groups as terrorists, a Congressional committee has heard.

In a Sept. 19 hearing, army personnel told the official Congressional investigation that pro-life organizations, crisis pregnancy centres, sidewalk counselling, and mass pro-life demonstrations were included as examples of terrorist groups operating in the United States.

CatholicVote broke the story about the Army's labelling of pro-lifers as terrorists earlier this year, including slides from the anti-terrorism training.

Lt. Gen. Patrick Matlock, Deputy Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and Agnes Schaefer, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs appeared before the Subcommittee on Military Personnel that the slides labeling pro-lifers terrorists were "locally developed at Fort Liberty" and "used for training since 2017." They admitted the slides "were not reviewed or approved by Fort Liberty leadership because local policies were not in place for reviewing and approving such training slides."

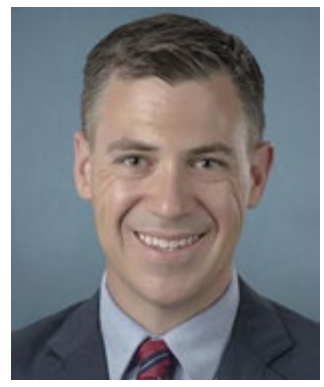
Matlock and Schaefer are responsible for the Army's anti-terrorism and extremism policies.

Committee chairman Rep. Jim Banks (R, Indiana) asked how the Army could use the training resources for seven years before the controversy arose earlier this year. Banks asked, "How in the world does something like that go on for so long and neither of you or anyone in leadership ever catches it?" He cited as specific examples the labeling of the National Right to Life Committee and individuals who use state-issued "Choose Life" license plates as domestic terrorists.

Matlock refused to answer whether anyone had been held accountable. Rep. Matt Gaetz (R, Florida) said "We don't believe that your chain of command approach is going to be sufficient to deal with this if you play 'hide the ball' on what the consequence was." Gaetz also said it seemed that the Department of Defense as a whole has a "problem that people who express policy or Scripture aligned with Christian faith get demonized and attacked."

Banks said the Fort Liberty anti-terrorism training "labeled several prominent and well-respected pro-life groups, that count millions of everyday Americans as members, as violent extremists" and "accused the members of these organizations of being threats to the safety of military installations and designated symbols of pro-life groups, including state-issued pro-life license plates, as indicators of terrorism." Banks called the training "disturbing."

But Banks said the problem went further than Fort Liberty, noting its July 2024 directive, "Handling Protest, Extremist, and Criminal Gang Activities," was "overly broad" and could be used "to police the speech of conservative service members, quiet dissent, and require service members who believe in conservative ideals to hide their identities for fear of retaliation from their commands."



Rep. Jim Banks wondered "How in the world does something like that go on for so long?"

Banks warned the policy could "weaponize(d) … against any Army soldier with values different from the administration."

National Right to Life president Carol Tobias has denounced vilifying all pro-lifers as terrorists. In a statement she said, "In a presentation that is deeply offensive to pro-life Americans across the nation, Fort Liberty promoted outright lies about National Right to Life in a demonstration of lazy scholarship." She made clear, "In our over 50-year history, National Right to Life has always, consistently, and unequivocally, condemned violence against anyone."

Also last month, 80 members of Congress, including Senator Ted Cruz (R, Texas) and Lindsey Graham (R, South Carolina) sent a letter to Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth calling for an Army investigation of the Fort Liberty training and to ensure that similar materials not used at any other Army facilities.

The letter from the members of the House and Senate said, "While Ft. Liberty's statement asserts that the slides 'do not reflect the views of the … U.S. Army or the Department of Defense,' the American people are rightfully concerned that training of this kind is being disseminated in the first place." They wondered if it was "official Army policy to identify Pro-Life Americans and Pro-Life Organizations as 'terrorist groups'," and asked for assurances that "similar materials are not being utilized at other installations across the Army."

Standard deviations

Every four years, the cyclical rituals of American democracy impose the ordeal of an "election year" not only upon its own populace, but on the entire globe. At such times, stances on a range of geopolitical issues hang in the balance—positions which, in turn, promise to set the general tenor of international diplomacy and public discourse for years to come.

The 2024 presidential contest is especially significant for the pro-life movement because, for all of the recent disappointments from former president Donald Trump, the Democrats have embraced the most radical policy positions on abortion as core components of their institutional identity; should they prevail, they would be able to claim a mandate (assuming they would even countenance the use of such a term) and would enact a destructive agenda on the American nation, and then on the wider world by way of their foreign policy apparatus.

But, strangely enough, the Democrats—who have become, in a short span of time, a truly extreme party—have taken a rather odd tack regarding their political rivals. From this cadre of ideological avant-garde activists, for whom no social or economic position is too left-wing, we hear accusations that their Republicans opponents—especially the vice-presidential nominee, JD Vance—are, of all things, "weird."

be zealous, cruel, and uncompromising.

JD Vance has, by almost any reckoning, led an incredible life: from its humble beginnings, this 40-year-old's story already includes credentials earned from elite institutions, dazzling achievement in competitive industries, military service, a meteoric rise in the political sphere, and a beautiful family to boot. Indeed, so compelling is his story that the bestselling memoir in which it is told, *Hillbilly Elegy,* was turned into a motion picture. In many ways, Vance's life is exceptional—but one of the things which it demonstrates so exceptionally is the American Dream. To characterize this young, successful, pro-life, pro-family father of three as "weird" is to bring into view the next horizon what used to be called the culture wars. We live in a world where the following things are becoming commonplace: the elderly, disabled, and distressed are encouraged to end their lives via state-funded suicide programs; two adults can pay to facilitate the surrogate pregnancy of a human person to whom neither has any direct biological connection and become the "parents" of this child; the inevitable insecurities, uncertainties, and anxieties of adolescence are super-charged by social contagions and amplified with misinformation so that mere children and teenagers will be convinced or coerced into accepting treatments that, at best, will arrest the normal processes of maturation; and prenatal infanticide, at any stage of an unborn child's gestation, is defended under the banner of human rights. All of these things are presented to us as unobjectionable and normal; and stable, fruitful heterosexual families are increasingly coded not simply as privileged, antiquated or unfashionable, but as "weird," phenomena to which polite society no longer gives approbation. In other words, now that old norms have been eroded, a new, inverted set of norms will be forcefully established and ruthlessly enforced. The travesties we witnessed this summer during the opening ceremonies of the Paris Olympics, and a Democratic National Convention, which featured a mobile "clinic" providing free abortions and vasectomies, to say nothing of activists in "Morning After Pill" costumes and a giant, inflatable replica of an intrauterine device—these high-profile, public events give a hint of the shape of things to come.

Some conservatives have opined that, in our present content, there can be no act more rebellious, against-the-grain, or counter-cultural than starting a family; and this is certainly true. But rather than being buoyed by a rising tide of oppositional energy (of the kind that supported the counter- culture of the 1960s), the norms of the traditional family will face the kind of headwinds that would be more familiar to the dissidents of totalitarian states. Nevertheless, being more Vaclav Havel than Bob Dylan, the families who endure this opposition will receive not only the natural rewards which this state of life provides but, in doing so, they will enable future generations to thrive long after the depraved and de-stabilizing cultural forces which are now in ascendence have disappeared, and the nightmare of their would-be "norms" have been relegated to a particularly dark chapter of the history books. Such a future is a long way off, but hope that it will come should give us all the courage to persevere in the present. Go forth and be "weird."

The depraved and de-stabilizing cultural forces which are now in ascendence will eventually lose currency



Letters

The Interim welcomes letters of 300 words or fewer. Letters may be edited. Please send to:

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Contra Leishman (I)

I enjoy Mr. Leishman's columns, but not all of them and not this one ("COVID jabs don't deserve pro-life criticism," September). He quotes the experts: "The COVID-19 vaccine has been a miraculous, life-saving advance offering staggering efficacy in adults." I'm not sure of Leishman's authority to wade into these waters. Especially when the other side of the coin is: "The COVID-19 'vaccine' was the greatest assault on humanity ever and one of global proportion."

If Leishman has any sort of background in vaccinology, drug development and regulatory approval, and the medical sciences, he should see and understand that health bodies such as the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and Health Canada, that medical journals, medical schools and medical science itself, were all compromised and damaged by this COVID-19 injection movement. mRNA products are not sufficiently developed at this time for use in humans – this was one big, risky experiment by people who don't care. People were harmed, people were killed and people pushing back were brutally suppressed. To top it off, the products were manufactured using products of abortion.

If Leishman wants to comment on this area, he should spend his time on the Canadian judicial atrocities inflicted on the Freedom Convoy leaders, including the freezing of the bank accounts of Canadian citizens or the unjust cancellation of medical scientists, doctors, lawyers, teachers and other members of the medical profession who pushed back to save Canadians.

John JF Killackey
Mississauga, Ont.

Contra Leishman (II)

I generally respect the content of the articles published in your newspaper. That being said, I was highly disappointed with Rory Leishman's September column.

Leishman seems to support a statement issued by the Doctrine of Faith of the Catholic Church that "it is morally acceptable to receive COVID-19 vaccines that have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process." I disagree! For those who want to learn more it is worthwhile to reading studies done by Dr. Theresa Deisher regarding the use of human fetal tissue to culture viruses for vaccines. These studies are easily found on the internet.

Likewise, many studies dealing with the subject of unsafe and ineffective COVID vaccines are easily found on the internet. These studies are not all peer-reviewed but most have been completed by highly qualified people. These studies deal with issues such as COVID vaccines causing large blood clots, neurological disorders, and all-cause mortality in the world during COVID. For some reason, Leishman has decided to sing the praises of COVID vaccines but failed to mention the thousands who have suffered very serious adverse effects including death from these vaccines.

This article is one of the poorest in quality I have ever read in The Interim.

Pat Kelly
Mitchell, Ont.

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Line-crossing and finger-pointing



Talk Turkey
Josie Luetke

Linda Gibbons and Mary Wagner have long been personal heroines of mine. When I was still just a high school student I was personally challenged by their witness and seriously wrestled with the dilemma of whether I—and the rest of the pro-life movement—should be so committed to the defense of the pre-born that the law would be rendered immaterial.

Gibbons has repeatedly transgressed Ontario's bubble zone legislation (and prior to such legislation, a court-imposed legal injunction) by pacing back and forth in front of an abortion facility while bearing a sign with a picture of an infant and the demand: "Why mom? When I have so much love to give." Over the past few decades, she has spent a cumulative 11 years incarcerated for her civil disobedience. Now a 76-year-old grandmother, Gibbons is being held in the Vanier Centre for Women in Milton.

Wagner, presently free, has spent a total of six years behind bars. She actually entered the "killing places" and handed out roses to the women in the waiting rooms, counselling them to spare the lives of their pre-born children.

Many other Canadians have been arrested in the past for their pro-life efforts, and a number of brave Americans are currently imprisoned for blocking access to abortion facilities or for other pro-life interventions.

I believe I've settled the dilemma of my youth—God calls each of us to respond to the silent cry of the pre-born in different ways during different periods of our lives. Even Gibbons and Wagner have taken breaks from this type of witnessing, to fulfill other responsibilities, and the extent to which they violate the law also varies. Suffering imprisonment is a great sacrifice and requires great discernment.

Still, while I've yet to find myself in handcuffs, I retain my immense admiration for those peaceful pro-lifers who do, and I thought such admiration was universal within the movement. As it turns out, it's not.

Some make a blanket assertion that it's just wrong to ever break the law. This objection is silly. As the law of the land becomes ever more ridiculous (and unjust), I'd hope the folly of blind devotion to it becomes apparent. We obey a higher law—God's.

More commonly, I see pro-lifers criticizing "rescue" and similar non-violent but unlawful pro-life witness for not being "strategic" or "effective."

Former Planned Parenthood clinic director turned pro-lifer Abby Johnson, for instance, said, "I am not someone who believes that this is the most effective form of activism," when commenting recently on Fox News about pro-lifers detained for violating the United States' Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act. She said, "While I respect their position, I respect their activism, it's not something that I think we should continue, something we should be doing."

The pro-life movement needs many different types of activism including those that are more confrontational

Writing in *The Federalist,* Lauren Muzyka, president and CEO of Sidewalk Advocates for Life, contrasted what she framed as "risky bravado" with her own organization's "strategic, life-saving outreach." She charges that pro-life prisoners of conscience are "removed from ministry, tied up in needless litigation, and separated from the everyday conversations that change hearts and minds."

Katie Somers, director of outreach for Toronto Right to Life, posted on X last year, "I know we are most effective if we are not in prison. We have to draw a clear and solid line in the pro-life movement, and doing anything illegal must be off limits."

They are mistaken.

Rescues have saved lives, which Monica Migliorino Miller, director of Citizens for a Pro-life Society, who has herself participated in this activism, attests to in a reply to Muzyka that The Federalist published in March. She points out that at every step in the legal system, the minds and hearts of others can be changed, and as Gibbons and Wagner will also contend, pro-life ministry continues in prison. Fellow inmates are among the most vulnerable to abortion, and they (Gibbons and Wagner) have unique access to them behind bars.

Just as early Christianity spread through martyrdom, so can our pro-life martyrs prompt reflection, inspire others, and win converts to the cause.

Progressive Anti-Abortion Uprising (PAAU), a left-wing pro-life group (which I will compliment but cannot endorse), defends rescue beautifully on their website, pointing out that it "challenges the legitimacy of the status quo currently protected by existing law." They appeal to the reader: "Your physical presence in (the potential abortion victim's) moment of suffering matters. It is meaningful, even if the baby will never know your love; those who observe your act of love for them will know it."

More importantly, I hope this criticism exposes "effectiveness" as inadequate as a singular lens for assessing the merits of any pro-life action.

When Jesus leaves the 99 to rescue the one sheep—is that effective?

Again, I defer to PAAU: "Preborn people deserve to have someone show up for them. An attempt to rescue a preborn child may be the only act of love they ever receive before they are murdered."

Migliorino Miller writes, "If women still opt to kill their children, at least a few pro-lifers will stay in the 'dark holes' with the unwanted unborn, remaining as a witness to the sanctity of their lives."

She concludes, "The question is not how many babies have been saved, but how many babies have been loved."

I don't know if I should take criticism of rescue and other "criminal" pro-life tactics at face value or speculate about other motives. Muzyka, for her part, suggested that law-breaking activists just want the excitement or the attention, so I feel I have the license to warn against a desire to conform to some type of "respectability politics" that I've written about previously, or a desire to justify one's own enjoyment of freedom by blaming those comrades who languish in prison.

The pro-life movement needs many different types of activism, including those that are more confrontational and more demanding. When good people step up, turn around, and put their hands behind their backs, we owe them a debt of gratitude—hands together now.

Who's weird?



Almost immediately upon becoming the Democratic candidate for president, Kamala Harris started attacking her Republican opponents, Donald Trump and JD Vance, as weird. To emphasize the difference between the Democratic ticket's ostensible normalness and the Republicans' alleged weirdness, she picked the mostly non-descript Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, a former high school football coach. No sooner had Harris delivered the broadside that "weird" became a popular meme on social media criticisms of the Republican ticket.

What does the label refer to specifically? That's hard to say because Harris and Walz have not litigated the case against the supposed weirdness of Trump and Vance because they are running a "vibes" election campaign mostly free of content. Harris and Walz seem to be implying that Republicans like Trump and Vance want to tell women what to do with their bodies by falsely claiming that a second President Trump term will see a federal ban on abortion. Their attacks often respond to an old Vance quote that politicians that do not have biological children are "cat ladies" who "don't really have a direct stake" in America's future.

Trump has called people like himself and Vance "extremely normal" and have unsuccessfully tried to deflect the "weird" charge back to Democrats although without much success.

I tweeted that Walz is hardly normal, that his views are indeed strange, noting specifically a law he signed that required feminine hygiene products in men's and boys' restrooms. Apparently the Democrats believe that a boy can be a girl by wishing it so and more implausibly that he might need to change tampons between math class and recess. That the rules apply even to elementary schools shows the lengths to which Democrats are willing to accommodate the gender fetishes of a noisy but tiny minority who wish to deny biological reality and require that everyone else play along with their delusions. Even if men who want to pass as women could menstruate, if I recall my old health class accurately, this is not something that the kids in grade school would need. It is the definition of weird to put feminine hygiene products in the restrooms of kindergarten and Grade 1 kids.

Walz also signed a bill legalizing abortion through all nine months. Democrats in Congress want to pass a law overturning all state restrictions on abortion. Polling shows that the majority of Americans want abortion to be legal in the first trimester and then their views become more complex but generally more pro-life later in pregnancy. You could make the case that pro-life Republicans who support total bans with no exception for rape and incest are "weird" by being outside the majority view on abortion, but it is as easily made about Democrats who do not want any restrictions on prenatal homicide. As Trump noted during the debate, Democrats have no trouble "executing" babies when they are born and while the "fact-checkers" say that is untrue, Democrats have generally opposed any version of an born-alive abortion survivors law that would provide legal protection to babies who survive botched abortions.

It is true that Vance holds ideas that are unusual but which still may be worth exploring, including giving parents extra votes that they will cast on behalf of their children (Demeny voting. He also holds ideas about nationhood and respect for ancestors that were once common but are now viewed suspiciously by self-styled progressives as patriarchal and racist.

Of course, the Harris-Walz charge of weirdness has tapped into a sentiment that is skeptical of Trump's brand of Republicanism but also worried about being viewed disfavourably by one's family, colleagues, and neighbours. A major reason the left-wing rachet we see in shifts of public opinion is that many people just go along with the flow.

No sooner had Harris labeled her political opponents weird than the Trudeau Liberals began tossing the charge against Pierre Poilievre and his Conservative Party. Again, it is the label not the argument that matters, although it has been difficult to make their attacks stick. Considering Justin Trudeau's, er, flamboyance, Poilievre probably doesn't seem all that odd. And whereas Trump and Vance take so-called controversial opinions on hot-button issues like immigration and family policy, Poilievre and his party have gone out of their way to present as non-threatening to Ottawa's consensus on a plethora of topics such as immigration and abortion.

As our editorial on the opposite page makes clear, the far Left looks to redefine what marriage or a woman is and those who do not buckle to every newfound and newfangled fashion, that hold true to biological reality or traditions spanning millennia, are called out as weird, curiosities from another age. We see this with exhortations to "get with the times" and "you can't turn back the clock." Get with the times often means getting in line with the reliably left-wing *New York Times* editorial page. As for not being able to turn back the clock, that's pure nonsense; of course, you can turn back the clock if it is wrong; it would be madness not to. And societies should be able to turn back the clock on cultural changes just as next month Canadians will turn their clocks back to standard time. Standard sounds a lot like normal. It's time to return to normalcy.

- Paul Tuns

Letters continued

Contra Leishman (III)

Rory Leishman's argument that COVID jabs are safe and effective isn't persuasive. He cites two vaccine experts from the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), to support his views. But it's unlikely they would dissent from the prevailing "safe and effective" narrative. They would be vilified, censored or fired for doing so. It's easier and more profitable for them to conform to the mantra. Institutions like UCSF invariably receive funding from the government and pharmaceutical companies, so it's extremely difficult for vaccine experts employed by them to be independent and objective. That's essentially why they're not credible. As St. Paul wrote, "For the love of money is the root of all evils." (1 Timothy 6:11-16).

Importantly, Leishman doesn't mention widespread reports of myocarditis, blood clotting deaths, and other vaccine injuries resulting from the jab. Nor is this covered by the controlled corporate media.

There are many vaccine experts who argue that COVID jabs are unsafe and ineffective. Among them is Dr. Robert Malone, who invented mRNA technology, and Dr. Byram Bridle, a Canadian viral immunologist. Both were accused of spreading misinformation and censored. They had nothing to gain by honestly expressing their scientific findings. Thus, it's more reasonable to trust and believe the dissenting experts.

Claudio Ceolin
Toronto



The case against MAiD



National Affairs
Rory Leishman

Thanks to the appalling Medical Assistance in Dying laws mandated by the Supreme Court of Canada and enacted by the Trudeau Liberals and their NDP and Bloc Quebecois allies, Canada now has both the most and the fastest increasing number of euthanasia deaths in the entire world. More Canadians are killed every year by MAID than die of stroke.

Yet according to an Ipsos poll, the great majority of Canadians -- even including close to 80 per cent of self-identified Protestants and Catholics -- support Canada's MAiD laws. Why is that?

Part of the explanation is that few Canadians understand that MAiD is a euphemism for suicide. Yet if you ask someone to kill you and he kills you, it is -- or should be -- evident that you commit suicide and he commits homicide.

The Criminal Code of Canada has long provided that anyone who deliberately kills a person at the person's request is guilty of murder in the first degree. This fundamental rule of law applied to all Canadians until 2015, when the Supreme Court of Canada arbitrarily decreed in its appalling *Carter* decision that physicians are exempt from the law for the purpose of perpetrating euthanasia.

Under terms of the latest MAiD provisions, a physician can legally kill a patient with a lethal injection (the procedure used in almost all MAiD deaths), provided only that the patient is mentally competent, persistently asks to be killed and is afflicted with what the patient regards as intolerable suffering caused by a grievous and irremediable medical condition.

In effect, Parliament has licensed physicians to murder suicidal patients.

Many Canadians fear that, without MAID, they could end up suffering intolerably from a crippling illness or a long, slow, painful death. In particular, many people suppose they would rather die than endure a devastating stroke. Such views are subject to change after a stroke, provided the patient is not euthanized. With proper palliative care, the great majority of severely crippled stroke victims learn to cope with their handicaps and resent suggestions they would be better off dead.

One of the most devastating of illnesses is ALS, an incurable and progressively paralyzing disease that gradually worsens, leaving the patient unable to move, swallow, speak and, ultimately, breathe. In the aftermath of such a calamitous diagnosis, many ALS patients in Canada now choose MAiD because they fear they could end up choking to death. Yet there is no basis for such fear. Stephen Hawking, the renowned theoretical physicist, was afflicted with ALS. For the last 10 years of his life, he needed round-the-clock care and could only communicate through a computer activated by muscles in his cheek. Yet, he never lost his zest for life and he died peacefully at the age of 76 in 2018.

For ALS patients who do not choose MAiD, such a peaceful death is typical. According to ALS Canada, appropriate medications can "very effectively reduce the sensation of shortness of breath and choking. They do not speed up death."

Many patients do suffer long and terribly during the last stages of life, because they or their substitute decision makers insist on continuing life support with ventilators and cardiac resuscitation long after these procedures can no longer serve any purpose except to prolong the dying process. These patients should have exercised their long-standing right in law to end active treatments in favour of palliative care to ease their passage to a peaceful death. Under the direction of a competent physician, palliative care can not just alleviate shortness of breath. It can also eliminate nearly all unendurable pain, if only, in extreme cases, by rendering the patient unconscious without deliberately killing them. Furthermore, modern medicines can relieve anxiety, depression, nausea, and other symptoms that often plague the dying during their last days.

But alas, for many euthanasia advocates, such considerations are irrelevant. According to the Fourth Annual Report on Medical Assistance in Dying in Canada 2022, more than half the MAiD victims that year listed "loss of dignity" as one of the main reasons for the perception of intolerable suffering that prompted them to put an end to their life.

In caring for such distressed patients, no mere words can persuade them that they still have a life worth living. What these sufferers desperately need are deeds of care and compassion from their medical caregivers, family members and friends. On no account should any suffering and depressed patient be left to feel unwanted, unloved and bereft of dignity, no matter how dependent he or she might become on others to help them cope with a devastating illness or the near approach of death.

Study says health care serial killer could take advantage of Canada's assisted dying program

Paul Tuns

Professor Christopher Lyon published a study titled "Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying System can Enable Healthcare Serial Killing" in *HEC Forum* – HEC stands for HealthCare Ethics Committee -- concluding that Canada's euthanasia law enables serial killers within the health care system.

Lyon, who teaches at the University of York in the United Kingdom and whose 77-year-old father was killed by euthanasia in a Victoria, B.C. hospital in 2021 over the family's objections, assessed Canada's Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) regime for "its ability to protect patients from criminal healthcare serial killing (HSK) to evaluate the strength of its safeguards." Lyon concluded "clinicians involved in HSK typically target patients with the same clinical features as MAiD-eligible patients" and "they may draw on similar rationales," such as "to end perceived patient suffering and provide pleasure for the clinician." He said that HSKs differ from most other serial killers because they tend to be custodial and are more likely motivated by delusions of "mercy-hero" than sadism.

Lyon said that clinician power to independently define MAiD eligibility and carry out the euthanasia death practically invites abuse of that power.

Lyon observed, "While some patients may be legally eligible for MAiD by meeting the Criminal Code eligibility criteria, their assessors and providers can still have non-clinical or extra-legal motivations to participate, such as sadism, financial gain, misapplied altruism, or ideology."

Lyon said that healthcare serial killing "can remain undetected or unconfirmed for considerable periods owing to a lack of staff background checks, poor surveillance and oversight, and a failure by authorities to act on concerns from colleagues, patients, or witnesses." He found that legal euthanasia "added opportunities" for doctors and nurses to kill patients, "afforded by clinicians' exemption from criminal culpability for homicide and assisted suicide offences amid broad patient eligibility criteria."

Canadian long-term care nurse Elizabeth Wettlaufer murdered eight nursing home residents and tried to kill others and was "only caught through her confession." She killed them with undetectable insulin injections, she claimed, because she was angry, frustrated with her life, and felt "euphoric" in killing those in her care.

Lyon said that MAiD prosecutions for clinicians are unlikely because of inconsistent reporting and little oversight of the legal killing of patients. He noted that there have been no charges laid on doctors for carrying out euthanasia on patients who do not qualify for the lethal procedure. He notes that in Ontario, doctors who fail to adhere to the 90-day Track 2 assessments period for non-terminally ill patients, get a "notice email" for their first three offenses. He observed, "Ontario MAiD providers seem to be able to unlawfully kill at least three people before serious oversight interventions are considered."

Canada is especially susceptible to abuses of the euthanasia law because "Unlike other MAiD jurisdictions, Canada uniquely lacks an oversight system to independently review MAiD requests, consistent post-death reporting, and a waiting period between approval and death."

After examining the sordid history of several physicians who have broken rules regarding the application of euthanasia who have not been charged, Lyon wondered "whether it would be possible to recognize criminal HSK in the current system if it tolerates, creates, or draws such personalities amid legal ambiguity and inconsistent guidance and practices."

He also found that attempts to have MAiD cases reviewed for possible breaches of the law face bureaucratic hurdles, including the privacy rights of patients.

Lyon concluded that "a radical restructuring of its oversight and delivery can help mitigate the possibility of abuses in a system mandated to accommodate homicidal clinicians." Lyon advised that there be "clear guidance for police, prosecution, and judicial services to recognize offenses in MAiD law," noting that the law is currently "ambiguous, with many exemptions for clinicians that may make it difficult to lay charges or prosecute apparent offences." He also called for greater vetting and monitoring of MAiD assessors and providers, advising there be a searchable national database because many healthcare serial killers are able to evade public scrutiny of their "chequered employment history."

Lyon told the National Post that he is not saying that criminally culpable homicides are occurring under cover of Canada's euthanasia regime, but rather that it creates the optimal conditions for it. In his report, Canada's euthanasia regime, Lyons concludes legal MAiD provides "added opportunities for killing" and exemptions from prosecution for health care workers that create an environment in which health care serial killers can operate and literally get away with murder.

Alex Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, said, "While provocative, this paper is limited to critically assessing the MAiD system as an opportunity structure for culpable HSK to highlight gaps in the current safeguards, that Canada's MAiD regime may serve as a protectorate that allows serially homicidal personalities to 'safely' or legally kill."





CLC blankets N.B. with info on transgenderism and kids

Paul Tuns

Ahead of the New Brunswick general election officially called on Sept. 17, Campaign Life Coalition distributed thousands of postcards with information about transgender indoctrination in schools. This raised the ire of politicians opposed to Premier Blaine Higgs's policies requiring parental consent to use names and pronouns at odds with a student's biological sex.

CLC distributed postcards to households in August when they sent interns and staff to the province to deliver more than tens of thousands of postcards. They sent a second batch of postcards through Canada Post afterward. Overall, CLC distributed 620,000 postcards.

One postcard with a teacher at a blackboard said "Pushing transgenderism in schools harms children" with text on the blackboard reading "Sex assigned at birth, non-binary, gender identity" and the excoriation "Let's stop confusing children in New Brunswick classrooms!" Like most of the postcards CLC distributed, it included the organization's website clife.ca/StopGenderIdeology so interested residents of New Brunswick could learn more about the trans indoctrination occurring in schools.

Another postcard stated "Gender Ideology in schools often leads to chemical and surgical mutilation," with facts about the negative health risks of puberty blockers, high doses of estrogen and testosterone to suppress puberty. It also reported that two-thirds of children identifying as transgender are put on puberty blockers and that "hundreds of Canadian girls 17 and under underwent double mastectomies over the past five years." The bottom of the postcard, which features surgical tools and a teenage girl hiding her face, says "Together, let's stop this child abuse!"



One of the postcards distributed by Campaign Life Coalition in New Brunswick in August.

A third postcard headlined "'Gender-affirming' shouldn't mean body-denying" and urged readers to "join us in calling on New Brunswick to ban the dangerous practice of prescribing sex-change drugs and surgeries to underage youth." There are several quotes and information about CLC's petition at clife.ca/BanChildSexChange.

A fourth with an image of mother and teenage daughter headlined "Why parental consent matters," said "parental guidance is crucial," "mom and dad know their children best, and love the most," and "activist teachers are not superior to parents."

Another stated, "No child is 'born in the wrong body.' God doesn't make mistakes."

In a Sept. 14 video, New Brunswick Liberal leader Susan Holt claimed CLC's pamphlets were "misinformation." Holt said, "I'm calling on leaders across party lines to denounce the misinformation spreading through mailboxes and social media across our province." Holt claimed, "The information they are sharing is not true and is extremely concerning."

CLC said in a statement that Holt would rescind Higgs's policy of protecting parental rights in regard to transgender policy in schools, saying Holt's "policy of encouraging Gender Ideology in schools is harming children." CLC director of political operations Jack Fonseca said, "The New Brunswick Liberal Party, led by Susan Holt, has pledged to repeal this common-sense school directive if Liberals form the government." He explained, "She will turn back the clock on parental rights, and forbid teachers from obtaining parental consent before transitioning kids at school."

CLC also received threats of violence from postcard recipients upset with their content. Those threats have been reported to the police.

Gibbons trial hears Gibbons did not interfere

Interim Staff

Two witnesses – a police officer and an abortion mill employee -- in the criminal trial against pro-life demonstrator Linda Gibbons testified that she did not interfere with the operations of the abortion facility at which Gibbons was demonstrating in May and June earlier this year.

On Sept. 19, the case of the 76-year-old activist was heard at the Ontario Court of Justice in Toronto where Justice Maria Speyer presided. The case was continued on Sept. 23, after *The Interim* went to press.

Gibbons was arrested four times in the spring after holding a sign near the office complex at 727 Hillsdale Ave. in Toronto where an abortion mill operates. Both the arresting police officer and an abortion mill worker testified under oath that Gibbons holding her sign did not impede pedestrian traffic to the office complex or the abortion mill.

Gibbons is charged with interference with the operation of a business. Justice Speyer noted at the beginning of the trial that "Miss Gibbons is not speaking" after the activist refused to answer any questions directed to her. Gibbons remains silent during her court appearances in solidarity with the preborn children killed by abortion who have no voice. In July, Gibbons was sent to mental health court due to her determination to remain silent in court.



Linda Gibbons with the sign she witnesses with, "Why mom? When I have so much love to give."

In a separate case being tried in early October, Gibbons also faces three charges of violating *Ontario's Safe Access to Abortion Services Act*, which creates anti-free speech bubble zones that prohibit pro-life witnessing near facilities that commit abortions.

The bubble zone, introduced by Kathleen Wynne's government in 2017, remains after eight years of government under Progressive Conservative Premier Doug Ford. Campaign Life Coalition has launched a petition calling on Ford and Ontario Attorney General Doug Downey to repeal the *Safe Access to Abortion Services Act, 2017*.





Fool me once, shame on me, fool me twice …



Law Matters
John Carpay

How long will Canadians continue falling for the same media tricks that they fell for during the years of lockdowns and vaccine passports?

As the annual flu season approaches, Canadian media are raising the banner of fear, lifting high the torch of terror, and waiving the flag of foreboding. Media allege that we are seeing large numbers of "Covid cases" and "Covid hospitalizations" and "Covid deaths."

It's the same narrative we were fed in 2020, which created and then maintained unfounded fear of COVID. This unnecessarily high level of fear, in turn, generated support for the violations of our *Charter* freedoms of association, expression, religion, conscience, mobility, and peaceful assembly, and the right to choose freely what will or will not be injected into our bodies.

What is missing from these stories by government-funded media is significant and relevant.

Firstly, government-funded media make no mention of the number of cycles used in the PCR (polymerase chain reaction) testing that is used to generate so-called "cases" of COVID. The percentage of people testing "positive" for the virus by way of the PCR test depends on the number of times that a viral remnant in a person's nose or throat is doubled (amplified). If a COVID viral remnant is amplified 40 times, almost everyone will test positive for COVID. Conversely, if that very same viral remnant is amplified only 20 times, very few people will test positive for COVID. The PCR test does not and cannot determine whether someone is sick with COVID, or a spreader of the virus.

In *Gateway v. Manitoba*, expert witness Dr. Jay Bhattacharya explained that the unavoidable errors in PCR testing render the PCR test unfit for public health decision-making: "A reliance on a test that is run up to 40 cycles, (or any number of cycles higher than 30) is certain to produce a very large proportion of false positive outcomes. Lockdowns that are imposed on the basis of 'case' counts derived from PCR tests will be only marginally related to the threat posed by the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus."

Neither governments nor the media will inform the public about how many times a viral remnant was doubled to generate "COVID cases" and "COVID deaths." A large but willfully undisclosed number of these "cases" pertain to people who are not sick with COVID and are not spreading it. Yet governments and media will try to terrorize you with high numbers of "COVID cases" based on meaningless PCR testing.

Governments which claim to love science should freely and readily disclose the number of amplifications (doublings) used in PCR testing to the public, as well as to each individual receiving her or his PCR test result. And yet, since 2020, Canada's federal and provincial governments have kept this information a state secret, typically divulged only under duress in court, when governments get sued by Justice Centre lawyers who defend *Charter* freedoms.

In *Gateway v. Manitoba*, for example, government officials admitted under oath that at least 40 per cent of their "COVID cases" were people who were not sick with Covid and not spreading it.

The second glaring omission from government-funded media reports is the relevant context.

Over 333,000 Canadians die each year. This is what you might expect in a country of 40 million people. According to the death statistics that can be easily accessed on government websites, the impact of COVID on years of life lost (all-cause mortality) was negligible. Every year, sick, and elderly people die in large numbers. We are all going to die, but it's more likely that we will die after reaching the age of 70 or 80, as opposed to dying after reaching the age of 30 or 50. It is very sad, and also very normal, that elderly people die. Had COVID not arrived in the world in 2020, people would still have died in almost equal numbers. However, the cause of death would have been cancer, heart diseases, dementia, lung diseases, strokes, the annual flu, etc. instead of COVID. COVID had an impact on cause of death, not on numbers of deaths or death rates.

The omission of relevant facts, combined with a blind and erroneous faith in the accuracy of PCR testing, is what government-funded media used in 2020 to spread unfounded fear. They are trying to do the same thing now. Will we fall for it again?

John Carpay is president of the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms.

Euthanasia pods hit the European market

Paul Tuns

The Sarco suicide pod, designed by infamous Australian euthanasia activist Philip Nitschke, is being sold in the United Kingdom and the *Daily Mail* newspaper reported that Peter and Christina Scott will become the first people to die by assisted suicide in the pod and that they intend to die together at the same time. Meanwhile, Swiss police arrested several people involved in a Sarco death of American Kate Connelly in Merishausen, Switzerland.

The Sarco – short for sarcophagus – is a 3D-printed death capsule that enables suicide by the activation of nitrogen gas which kills the user through suffocation. It is not clear when the Sarco is being used who is pushing the buttons to activate it, suggesting that a third-party could be assisting in the suicide attempt.

In July, public prosecutor Peter Sticher warned that Nitschke could face legal consequences if he sold his suicide pod in the United Kingdom as it would run afoul of the law against aiding, abetting, and inducing suicide. He stated, ''There is no reliable information about the method of killing. (It is) completely unclear who has control over which mechanical process during the dying process.''

Euthanasia Prevention Coalition president Alex Schadenberg said the Scotts are being used "are part of a death campaign that romanticizes suicide where the 'wish to die' is turned into a 'love story'."

Schadenburg said that the case of the Scotts would be a murder-suicide because one person would activate the nitrogen gas for both to die.

Schadenberg said, "The Sarco was developed by Nitschke, founder of the euthanasia advocacy group Exit International, as a way to gain media attention and to promote his websites that sell suicide books, materials and gadgets," adding, "Nitschke is 'making a killing' on selling suicide."

The Guardian reported that there is a criminal investigation into the death of American citizen Kate Connelly, 64, who was killed using the Sarco pod in Switzerland. Swiss authorities say the Sarco is not compatible with Swiss law even though the country permits doctor-assisted suicide. Health Minister Elisabeth Baume-Schneider affirmed that the euthanasia pod does not meet product safety legislation and therefore cannot be marketed or used for the purpose of euthanasia. She also said Sarco use of nitrogen does not comply with the country's laws on chemical products.

It is known that Florian Willet, co-president of The Last Resort, a Swiss affiliate of Exit International, was present at Connelly's euthanasia death.



The Sarco suicide pod, designed by Exit International founder Philip Nitschke, seen above has claimed its first known European victim.

Kevin Yuill, an emeritus professor of history at the University of Sunderland and CEO of Humanists Against Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia , wrote about the "dystopian horror of the Sarco suicide pod" in Spiked Online. He said, "This creepy death capsule reveals the dark heart of 'assisted dying'." The "futuristic-looking death machine," wrote Yuill, "works by filling its chamber with nitrogen and reducing oxygen levels rapidly once a button is activated from inside. The process would allow a person to lose consciousness and die in approximately 10 minutes." Yuill said at "$20 a pop … it's cheap."

The pods are marketed as disability friendly because they can be activated by voice commands or the blinking of the eye and environmentally friendly because they double as coffins.

Nitschke said one goal of the Sarco is to take the physician out of assisted-suicide: "You really don't need a doctor to die."

In July, the Swiss authorities put a temporary block on the sale of the Sarco to prevent a terminally ill Australian in Switzerland from using it to commit suicide. Yuill said that many euthanasia activists and politicians are opposed to the Sarco, quoting a spokesman for the Swiss life-ending facility LifeCircle condemning it as "there is no human warmth with this method."

Yuill wondered if some euthanasia physicians are opposed to the Sarco because its inexpensive cost "Is much cheaper than other forms of assisted dying," but he also wrote that "the Sarco exposes the horrors of euthanasia that hide behind kind-sounding words like 'assisted dying' or the 'right to die', and "It makes it all too clear that death could become cheap, easy and accessible should we decide to go down this path."

Writing at *National Review Online*, euthanasia critic Wesley Smith wondered about the research and development that went into creating Sarco, which Nitschke said cost more than $1 million to create: "Was the capsule tested? If so, how? On animals? Who knows? Somehow, these questions don't get asked."

Pastor acquitted of drag queen protest charges

Interim Staff

On Sept. 24, Pastor Derek Reimer was acquitted of charges related to his drag queen story time protest in Calgary.

Reimer, pastor of Mission 7 Ministries, was charged with causing a disturbance and mischief for protesting the "Reading with Royalty" event marketed for children at the Seton Public Library in February 2023. He was removed from the premises by police.

In his ruling, Judge Allan Fradsham called Reimer's protest "disrespectful" and "inconsiderate," but concluded that "not all actions" of this nature "are criminal."

After being acquitted, Reimer posted on Facebook, quoting 2 Timothy 3:11: "Persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me."

Reimer's lawyer Andrew MacKenzie said in a statement to the media, the acquittal "is an important exoneration." MacKenzie noted that Reimer has spent 46 days in jail and said that while nothing can give Reimer back the time he spent in jail, there is "some vindication from the thorough and thoughtful decision published by the Alberta Courts."

Reimer was found guilty of criminal harassment in a separate case for protesting another drag queen story time and is awaiting sentencing on Nov. 28. He is also waiting for an Oct. 7 decision in relation to charges of trespassing and violating bail conditions for protesting at Calgary's Signal Hill Library on March 15, 2023.



Canada reaping costs of birth dearth

Continued from page 2

45 per cent by 2067. Put another way, today there is fewer than one senior for every three potential workers but in 43 years, there will be roughly one senior for every two potential workers. In 1997, there was one senior for every five potential workers.

"Another Day Older and Deeper in Debt" makes estimates about population, the economy, and government revenue and spending out to 2067. They estimate that health care spending by the provinces will increase from 7.6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in 2023 to 12.7 per cent in 2067. This will be partially offset by lower costs for education and family benefits as fertility rates settle in at about 1.37 children per woman of child-bearing age.

Total program spending for health care, education, elderly benefits, and family benefits will increase from 15.2 per cent of GDP in 2022 to 19.7 per cent in 2067, but some provinces are more impacted than others with the Atlantic provinces and northern territories spending between 21.4 and 29.9 per cent of GDP on these programs while Alberta and Saskatchewan will spend 12.7 per cent.

The required tax rate change by 2067 to pay for these increased costs range from an increase of 16 per cent in Saskatchewan to more than 40 per cent in the Atlantic provinces, and between 130 and 323 per cent in the northern territories. In total the provinces and territories will have to raise more than $2 trillion dollars in additional revenue to cover their increased health care costs and seniors' benefits. If they don't, it will increase their debt burdens, including servicing that debt with higher interest payments.

Federally, there will be no difference in its spending for dependent Canadians (youth and seniors) unless they change their policies.

The authors say that increasing federal transfers payments from Ottawa to the provinces is not the solution to the increased pressure of rapidly rising health care costs. They say that transfers "blur accountability for taxes and program quality" and "threatens to undermine fiscal discipline that Canadians need from provincial governments." Robson and Mahboubi prefer to see provinces improve the delivery of health care and to pay for program spending by increasing consumption taxes (provincial sales taxes). They also call for more creative policies that expand private alternatives to unsustainable publicly-funded programs.

Robson and Mahboubi argue "the fiscal impact of demographic change … is sometimes compared to glacier," explaining, "the implication is that changes, being gradual, require no dramatic reforms to health care or public policies more generally." They state that the truth is quite the opposite, with their projections showing "the cumulative impact of even modest annual changes over time is not small -- especially when the impact of aging on the revenue side is factored in." If provincial governments do not begin to reform policies now, "demographic change will stress the budgets of Canada's provinces and territories in the decades ahead."

The study did not examine how policies that boosted fertility would change the long-term calculations with their assumption that fertility will rise modestly from 1.33 to 1.37.





My personal hero from the world of sports

Why pro-lifers are like pinch-hitters

Donald DeMarco

Four days after I was born, Clarence McKay "Ace" Parker made his debut with the Philadelphia Phillies. This tidbit of information concerning two entirely unconnected events is of no importance to anyone except to me. It gives me a personal tie-in to him, though a rather thin one. But I will honor it and also the particular virtues "Ace" exemplified over the course of his lifetime.

His debut, though modest, was not without significance. It was in the role of a pinch runner. He earned the role, in the eyes of his manager, because of his speed. At lease he was judged to be faster than the runner he replaced. He was called upon "in a pinch." How many of us are prepared to fill in at a critical moment?

His debut at the plate came six days later. The Phillies were trailing the Boston Red Sox in the ninth inning by a score of 15 to 3. This time, Ace was chosen to replace the pitcher as a pinch hitter. Now, when your team is losing by 12 runs, away from home, and in the ninth inning, there is very little chance of a comeback. But hope springs eternal, and the manager did the right thing. In sports lore, this move is referred to as "the old college try." To do the right thing in a dire situation is surely virtuous. And so Ace Parker strode to the plate and on his very first at bat, hit the ball well over Fenway Park's "green monster." A home run in his first plate appearance, fully justifying his manager's trust in him. The final score, 15-5, did not matter. Ace Parker slammed a round-tripper in his first at bat.

Getting off to a good start is to be highly commended. Ace played 94 games with the Phillies and, oddly enough, hit but one more four bagger. The good start led to a dry run. Owning a meagre batting average of .179, Ace had the good sense, and, we might add, the humility, to seek employment elsewhere. He tried another sport, football. His new career was anything but a dry run. He joined the NFL and was immensely successful, ultimately being elected to football's Hall of Fame. He was an accurate passer, a fleet-footed tailback, and, as a safety, had an astonishing 50 interceptions.



Donald DeMarco appreciates the scrappy Clarence McKay "Ace" Parker, who played in both Major League Baseball and the National Football League.

"Ace" Parker possessed the virtue of perseverance, also in sports lingo called "stick-to-it-iveness." When he passed away at age 101 he had lived longer than any other football player. Longevity was added to his sundry gifts and accomplishments.

Life certainly has its highs and lows, peaks and valleys. But this is no reason to be discouraged. When one door closes, another one opens. We live by faith, not by consulting a road map. "Let the day begin at hazard," advises poet laurates Richard Wilbur. "There is nothing to do with a day except to live it." The same can be said of life.

In today's world, many cannot get off to a good start because they are exterminated before they are born. Mr. and Mrs. Parker, on the other hand, had the courage and faith to bring seven children into the world. Pro-life advocates are like pinch runners and pinch hitters. They stand in for someone else without disposing them. They are helpers "in a pinch." Culture itself is "in a pinch" and needs immediate assistance. The score may be 3-15, but hope remains on the horizon.

When society is not doing the job, it needs help. When a particular batter is in a slump, he may need a pinch hitter, especially when the game is on the line. We might say that culture is in a slump. Pro-life pinch hitters arrive to rectify a dire situation. They may not be hitting homeruns in their first at bats, but they may change their tactics and persevere rather than lose hope.

The word "pinch" has a variety of meanings. Sometimes a "pinch" is needed to wake someone up. Again, this is part of the work that has been bequeathed to defenders of life. They are selected to wake society up, to arouse it from its moral lethargy. Every sporting event begins with victory in mind. If that goal could be transplanted into culture, the unborn would have a better chance of entering the game of life.

Clarence McKay "Ace" Parker will remain a sports hero for me simply because he was good in a pinch. Let us all seek to imitate that virtue.

Think tank labels sports betting a public health problem

Paul Tuns

Cardus, an Ottawa and Hamilton-based Christian think tank, released a pair of studies in September exploring the scope and impact of sports betting, and calling for tighter regulations of the online sports-betting market.

In "Hidden Harms of Single-Event Sports Betting in Ontario," author Johanna Lewis found that the average net monthly spending per sports betting account is $283, the equivalent of three per cent of the average monthly household income. (A person may have more than one account.) The report states that experts consider gambling more than one per cent of income to be associated with higher risk of harm to finance, relationships, and psychological and physical health.

The report notes that research shows that a person who spends more than one per cent of their income on gambling is 4.3 times as likely to experience financial harm as someone who spends less than 0.1 per cent of their income gambling, "4.7 times as likely to experience relational harm, 3.9 times as likely to experience emotional or psychological harm, and 4.4 times as likely to experience harm from health problems related to their gambling."

The one per cent threshold for average household income in Ontario would be $89 per month. Research suggests that the three per cent threshold presents even higher risks of harms.

These higher levels of betting should not be surprising considering the ubiquity of sports-betting advertising and sports commentary. The report cited another study that found sports viewers in Ontario are exposed to 2.8 gambling references every minute during live sports broadcasts and that "more than one fifth (21.6 per cent) of viewing time included some form of gambling reference."

Brian Dijkema, president of Cardus, said, "Single-event sports betting has become so big in Ontario, it can turn anyone's smartphone into a two-hour slot machine while watching a hockey or football game." Dikjkema called on government "to regain control of this form of gambling before the situation gets worse."



Cardus president Brian Dijkema said online sports gambling "can turn anyone's smartphone into a slot machine while watching a hockey or football game."

The report said online sports betting "opened the door for any game to turn a smartphone into a two-hour slot machine" and in doing so made the worst features easily accessible: the "ability to bet quickly, continuously, and at short intervals," with "effectively unlimited access (online), and ability to gamble while alone, drunk, or high" and "structural characteristics that encourage cognitive distortions and loss chasing." Furthermore, online betting enables problem gamblers "to circumvent responsible-gambling tools."

The report also calls out "the rise of in-play betting" which allows betting while games are underway on any number of items like who scores next or who leads at halftime. Online sports betting allows gambling sites to change their odds in real time during games and to offer "bets on a virtually infinite number of events through apps and websites that are updated every few seconds." The report states, "As one researcher put it, the introduction of in-play bets has changed sports betting from a game like the lottery—make your predictions, then sit back and wait to see if you won—to a game more like a slot machine, where you can bet continuously throughout the game." That is, they enable frequent betting and opportunities for greater financial losses. "For sportsbooks," the Cardus study observes, "getting people to spend more money by betting more often and more quickly is a feature, not a bug."

The report said that compared to traditional sports betting, in-play bettors tend to be younger and more likely to be consuming alcohol while betting.

Sports betting and its advertising "normalizes as fun and harmless what is in fact a risky and potentially addictive behaviour." Thus, the Cardus report finds, "the rise of online sports betting is a public-health problem that demands action from government."

Considering the ease and addictive nature of online gambling, Cardus found the number of active accounts with iGO, the online sports betting regulator of the province of Ontario, has increased rapidly as has the amount being wagered. In fiscal year 2023, covering the end of 2022 and beginning of 2023, $7 billion was wagered in online sports betting in Ontario. Early estimates for fiscal year 2024 indicated that the amount bet was increased to $9 billion.

The number of licensed sports betting sites has grown from 18 in early 2023 to 47 today.

Basketball is the most popular sport to be betted on (29 per cent), followed by soccer (15), football (13), hockey (nine) and baseball (8), with all other sports combining for 26 per cent of sports betting.

The "Hidden Harms" report urges the Ontario government to ban advertisements for sports betting, ban in-game betting, require more effective responsible-gambling messages, provide a central platform for players to limit their sports gambling, and require companies that profit from sports gambling to contribute finances to problem-gambling prevention and treatment.

While advocates of single-game and prop bet gambling say that legal gambling reduces illegal gambling, the report notes there is no credible estimate for Canada's black market sports betting and thus governments and companies have no idea what effect legalization has had on sports gambling. In Cardus's second study, "How Big is Canada's Black Market for Sports Betting," also written by Lewis, said that the most common public estimate is $10 billion based on a 25-year-old extrapolation from United States gambling figures.

Lewis said the claims that there is a set pot of betting that would be merely transferred to government-regulated sites online are betrayed by the "hundreds of millions of dollars" companies spend "trying to stoke demand through advertising."

Lewis also found that estimates of government's share are exaggerated or misleading considering that the billions being wagered do not take into account paying out winnings.

The Cardus study says that Ontario, the only province with detailed public information, is hardly reaping the fiscal rewards of legal sports betting. In Ontario in 2022-2023, the provincial government's agency iGO made $74 million while private companies netted a profit of $294 million.

Dijkema said, "Single-event sports betting has been great for private companies, but not for the public purse and may not have actually helped reduce under-the-table sports betting anyway."

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Abortion a prominent issue in the U.S. election

Candidates tackle abortion at debate

On Sept. 10, Vice President Kamala Harris (D) and former president Donald Trump (R) took part in a debate moderated by ABC News in which the two sparred over abortion in the second question posed by the hosts. Harris vowed to sign a bill reinstating *Roe v. Wade* which would nullify state laws protecting preborn children from abortion at any stage of pregnancy. Harris said she would "proudly sign it into law." She condemned state-level bans, saying that Trump was responsible for them because he appointed the judges who overturned Roe and returned the issue back to the states. More than a dozen states ban abortion from conception or after six weeks gestation when a heartbeat becomes detectable. Harris claimed that women were not able to receive emergency medical care because of abortion bans even though all states that significantly restrict or ban abortion have exceptions for miscarriage care and life-threatening medical emergencies. "Donald Trump certainly should not be telling a woman what to do with her body," Harris snarked. Trump commended the *Dobbs* ruling overturning *Roe v. Wade*, and claimed that all legal scholars and politicians on both sides of the issue wanted Roe overturned. He also stated that Democrats are extreme on the abortion issue because they support "execution after birth," noting that the Viginia Governor supported abortion even after birth. When ABC News moderator Linsey Davis's interjection that Trump's comments were false, that no state permits newborns to be "executed," the former president referenced then Virginia governor Ralph Northam comments in a 2019 radio interview in favour of "after-birth abortions" when the child survived a botched abortion. (Trump might have also referenced most Democrats' opposition to Infant Born Alive Protection bills that ban the active killing or passive neglect resulting in death for babies that survive abortions and states that do not require medical care for newborns that survive botched abortions.) Harris responded to Trump by harrumphing and rolling her eyes before insisting, "Nowhere in America is a woman carrying a pregnancy to term and asking for an abortion. That is not happening. It's insulting to the women of America." Harris accused Trump of secretly supporting a national ban on abortion if he were re-elected, a charge Trump denied, saying the issue would be left to the states. When asked by one of the moderators if he would veto a federal abortion ban, Trump did not answer the question; when asked by Trump if she would veto a bill that allowed abortion for all nine months, Harris refused to answer the question.

Trump comes out against Florida pro-abortion amendment

In August, Donald Trump said in an interview with NBC News that he did not support Florida's law which prohibits abortion after six weeks and indicated he would support the referendum on Amendment 4 which would create a right to abortion in the state constitution, a move pro-life advocates say will result in abortion-on-demand through all nine months although advocates of Amendment 4 claim it would allow abortion after a child was viable outside the womb, typically considered around 22 weeks or later in pregnancy. Trump said a six-week limit for abortion is too restrictive – "six weeks is too short, it has to be more time." Asked about Amendment 4, Trump said "I'm going to be voting that we need more than six weeks." Some pro-life activists criticized Trump for supporting an explicitly pro-abortion constitutional amendment with Lila Rose calling him "pro-abortion" and suggesting that pro-lifers could not vote for the former president. Vote No on 4 campaign spokesperson Taryn Fenske did not specifically respond to Trump's apparent support for Amendment 4 but said in a statement that Trump has consistently opposed late-term abortions and said if passed, the constitutional amendment "would allow late-term abortions, eliminate parental consent, and open the door to taxpayer-funded abortions." Apparently concerned that Trump was losing the support of pro-life Catholic and evangelical supporters, his campaign began walking back his comments immediately after they aired on August 29, with a campaign spokesman insisting Trump had "not yet said how he will vote on the ballot initiative in Florida." Karoline Leavitt, the campaign's national press secretary, said "He simply reiterated that he believes six weeks is too short" and Republican Vice President candidate JD Vance said the president had not yet made up his mind. Pro-lifer activists condemned Trump's apparent support for Amendment 4. Erick Erickson, founder of RedState.com, tweeted, ""If Donald Trump loses, today is the day he lost." Erickson explained: "The committed pro-life community could turn a blind eye, in part, to national abortion issues. But for Trump to weigh in on Florida as he did will be a bridge too far for too many." Albert Mohler Jr, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, wrote on X that Trump's comments "seem almost calculated to alienate prolife voters". By August 30, Trump clearly stated he would vote against Amendment 4 while reiterating he wants to see Florida's abortion law broadened to ban the lethal procedure later in pregnancy.

Pro-lifers divided on Trump

Donald Trump once had a legitimate claim as "the most pro-life president in U.S. history" based on his appointment of three justices to the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, ending U.S. taxpayer funding of abortion abroad, defunding Planned Parenthood at home, and codifying conscience rights. However, since the *Dobbs* decision overturning *Roe* in 2022, he has staked out a position that only the states should regulate abortion and that he did not support limits in the first trimester, although he also indicated he opposed a 15-week ban. But as the Republican standard-bearer in this election cycle, he removed blanket opposition to abortion from the Republican platform replacing it with a condemnation of late-term abortions, and who now vows to "protect women's reproductive rights" – code for abortion. Trump has deeply divided the U.S. pro-life movement. Differences of political strategy have taken a back seat to the legal and political goal of overturning *Roe* and but since *Dobbs*, pro-life leaders have split on the best strategies moving forward although nearly all still maintain the end goal is a total ban on prenatal homicide. Organizations like the National Right to Life Committee and Priests for Life are solidly behind Trump, while groups like American United for Life and Susan B. Anthony Pro-life America are critical of Trump's compromises and focus on the pro-abortion extremism of Kamala Harris and her running mate Tim Walz. When Trump signaled that he would support a Florida referendum permitting abortion-on-demand, Live Action founder Lila Rose tweeted, "If you don't stand for pro-life principles, you don't get pro-life votes." She was condemned by numerous pro-life and conservative leaders as aiding and abetting Harris. Rose stood her ground, saying she would not vote for Trump until he adopted a more pro-life position, telling *Christianity Today* pro-lifers "represent a constituency that has no voice, who can't speak for themselves, and so it's our job to speak for them." Liz Wheeler, a conservative political commentator, summed up much of the opposition to Rose when she said "refusing to vote for Trump is a vote for Kamala Harris, the most gruesome pro-abortion politician in our country." Another conservative, Ashley St. Clair, operations manager at *Babylon Bee*, said Rose's position was "evil" and accused her and Live Action of being a grift. James Lindsey, the investigative journalist, said pro-life was important but not enough to tank Trump's chances of becoming president. He accused pro-life opponents of Trump of being communist plants, some embedded in the movement for decades, in order to undermine a candidate like Trump. He and others condemned Live Action for raising tens of millions of dollars, which the organization's 990 forms show go towards salaries and producing original video content to spread the pro-life message.

The Biden-Harris record on abortion

In the September *National Right to Life News*, NRTL president Carol Tobias reports on the Biden administration's record on abortion: announced support for a national law that would "codify *Roe v. Wade*" and nullify state-level pro-life laws and eliminate all protection for preborn children; expressed support for the "Women's Health Protection Act" which would legalize abortion in all nine months; removed most remaining regulations on the abortion pill mifepristone, including allowing physicians to use the US Postal Service, in violation of the *Comstock Act* which prohibits mailing abortifacients; attempted to use the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act to force all hospital emergency rooms nationwide to commit abortion on demand. Tobias said although "Donald Trump has said some things we don't want to hear," she doesn't think he is "turning his back on the pro-life movement." She excused his compromises because "He is a candidate who wants to get elected," but "He was a friend during his years in the White House." She pointed to his record of appointing three justices to the Supreme Court that overturned *Roe v. Wade*, stopping U.S. taxpayer dollars from funding abortion abroad, strengthening conscience protection for health care workers, and keeping abortion out of Veterans Affairs hospitals, among other pro-life policies. The National Right to Life Committee reports that Trump "opposes using tax dollars to pay for abortions" and "pledged to sign the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act which would limit federal funding for abortion on a government-wide basis." Tobias said, "While some in the pro-life movement ask if Trump should still be supported, the important question is: What happens to our country if he isn't?"

Harris supports eliminating filibuster to pass pro-abortion law

On Sept. 24, Kamala Harris told Wisconsin Public Radio, "I think we should eliminate the filibuster for *Roe*." Under the filibuster rules of the Senate, a measure must receive 60 votes to advance to a vote. While historically members of the Senate rose and spoke to fill time in an effort to derail legislation, the recent custom of the Senate is to merely threaten to filibuster which then requires 60 votes to end debate. Harris said, "to actually put back in law the protections for reproductive freedom, and for the ability of every person and every woman to make decisions about their own body and not have their government tell them what to do." She expressed support for ending the filibuster in response to a question about what she would do to promote abortion. In 2017, then-president Donald Trump tweeted that "the very outdated filibuster rule must go" after the Senate refused to repeal the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare). Then-Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell refused to entertain the idea saying it was the only way to ensure the constitutional order of the Senate providing a cooling off period for legislation and ensuring that controversial legislation was not passed with slender majorities. After Harris's remarks on the filibuster became public, Senator Joe Manchin III (West Virginia), an independent who was elected as a Democrat, said he would not endorse her: ""She knows the filibuster is the holy grail of democracy … It's the only thing that keeps us talking and working together. If she gets rid of that, then this would be the House on steroids." Another independent senator who was originally elected as a Democrat, Krysten Sinema (Arizona), tweeted her opposition to eliminating the filibuster: "To state the supremely obvious, eliminating the filibuster to codify Roe v Wade also enables a future Congress to ban all abortion nationwide. What an absolutely terrible, shortsighted idea."

Polls suggest Harris winning votes with abortion stance

The *New York Times* reported that while the economy is the number one issue for voters, a growing share of voters in swing states such as Pennsylvania and Arizona say that abortion is the most important issue. A *New York Times/ Siena College* poll of registered voters in seven swing states that are thought to be decisive for the 2024 presidential election – Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin – found that while 28 per cent of respondents said the economy was the most important issue, 14 per cent said abortion was, followed by immigration at 13 per cent. About an equal number of women said abortion and the economy were the most important issues while among women under 45, abortion was the most important issue. Not all people who say abortion is the most important issue are necessarily pro-abortion and Democrat; Harris leads Trump by 20 points among such voters indicating about two-fifths of voters trust Trump more on the issue. A KFF Health Tracker poll echoes those results, with one-fifth of women 18-49 saying that abortion is the most important issue affecting their vote and half of them say it is their only consideration. KFF also found that 90 per cent of this demographic wants a federal law guaranteeing a right to abortion and 90 per cent say that the election will have a "major impact on abortion access." KFF also found a sizable minority of voters favouring Trump on abortion although he is behind Harris 53 per cent to 34 per cent as the candidate respondents most trust on the issue of abortion. Among all respondents to KFF, abortion was tied as the fourth most important issue with Medicare and Social Security at seven per cent each, far behind the economy and inflation (38 per cent), democracy (22 per cent), and immigration (12 per cent). With just two per cent separating Harris and Trump in most polls in the seven battleground states, the surge in importance of abortion and Harris's lead among people who are voting on the issue, could tip results to her favour on Nov. 5.

Project 2025 and abortion

Since 1980, the Heritage Foundation has provided blueprints for each new prospective presidency, producing a five-page outline for the incoming Reagan administration to "revitalize our economy, strengthen our national security, and half the centralization of power in the federal government." Last year, the Heritage Foundation published a comprehensive 920-page Project 2025, co-authored by more than 100 conservatives, many with experience in government, to detail an exhaustive agenda for a new Republican administration. Democrats are attacking the extensive policy memorandum published on Heritage's website as a secret, scary manifesto for white nationalism. For his part, Trump has said he has not read the document nor that he would implement any of its suggestions. Abortion activist Jessica Valenti called Project 2025 "a step-by-step plan on how the government can force American women out of public life and back into the home" and Kamala Harris and Tim Walz, among other Democrats, invoke the allegedly nefarious policy suggestions with metronomic regularity. They all seem especially worried about its policy suggestions for abortion and contraception. Project 2025 calls for repeal of the Food and Drug Administration's approval for the abortion pill and upholding federal regulations banning the shipping of abortifacients in the mail. It also calls for redefining emergency contraception, which often works by depriving the embryonic child of oxygen, as an abortifacient. The authors call for rescinding the FACE Act which sets up anti-free speech bubble zones around abortion facilities and which has been used to jail peaceful pro-life demonstrators. Project 2025 calls for the Department of Health and Human Services to be renamed the Department for Life, which would then promote life-affirming healthcare and alternatives for women considering abortion; it also suggests that the new administration appoint a "pro-life task force" to oversee anti-abortion efforts within the department. Project 2025 also calls for an end to federal funding of birth control under Title X, enacting conscience rights for health care workers, permitting private companies to refuse birth control coverage, requiring better data collection on complications following both surgical and chemical abortions, ending government-provided abortions for refugees, and creating programs that would promote marriage. On childcare, the document calls on Washington to "prioritize funding for home-based childcare, not universal day care." Project 2025 also argues that the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA) mandating hospitals give life-saving and stabilizing care should not include abortion as the Biden administration claims it does, stating that EMTALA requires hospitals to "explicitly protect unborn children." Project 2025 also takes specific aim at several pro-abortion talking points by denying that abortion is legitimate healthcare or that abortion is necessary to save a mother's life. While the document focuses on banning chemical abortions, and defunding and denormalizing abortion, it is silent on the issue a federal ban.

All news briefs by Oswald Clark.

Abortion on the ballot in 10 states

West Virginia could outlaw euthanasia

Oswald Clark

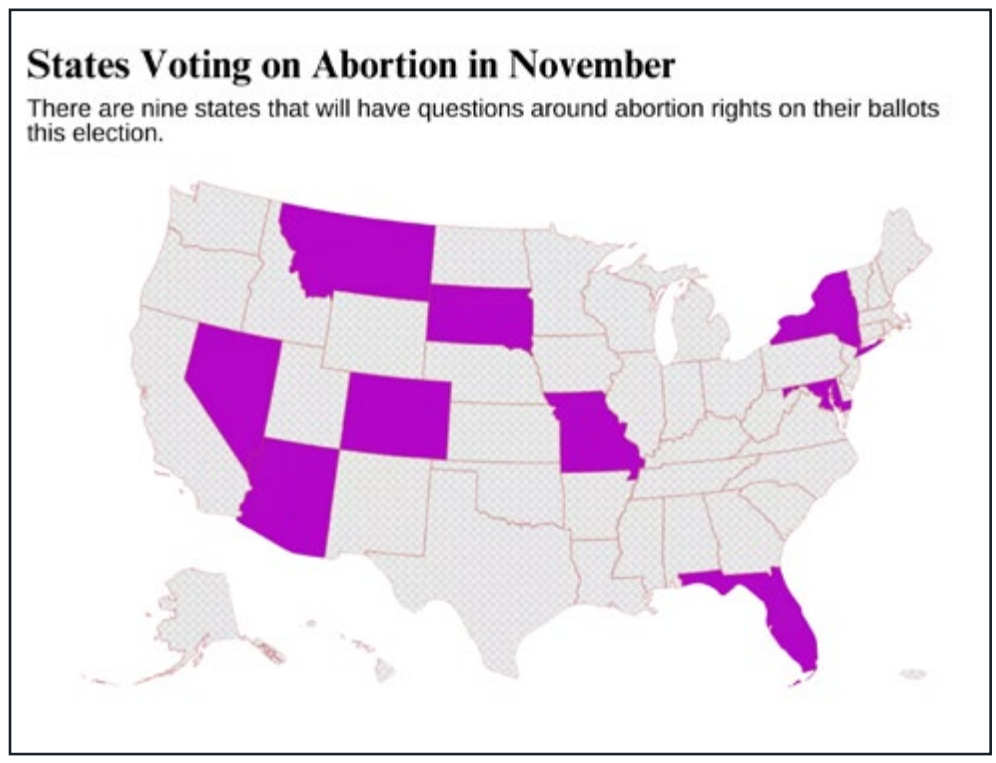
Voters in ten states will decide the fate of abortion laws after abortion advocates organized to get referenda on the issue on the ballot.

The ten states are Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, and South Dakota.

In Maryland and New York, the legislature voted to put the constitutional amendment on the ballot this fall, while in the other states, citizen-initiated referendum, often backed by the financial clout of the abortion industry and left-wing billionaires, put the amendments on the ballot. In almost all the cases, there was litigation to prevent or ensure the amendment made it to the ballot. Pro-abortion organizers in Arkansas came up short in getting the issue on ballots in that state.

In Arizona, a proposed constitutional amendment would create the "fundamental right" to abortion until "fetal viability" at about 24 weeks gestation. After viability, abortion would be restricted to cases of when the life or health of the pregnant woman is at risk. Currently in Arizona abortion is legal until the 15th week although there is an exception to save the woman's life after that point. The ban, which was enacted earlier this year, replacing an unenforced law from the 1800s banning all abortion, would be overturned if the constitutional amendment passes.

An amendment to the state constitution of Colorado would formally declare that "the right to abortion is hereby recognized" and that "government shall not deny, impede or discriminate against the exercise of that right" if passed. It would also outlaw the government from limiting health insurance coverage for abortion, effectively overturning a 1984 law that barred health insurance from covering abortion. Other than that restriction, there are no limits on abortion in Colorado. To pass, the amendment requires the support of 55 per cent of voters.



In Florida, Amendment 4 would add abortion to the state constitution and bar any restrictions on abortion before fetal viability and provide exceptions after that point for "the patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider" – language that pro-life groups say would not limit abortion after the 24-week cutoff. If passed, the amendment would undo the state's six-week ban on abortion which includes exceptions for cases of rape, incest, and the life of the mother. That law was enacted in 2023 and replaced a later-term cutoff for abortion. Donald Trump opposes the six-week ban but has said he will oppose Amendment 4 despite early indications he might support the constitutional amendment. At least 60 per cent of voters would have to support Amendment 4 to pass.

In Maryland, an amendment to the state constitution would to guarantee the right to "to make and effectuate decisions to prevent, continue, or end one's own pregnancy." Currently, abortion is legal until viability and afterward in cases when the mother's life or health are at risk or when a fetal anomaly is discovered. Only 50 per cent plus one is needed to pass the constitutional amendment.

In Missouri, the proposed amendment to the state constitution states that the government "shall not deny or infringe upon a person's fundamental right to reproductive freedom," which is defined as "birth control," "abortion care" and "miscarriage care" — up until the point of fetal viability. If passed by a simple majority, it would provide exceptions to the limit at viability in cases when the mother's life or health is endangered. Local pro-life groups say that requiring a health care worker to attest to that an abortion is necessary to protect the "life or physical or mental health" of the mother would not ban any abortions after 24 weeks. Somewhat confusingly, the amendment would permit the government to restrict abortion rights when doing so "is for the limited purpose and has the limited effect of improving or maintaining the health of a person seeking care, is consistent with widely accepted clinical standards of practice and evidence-based medicine, and does not infringe on that person's autonomous decision-making." Currently, Missouri bans all abortion except in cases of medical emergencies when the mother's life is in danger.

In Montana, voters will decide on a constitutional amendment that would recognize "a right to make and carry out decisions about one's own pregnancy, including the right to abortion." It specifically outlaws the government "from denying or burdening the right to abortion before fetal viability," and "prohibit the government from denying or burdening access to an abortion when a treating healthcare professional determines it is medically indicated to protect the pregnant patient's life or health." Again, pro-life organizations say the health of the mother exemptions would not effectively deter physicians from committing abortion. Abortion is legal in Montana until fetal viability and a simple majority is all that is necessary to add abortion to the state constitution.

Nebraska has dueling constitutional amendments on its ballot. The first one, "Protect the Right to Abortion" would amend the state constitution to declare "all persons shall have a fundamental right to abortion until fetal viability, or when needed to protect the life or health of the pregnant patient." A second proposed amendment, "Protect Women and Children," would bar abortions in the second and third trimesters, except in the case of a medical emergency or in cases of rape or incest. A simple majority is necessary to pass; if they both do, the one with the most votes will take effect. If "Protect the Right to Abortion" prevails, it would nullify the state's existing abortion law which currently bans abortion after the 12th week except in cases of rape, incest, and to save the mother's life.

A constitutional amendment in Nevada would enshrine abortion in the constitution up to the point of fetal viability. Abortion is currently legal until the 24th week of pregnancy but abortion advocates hope to prevent restrictions placed on the deadly procedure in the future. In Nevada, constitutional amendments need to be approved twice by voters before they are enacted, so if a simple majority votes for the amendment in November, it will be placed on the ballot again in the 2026 midterm elections.

In New York, the "Equal Protection of Law Amendment" does not explicitly refer to abortion but would prevent the state from doing anything to affect "pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, and reproductive healthcare and autonomy." Local pro-life organizations say the absence of the word abortion will not fool New Yorkers that it is a pro-abortion constitutional amendment. A simple majority is necessary to pass and if it does, advocates of the amendment say it would not affect the state's law of legal abortion until the 24th week.

South Dakota Constitutional Amendment G, the Right to Abortion Initiative, would make abortion legal without limits in the first trimester, permit second-trimester regulations, and allow abortion in the third trimester to "preserve the life or health" of the mother. Dakotans for Health pushed for the amendment calling South Dakota's abortion ban "the harshest in the nation." Like Missouri's law, it permits abortion only when it is necessary to save the life of the mother. The amendment would be approved if passed by a simple majority. Abortion rights constitutional amendments have passed in typically conservative Kansas, and Republican-leaning Ohio voted for enshrining abortion as a constitutional right, both in 2022. Those pro-abortion victories in red states that have elected pro-life governors and senators, have emboldened abortion activists to push for constitutional amendments across the country.

Meanwhile, voters in West Virginia have the opportunity to provide constitutional protection against euthanasia for vulnerable people. Amendment 1 would ensure "No person, physician, or health care provider in the State of West Virginia shall participate in the practice of medically assisted suicide, euthanasia, or mercy killing of a person." The amendment specifically states that "Nothing in this section prohibits the administration or prescription of medication for the purpose of alleviating pain or discomfort while the patient's condition follows its natural course; nor does anything in this section prohibit the withholding or withdrawing of life-sustaining treatment, as requested by the patient or the patient's decision-maker, in accordance with State law." The amendment also specifically states that it would not affect the death penalty. If passed, Amendment 1 would be the first constitutional amendment outlawing euthanasia, sometimes called Medical Assistance in Dying, thereby thwarting possible court challenges to the state's prohibition on euthanasia. One advocate for Amendment 1 said "voters in West Virginia can ensure this deadly practice never infiltrates its healthcare system" by passing the amendment.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



October 6
Life Chain



October 19
Nova Scotia municipal elections



October 19
British Columbia general election



October 21
New Brunswick general election



October 23
St. Joseph's Centre of Hope for Women Gala Dinner
Woodbridge, Ont.



October 28
Saskatchewan general election



November 13
Saskatchewan municipal elections



February 28, 2025
Deadline to become a member of the Manitoba Progressive Conservative Party in order to cast a ballot in the PC leadership race.

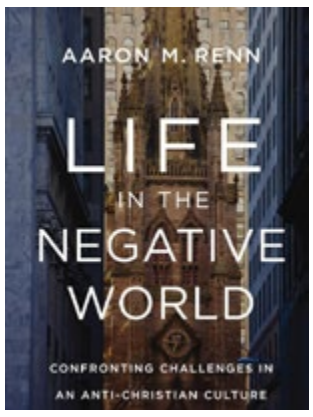


May 8, 2025
National March for Life Ottawa

Author challenges evangelicals to confront anti-Christian culture

Paul Tuns
Review

Life in the Negative World: Confronting Challenges in an Anti-Christian Culture
by Aaron Renn
(Zondervan, $33.50, 247 pages)



Aaron Renn is a fellow at *American Reformer* and former research fellow at the right-of-centre Manhattan Institute for Public Policy. You might be familiar with his work if you are regularly reader of *First Things,* his subscription newsletter or his Substack. His new and challenging book *Life in the Negative World: Confronting Challenges in an Anti-Christian Culture* expands his 2022 First Things essay "The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism" in which he identified three ages in which evangelicals (and the broader Religious Right, pro-life, and social conservative movement) have lived through over the past six decades and the various responses to those different ages and their unique challenges. Although he writes primarily about and for evangelicals, there are broader lessons for all people of faith who hold true to traditional virtues and religious practices.

Renn argues that there was a Positive World, Neutral World, and Negative World that animated the broader culture's relationship to Christianity. The Positive World, in place from the early 1960s through to the early 1990s, privileged Christian practice and beliefs, a status "softly institutionalized" by laws that upheld Christian morality and the social expectation that a good citizen was also likely a church-going and moral person. "Christianity and church attendance had normative force in society." Much of this was due to the traditional White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (mainline Protestantism) or WASP culture that sat atop the U.S. political, economic, and cultural hierarchy. Renn says that there were people who had no interest in the tenets of faith who attended church services simply because that was what was expected but it maintained a status quo in which "Christianity was held in honour." It should be noted that during this time, there was already immense secularizing pressures.

This was followed by a brief period Renn labels the Neutral World in which society became neutral toward Christianity, with religious piety and morals no longer holding a "privileged status but nor was it disfavoured." Christianity, Renn argues, was "one valid option among many within a pluralistic, multicultural public square" and "Christian moral norms retain some residual effect." This period was relatively short-lived, with Renn dating it from 1994 through 2014.

The present Negative World is one in which Christian practice and ethics are viewed with disdain when they do not coincide with progressive ideology, and "Christian morality is expressly repudiated and now seen as a threat to the public good and new public moral order." There are negative consequences for professing one's faith including a loss of status and sometimes livelihood. "The contents of a person's Christian faith," Renn argues, "can't conflict with today's secular culture and ideologies" so that "denatured Christianity is acceptable but orthodox Christianity is not." That is, you are allowed your faith if it is entirely private and does not influence what you do outside church.

The advent of the Negative World coincides with what is sometimes called The Great Awokening that was animated by a new lexicon of "social justice, systemic racism, and white privilege" that made the jump from the halls of academia to the pages of the nation's newspapers and social media in 2014.

Renn identifies six key factors leading to a decline in the status of Christianity: the collapse of the WASP establishment, the '60s social revolution, the '60s sexual revolution, the end of the Cold War, deregulation and corporate consolidation, and digitization.

There were three distinct evangelical responses to the decline in receptivity to Christianity: culture war, seeker sensitivity, and cultural engagement. With growing secularism during the Positive World, there was a culture war strategy of "highly combative" political engagement by the Religious Right and a seeker sensitivity strategy which "reposition(ed) the church to be more relevant to changing consumer tastes in order to increase their market" appeal. Renn says that seeker sensitivity Christianity was often presented in a "therapeutic register" to make churches "more approachable and non-threatening to non-churchgoing people in the broader culture." Many of these churches aligned politically with culture warriors even if they were less outspoken about it.

The third strategy, cultural engagement, "tended to downplay flashpoint social issues like abortion or homosexuality," emphasizing Jesus and Gospel "often in a therapeutic register similar to seeker sensitivity" churches. But these churches tended to prioritize issues more in line with secular society like social justice and alleviating poverty.

Renn says that the culture warrior strategy was more rural, seeker sensitivity strategy was more suburban, and the cultural engagement strategy was more urban. There are often clear class distinctions and each had positives and negatives, and the trick Renn says is to learn what is most applicable in the Negative World. (Cultural engagement church leaders and congregants had the most to lose as they generally populated the cities where large numbers of economic and cultural elite live and work.)

There are challenges for church mission going forward. The culture warriors, for example, "has been forced to confront a culture not amendable to being transformed through politics." The most immediate questions, however, are not necessarily about saving the culture but saving spaces for Christians to practice they faith without compromise with the anti-Christian culture.

Renn offers a program, often more general than specific, for Christian believers to essentially make safe spaces for themselves so that they can persist and someday again be salt and light in the world. Not only are Christians a moral minority, but secular culture is intent on ensuring that it has no public purchase. This adjustment will be personal, institutional, and missional.

Renn wonders "how many of us ever considered whether our faith might cost us our job or was a barrier to advancement in our profession?" Increasingly practicing Christianity is a risky venture and Renn preaches resilience through a number of strategies. One strategy is "becoming excellent" in the professions and to avoid eschewing intellectual work so some Christians rise to positions of importance in secular society without "affirming absurd positions." "Christian life in the negative world," Renn writes, "will require more intentionality, focus, and effort than before." But an insurance policy doesn't hurt and Renn counsels that Christians save a significant portion of their income for when they will have to choose between their job and Christ, and that means living frugally, staying and getting out of debt, and becoming financially independent. That will allow them to walk away from a job when they refuse to affirm secular pieties over Christian ones. He also advises Christians becomes landowners and entrepreneurs as both insurance against cancellation and to help those Christians that are pushed out of secular society and its marketplace for staying true to their faith. This, Renn says, is "equipping not insulating" Christians to be truly countercultural. A Christian-owned café or bookstore that refuses to display the rainbow flag is an important venue for resisting the relentless politicizing pressures on both consumers and other businesses.

Furthermore, Renn says that Christians need to repair their "sexual economy" which means resisting pressure to divorce, having smaller families, or avoiding marriage and children altogether, as well as the viewing of pornography and normalizing casual sex. Renn provides the statistics to show that Christians are hardly immune to the sexual immorality rampant in the broader culture. "We should seek to create a counterculture in the church that models God's intended created order and Christian teaching" and model that counterculture to a broken world. "We must first live out God's ways in our own lives, families, and churches" and "only then, and only by God's grace, will we have any future hope of bringing change to secular society." He specifically calls out pastors who downplay the importance of marriage out of fear of offending single men and women in their congregations and emphasizes that "singlehood has never been understood as an ordinary calling for large numbers of Christians."

Renn says that "online gurus" like Jordan Peterson have attracted large followings by speaking bold truths and says that "bold yet not gratuitously offensive honesty is attractive to those hungry for truth." It is a model for missional churches to speak clearly about the challenges of modern society.

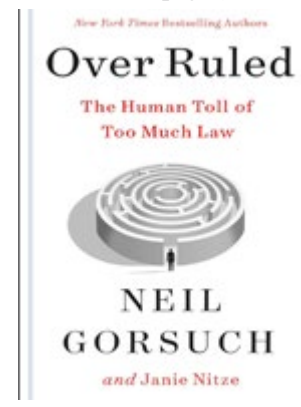
Healthy Christian families and communities will be countercultural in the Negative World but they will also attract souls seeking the Truth among the unchurched. Renn emphasizes that gender and the denial of biological sex is an important area in which the world is crying out for realism but that evangelicals intellectual teaching on the subject has been neglected. It is an area of immediate need for "excellence" that Renn calls for.

Life in the Negative World counsels against disengagement and retreat but also says that recent strategies to engage have been ineffective and need to be rethought. He says that the near future is fraught with the unknown dangers that increased intolerance, suspicion, and hostility toward Christianity will present to Christian believers but that complacency in the old ways or retreat from a corrupted world are not answers to the challenges evangelicals and all practicing Christians face in the Negative World.

A nation of too many laws

Paul Tuns
Review

Over Ruled: The Human Toll of Too Much Law
by Neil Gorsuch and Janie Nitze (Harper, $39.50, 291 pages)



In *Over Ruled*, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch and his former clerk Janie Nitze, make the case that there are way too many laws and regulations that carry criminal punishments in the United States, and that this excess is a threat to rule of law and civic trust. The authors profile the lives ruined or sidetracked by costly and lengthy ordeals in the U.S. justice system after breaking what are often unclear, unknown or petty laws enforced by a bureaucracy unbound by accountability for its actions.

Some of the cases explored by Gorsuch and Nitze are laughable, such as the hoops that a magician had to jump throw in order to have a rabbit in his show – disaster contingency plans, signage that notifies users (that is, the magician) which side of the rabbit's cage is the top (er, the one with the handle). Others are tragic, such as when the city of Philadelphia ended its contract with Catholic Children's Services to place foster children because the agency did not use same-sex couples, thus depriving foster children a family to stay with and foster parents the opportunity to care for children from broken homes and abusive situations.

The statistics tell the story about the over-regulation of American economic and social life. The authors write that no one knows how many criminal laws are on the books (the best estimate is 5000). They report that in one recent year, taxpayers trying to comply with the tax code were provided incorrect information by Internal Revenue Agency employees who did not themselves understand the constantly evolving complexities of the country's tax code about one-third of the time. The IRS has since improved its correct advice rate to about 90 per cent. An Environmental Protection Agency hotline advised that its advice might be out of date by the time users accessed it. Getting the wrong advice by administrators, Gorsuch and Nitze note, is no excuse for non-compliance.

The target of the authors' ire is mostly the administrative state and its bevy of laws that are often accompanied by criminal sanction. In one recent year, federal agencies issued 3242 final rules and 2285 proposed rules. Moreover, these rules are not written by lawmakers but unelected and often by low-level bureaucrats below the level that requires Senate approval. Gorsuch and Nitze acknowledge "some law is surely essential to our nation's flourishing and our well-being as individuals" but they argue that when laws proliferate without end, when Washington begins intervening and substituting its judgement for local solutions, and when citizens cannot possibly know they are breaking the law, it threatens the rule of law by undermining trust and faith in government and the courts.

Gorsuch was chastised when he was appointed to the Supreme Court as no friend of the "little guy" but this book shows that more than many judges he keenly aware of the unjust and anti-egalitarian results of being Over Ruled by laws, regulations, and rules without end.





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You are called to stand up for Life
St. John Paul II

God created life – let us stand together and protect
His preborn in the womb.
We can make a difference with every Life that is saved.

Our blasé reaction to the possibility of mass annihilation



Amusements
Rick McGinnis

While promoting her new book, *Nuclear War: A Scenario*, journalist Annie Jacobsen landed a choice spot on Joe Rogan's podcast where she laid out the dismal story she tells in her book. "One of the reasons why nuclear war is not spoken about by the general public," Jacobsen told Rogan, "is that it's set up to be intimidating. You'll hear a lot of defense officials and analysts using very esoteric language and it kind of excludes the average Joe or Annie."

Even without her dulcet-toned voice, Jacobsen is a professional, and she deftly responds to Rogan's misconceptions about the topic, (Frankly, it didn't seem as if he'd read her book.) using terms like "hypersonic" and imagining that there's some kind of "Iron Dome" defense system to deal with a barrage of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) heading toward their target. The story Jacobsen tells in her book is a deeply disturbing one, but what shocked me was how Rogan was so visibly dismayed by their interview.

Rogan – born in 1967 – seemed (whether in fact or for effect) to have forgotten all of the atomic warfare facts that I assumed anyone who lived through the Cold War, whether as an adult or a child, would have filed away in the forefront of their memory. But perhaps it's just me (born in 1964), who grew up in the era where "duck and cover" and survival in the wake of an all-out nuclear attack was a joke. I have a collection of hours of footage of detonations of atomic weapons in addition to a shelf of books, including a glossy coffee table book (*100 Suns*) of official U.S. government photography documenting the hundreds of atmospheric nuclear tests made between 1945 and 1962. Which is why Jacobsen's book, while depressing, was hardly revelatory in anything except small details that update the nuclear Armageddon narrative I've imagined since I was a boy – a modernized reboot of an old classic, like making Spiderman a black teenager. Faces have changed and smartphones have been added to the props, but the basic story is the same.

Jacobsen's book is organized into three acts: the first 24 minutes after a nuclear ICBM is launched against America, the next 24 minutes after the first warhead lands and a counterattack is launched, and a final 24 where the skies fill with missiles and nuclear war annihilates all the major players and most of the innocent bystanders. On either side is a prologue and epilogue laying out the foreground and imagining the aftermath months, years and centuries into the future.

It's a gripping story, told with the taut language of a spy thriller written by Tom Clancy or Vince Flynn, which shouldn't be surprising since, aside from her work for the *Los Angeles Times*, Jacobsen was a scriptwriter and consultant on Amazon's TV series *Jack Ryan*, based on Clancy's spy hero. But in Jacobsen's scenario there are no names – everyone from heads of state to cabinet members to chiefs of staff remain generic, though her U.S. vice president is a woman, the paranoid Russian leader is clearly Vladimir Putin, and it's hard to imagine the North Korean dictator who launches the unprovoked nuclear attack as anyone but Kim Jong-Il.

We arrived at this point, according to Jacobsen, through simple escalation and bureaucracy: from the moment the first atomic weapon was used, military and geopolitical consensus declared that we must have more and bigger ones, and by 1967 – the year both Rogan and Jacobsen were born – the U.S. alone had 31,225 nuclear bombs. That total came down slightly over the next quarter century, dropped off more steeply when the Cold War ended, and had settled at around 3,750 weapons in the U.S. arsenal by 2020.

Not as many, but more than enough to destroy the world. But I was sure everybody knew that.

Exactly why there's no scenario where most if not all of these weapons will get used over one deadly hour is, in Jacobsen's book, a simple matter of nobody with the authority to use them being able to imagine another option once a sequence of events, laid out in official guidebooks and battle plans, is initiated.

The logic of nuclear deterrence and Mutually Assured Destruction has effectively eliminated any leeway for action when deterrence actually fails to work

Voices of dissent within the military and political establishment are rare, Jacobsen writes. During a series of meetings in 1960 laying out plans for nuclear war, apparently only a single attendee found it worthwhile to voice their objection to the scenarios under discussion. General David M Shoup, commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps and a Medal of Honor winner took issue with the 300 million Chinese casualties counted as collateral damage in a missile exchange between the U.S. and Soviet Union. "All I can say is, any plan that murders three hundred million Chinese when it might not even be their war is not a good plan," Shoup said, according to the recollection of John Rubel, assistant secretary of defense in the Kennedy administration. "That is not the American way." Rubel remembers the silence that met Shoup's words, and how the meeting simply moved on.

From the moment the first heat signature of a missile launch is detected a byzantine series of interlocking protocols, procedures and duties are put into play, without much leeway for reflection or chance to stop what the system has designed as an inevitability. A Russian functionary neglects to pass on messages from U.S. officials to their counterparts because they have insufficient rank; the Secret Service exercises their mission to get the president to a safe place so relentlessly that they remove him from his crucial place atop the chain of command at a critical moment.

The logic of nuclear deterrence and Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) has effectively eliminated any leeway for action when deterrence actually fails to work. "The madness of MAD," Jacobsen writes, "is that the two sides are like a mirror. Like the myth of Narcissus but with a biblical twist: a madman stares in a pond, sees his image on the surface of the water, and mistakes himself for his enemy. Falling for the illusion, he attacks, slips into the water, and drowns. But not before he unleashes Armageddon first."

Jacobsen is careful to pare away particulars from the players in her scenario, but it's hard not to imagine her story playing out right now. As I write this the U.S. president is essentially a figurehead, judged not just by his opponents but by his own party as superfluous while his vice-president fights to win an imminent election. And yet the system, flawed as it is, continues running in his absence. How would Jacobsen's relentless nuclear bureaucracy cope with this change in the landscape of leadership? And does it even matter?

As Jacobsen's scenario hurtles onward, the actual purpose of FEMA – ensuring the survival of the U.S. political and military establishment – has been revealed, and the public is given rote commands to "Stock water. Drink Pedialyte. Stay indoors. Don't forget your morals." With the destruction of key parts of power and information networks and the decimation of major cities and the TV newsrooms and media outlets based there, the average person is in the dark, unaware of the severity of the events about to overtake them. They are on their own.

This story has been told many times, from Hal Lindsey's millenarian *The Late, Great Planet Earth* to Daniel Ellsberg's *The Doomsday Machine* to a subgenre that spans literary fiction, sci-fi and thrillers – books like *A Canticle for Liebowitz, Cat's Cradle* and *On the Beach*. I have lost track of how many movies and TV series were set during or after a nuclear apocalypse, but Jacobsen's book has apparently been optioned by acclaimed director Denis Villeneuve and will join their number.

My generation grew up assuming that the bombs might fall on them, but subsequent ones were spared our shared nightmare, growing up after the end of the Cold War, assured that the Taliban and ISIS could never aspire to anything more destructive than a low-tech, junk shop weapon like a "dirty bomb". But at some point in the last few years, though, we've begun thinking about nuclear war again, not in sci-fi but in real life.

One thing that changed is that, as Sarah Palin once inferred, we can all see Russia from our house again, since their invasion of Ukraine, and last year *Newsweek* published an article warning the United States "against becoming desensitized to the threat" of the nuclear option returning to the table.

In an article titled "The Risk of Nuclear War Fatigue", writer Nick Mordowanec said that "Lieutenant General Bob Ashley, former director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, told *Newsweek* Putin's 'boy who cried wolf' approach to nuclear weapons could eventually cause the U.S. to discount the threat and significantly increase aid to Ukraine. However, he added, 'I don't think we're there yet.'"

Phrases like "boy who cried wolf," like "shouting fire in a crowded theatre," are among those metaphors – sun-bleached and dogeared from overuse – that turn real problems into ritual handwringing. Much as ascribing a refusal to take Putin's threats as mere "fatigue" plays into a larger indifference to the threat of nuclear weapons – perhaps based on the reasonable assumption that we're never going to stuff the nuclear genie back in the bottle and, after all, isn't reducing the total arsenal from tens of thousands to mere thousands good news?

The truth is that there really isn't any good news here which is, in a story full of speculative assumptions in service to its message, the one big thing Jacobsen gets right in *Nuclear War: A Scenario*.

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Department deliberately kept Minister in the dark over euthanasia counseling

Continued from page 2

ture the full breadth of counseling euthanasia to veterans.

One page of documents requested by Gunn Reid reveals that Ministry officials decided to only provide verbal updates on euthanasia counseling to veterans so it would not create a paper trail. As the access to information request revealed, Veterans Affairs bureaucrats were worried about the story becoming public.

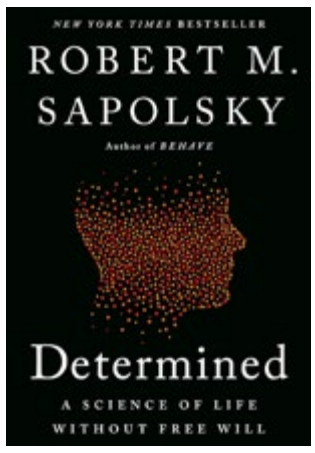
On one page, officials wrote about how they were concerned with press inquiries from Rebel Media about counseling veterans for euthanasia. There are numerous emails about how to handle media, with an official at one point stating, "Hello all, it's interesting to follow the thrice-daily media report emails to see how far the main story is traveling. Yesterday, it was reported by a couple of US news outlets, and today, it is in the UK Daily Mail," the documents say." Said one bureaucrat, "It is interesting to see how much coverage it's getting," the bureaucrats continue. "I had wondered if there would be anyone else to come out of the woodwork to say it had happened to them too but so far nothing (thankfully)."

On page 1220 of the documents, a government official states that the Department should not provide Minister MacAulay with information about the number of veterans being advised to be killed by Medical Assistance in Dying.

Gunn Reid said, "we can see just how out of touch these Veterans Affairs communications people are with normal people living in the outside world beyond the machinery of the Liberal government, everyday people who think veterans need care and not state-sanctioned homicide."

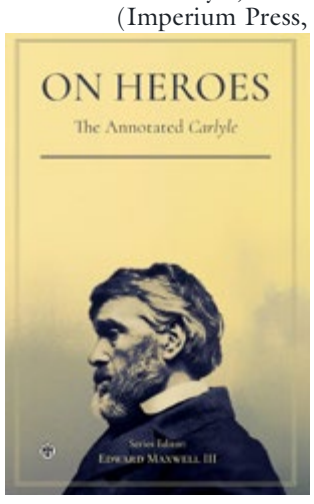


Determined: A Science of Life Without Free Will
Robert M. Sapolsky
(Penguin Press, $48, 511 pages)



Robert M. Sapolsky is a professor of biology and neurology at Stanford and the author of the bestselling *Behave*. In *Determined* he delves into the scientific case against free will by explaining both the science of the brain and the epigenetic influences on how the brain operates. Sapolsky explains well the functioning of neurotransmitters and genes so that even those without a thorough understanding of the science should be able to follow along. Without doubt science explains how the brain works but Sapolsky is impatient with any suggestion that the natural mechanisms occurring in the brain are anything but the sole explanation for the decisions we make. There is no engagement with so-called "compatibilists" who think that free will can co-exist with a theory that the mechanisms of the brain will influence decisions people make. He states, "The intent you form, the person you are, is the result of all the interactions between biology and environment that came before. All things out of your control." This stridency has ramifications not only for his ability to persuade readers that free will does not exist but also leads to some concerning conclusions, which Sapolsky gladly admits: "there can be no such thing as blame, and that punishment as retribution is indefensible." There should be little doubt that unconscious and mechanistic occurrences in the brain can affect the decisions we make, but the evisceration of free will by a purely deterministic model of our decisions would turn our society upside down with no good or evil.

On Heroes: The Annotated Carlyle
Thomas Carlyle, edited by Edward Maxwell III
(Imperium Press, $11 pb, 332 pages)



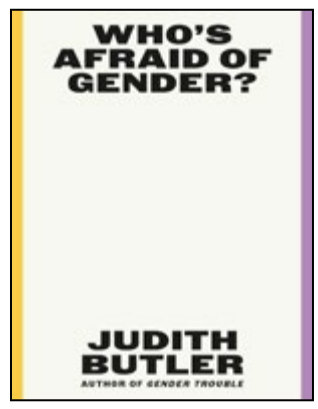
Thomas Carlyle was a 19th century historian, philosopher, and social critic best known for his Great Man Theory of History which argues that history is shaped by exceptional individuals who take command of events. The argument was first made in his lecture "On Heroes," which has been published many times as a book, most recently by Imperium Press. The full title of the book is *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* and in his lectures he provides vivid sketches of figures as varied Odin, Muhammed, Martin Luther, Shakespeare, and Napoleon, among others, all of which delve into the psychology of these world-changing actors and their interplay with the events of their days. Series editor Edward Maxwell III ably introduces the text, provides essential endnotes explaining obscure references, highlights some commonalities among the varied characters ("ultimately not a creation of his environment, but a creator and shaper of it") and rebuts two famous critiques of the Great Man Theory of History. Whether or not Carlyle rises to the level of great man – his arguments, insights, and superior prose style might just qualify – should be left to readers of this excellent volume.



Judith Butler's broadside against 'gender critics'

Sarah Stilton
Review

Who's Afraid of Gender?
by Judith Butler
(Knopf, $37, 320 pages)



Judith Butler is a famous, or infamous, feminist and leading influence on gender theory through her earlier works such as *Gender Trouble, Undoing Gender,* and *Bodies that Matter*. This year she returns to the topic in *Who's Afraid Gender?* which undermines many of her earlier arguments. Three decades ago, she criticized the idea that gender was mutable while also arguing that there were no essential gender identities. The confusion of this position has always been present as she tried to navigate uncertain ground between the voluntarist and essentialist models of gender identity. To say that this led to an instability in her argument is an understatement. Readers probably anticipated an exploration or explanation of how Butler traversed that middle ground. They will be disappointed.

In *Who's Afraid of Gender?* Butler is now on board with self-identifying fantasies, the delusions of gender, that is afflicting a growing number of adolescents and twenty-somethings. But her book offers very little in the way of reconciling her earlier work with her new views, or for that matter any argument for why gender is purely an individual choice, a mood really. Instead she focuses on attacking those who doubt the self-identification of the transgendered and other Alphabet People (Butler considers herself non-binary and has begun using they/them pronouns, which this review will not honour). In a way, though, she ended up precisely where the trajectory of her arguments in the 1980s and 1990s would inevitably lead: as a gender theorist she sought to keep the categories of male and female flexible and open to constant discussion, which meant constant undermining. That she could not then, but can now, countenance the abolition of the categories of male and female is not all that surprising.

What she cannot countenance is the opposition of people of faith and others unconvinced by trans activism, which she liberally calls fascist, white nationalist, trans-exclusionary radical feminists (TERFs), and other assorted villainous labels. She literally begins a sentence with the words "to be fair" but before the period appears Butler labels their views "fascist politics." Imagine if she chose not to be fair. Indeed, all gender critics (whatever that means) are dismissed as bigots and probably, she asserts, closeted homosexuals, who use "junk science" to support their bigotry. *Who's Afraid of Gender?* is not really about gender as it is about its critics, none of whom she engages with honestly. If the psychologizing of gender critics as people who cannot admit their homosexuality was not enough, she says attacks on gender are a "phantasm," a distraction from the world's real problems (according to Butler) of capitalism, climate change, mass migrations, poverty, and a host of other left-wing issues.

While critiquing gender critics for using junk science, Butler herself is adamant that science is on the side that claims gender and sex are unrelated and quotes "feminist scholars" to prove her point. (Did you, too, giggle when you read the term "feminist scholar"?) The problem is that when she evokes a feminist scholar like Daphna Joel and her *Gender Mosaic: Beyond the Myth of Male and Female*, she mispresents Joel's work as supporting the notion that sex "is a spectrum or mosaic," which, in fact, it does not. Her delving into the "science" of gender is downright laughable when she invokes Joan Roughgarden's *Evolution's Rainbow: Diversity, Gender and Sexuality in Nature and People* and the fact that some species such as yeasts "reproduce sexually" even though there is no male or female yeast; it is an understatement to say that there are problems comparing yeast and human beings.

Too much of the book quotes chat room complaints of teenagers with parents who are not totally accepting of their child's chosen gender and too little attention is given to the vast amounts of evidence from hospitals and detransitioners about the harm caused with so-called "gender-affirming care."

Perhaps it is too much to ask of Butler, one of the past half century's most influential intellectuals in academia, to parse what she means by gender because she does not bother doing so except with the circuitous argument that it is "a felt sense of the body, in its surfaces and depths, a lived sense of being a body in the world this way." Put another way, it is precisely what she said it wasn't in the early 1990s.

In fact, throughout the book, Butler eschews both explanation and argument almost completely. Butler admits she could "provide good arguments as to why looking at gender this way is wrong, which would be useful for educators and policymakers," she says of engaging with critics' views of gender theory, then does no such thing. She admits it is "tempting to try and expose and puncture this inflammatory caricature of gender through an intellectual exercise," and then doesn't. She heads directly for the *ad hominin* attack and cheap psychological evaluations.

Considering that she opened the door, it is fair to speculate whether Butler's views on the fluidity of gender have changed because of an intellectual eureka moment or whether she might have less noble motivations, such a desire to evade cancellation by upstart gender theorists perturbed by her earlier opposition to what has become trans orthodoxy. I'm just putting it out there; if it weren't such a gender-laden phrase, I might be tempted to say what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Or to delve further into the psyche, is Butler atoning for a sense of guilt over being a late convert to the modern transgender ideology even if she laid the groundwork for the notion that gender is fluid?

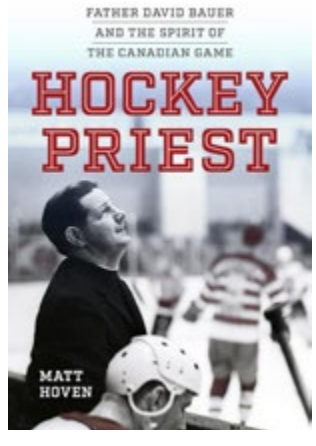
One needn't question her motives though to notice the shoddiness of *Who's Afraid of Gender?*, a hit job on critics of modern gender theory and defenders of the realities of biological sex while offering little of substance to one of the culture war's most vexing issues today.

Sarah Stilton studied philosophy and the classics at Harvard and Oxford and has worked in British and European politics for more than 20 years.

The Catholic priest who made the hockey hall of fame

Paul Tuns
Review

Hockey Priest: Father David Bauer and the Spirit of the Canadian Game
by Matt Hoven (Catholic University of America, $38.95 pb, 339 pages)



Fr. David Bauer was born in Waterloo, Ont., in 1924 and would later attend St. Michael's College School in Toronto, which was run by the Basilian Fathers. He joined their religious community and coached the St. Michael's Majors to a national championship in 1961.

Fr. Bauer famously said "if you can improve the boy as a person through virtues of hockey — courage, judgment, prudence, fortitude, teamwork and fair play, he will improve as a hockey player." That became his motto as he promoted a complete and thorough mentoring of the young men he coached, and who, in doing so, challenged the hockey establishment.

Fr. Bauer's older brother twice won the Stanley Cup with the Boston Bruins and he was himself offered but declined an offer to join the team. However, he did not abandon hockey. He taught and coached at St. Michael's College School and later transferred to the University of British Columbia's St. Mark's College.

In *Hockey Priest: Father David Bauer and the Spirit of the Canadian Game* Matt Hoven explains that Fr. Bauer's philosophy infused everything he did mentoring and coaching young athletes, writing "Not only were they physically growing and gaining in skills, but they grew as people."

His track record led to the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association bringing Fr. Bauer in to develop the Canadian Olympic and world championship teams comprised of university students and other amateur players. His teams won three bronze medals with a player friendly approach that recognized the dignity and humanity of each of his players.

Hoven delves into the philosophical influences on Fr. Bauer, most notably Basilian Fr. Henry Carr's ideas about sports and education and Jacques Maritain's Christian humanism, as well as the internal division and conflicting pulls of being a Catholic priest and hockey coach (the need to be the face of successful teams challenged his humility).

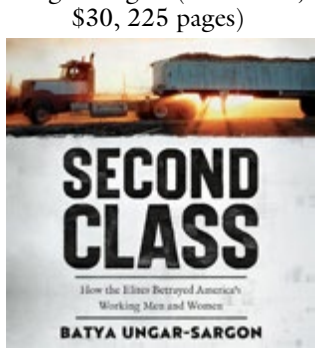
Fr. Bauer would eventually receive the Order of Canada and enshrinement in the Hockey Hall of Fame, and Hoven's intellectual biography shows why both were richly deserved.

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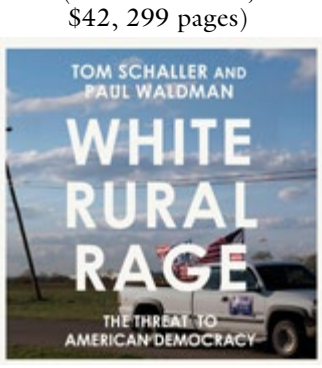
Understanding the white working class

Oswald Clark
Review

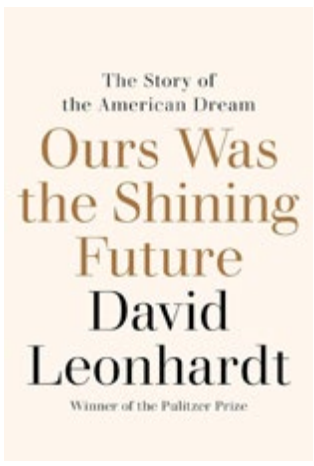
Second Class: How the Elites Betrayed America's Working Men and Women by Batya Ungar-Sargon (Encounter, $30, 225 pages)



White Rural Rage: The Threat to American Democracy by Tom Schaller and Paul Waldman (Random House, $42, 299 pages)



Ours Was the Shining Future: The Story of the American Dream by David Leonhardt (Random House, $42, 492 pages)



Since Donald Trump's surprise electoral victory in 2016, there has been no shortage of punditry to explain the dissatisfaction of the working-class whites that sent Trump to the White House. Books, articles, and studies have explored the frustration of lower income, lower status whites who feel that an out-of-touch governing class does not protect their interests, or worse, are hostile to them. Three new books this year could help explain this election but more importantly provide some insights on how to address these frustrated voters.

Tom Schaller and Paul Waldman in *White Rural Rage,* and Batya Ungar-Sargon in *Second Class,* look at much the same people and issues from very different points of view. Schaller, a political scientist at the University of Maryland, and Waldman, a former *Washington Post* columnist, are not only unsympathetic to the plight of the white working class, but are quite dismissive of the reasons for this population's frustration-cum-rage. Ungar-Sargon, an opinion editor at *Newsweek,* is much more sympathetic and provides ideas on how to improve their lot in life and status in society.

Schaller and Waldan admit in their introduction that critics are likely to question whether "two costal cosmopolitans" have the "right to offer this critique of White rural politics." As Victor Davis Hanson responded, "no one questions the authors' 'right,' but rather their competence." These two "coastal cosmopolitans" are simply too urbane and dismissive of conservative viewpoints to give rural whites a fair hearing. *White Rural Rage* is a less scholarly and more condescending update of arguments first put forth by Thomas Frank in his 2004 book *What's the Matter with Kansas: How Conservatives Won the Heart of America.* Both books argue that rural whites are left behind in an information-based, globalized economy, and are frustrated by the growing inequality between them and their neighbours and kin on one hand, and the political and business elite on the other. A growing economy that has lifted many other working whites out of poverty (and into cities) and invasive immigration have shrunk this segment of the population so its relative political, economic, and cultural importance has shrunk.

The problem with Schaller and Waldman is that they will not take seriously rural white America's worries about the radical transformation of society that progressive political ideologies have foisted upon the country. Their solution is for the aggrieved and frustrated to shuck their provincial concerns and let go of their prejudices. The working class failure to get with the times, the authors argue, borders on fascism and presents an existential threat to U.S. democracy, which is curious way to think about a group that the authors dismiss as ignorant, drug-addicted, and suicidal. One might think that "the 100,000 annual fentanyl overdose deaths" that "are disproportionately white, male, and rural," would evoke some sympathy rather than elide disparagement. The authors find the plight of rural whites so off-putting that they want to see changes to the Senate where every state has two representatives regardless of population. The Founding Fathers thought it was necessary to ensure each state had equal voice in one of the two legislative chambers, but the current fashionable narrative is to deride the disproportionate representation of smaller, more rural states. That is the feature, not the bug the Senate's critics believe it is but it is difficult to see calls for changes in the makeup of the Senate as anything but animus against rural whites.

Ungar-Sargon's *Second Class* defines at the working class more broadly as anyone without a college degree and being in the bottom 80 per cent of income earners. She then divides this group into three tiers: the Struggling who are barely getting by, the Floating who can pay their bills but not get ahead, and the Rising, the successful working class that can afford mortgage payments and make strides to achieving the American dream through hard work in a good-paying, usually unionized job.

She supplies a plethora of data showing the difficulties encountered by the working class and offers solutions to their plight. Among them are: immigration reform because mass immigration reduces working class wages and bargaining power; eliminating the requirement of a college degree for certain jobs; private and public sector funding for training workers; reforming the social safety net, especially programs that claw back payments on a one-to-one scale when recipients earn money through their labours; zoning reform to reduce housing costs.

Some of these reforms might make more difference than others but they also illustrate the weakness of Ungar-Sargon's argument: it is purely economic. Many people who live in poverty or precariously close to it have made bad decisions in life or are victims of broken homes. Many have not followed the "success sequence" followed by most college graduates of go to school, get a job, get married, have children. As Charles Murray pointed out in *Coming Apart,* many elite liberals do not live the rules-free, promiscuous lifestyle they publicly support, and many conservative and Christian working-class Americans do not practice what they preach. The difference is that the hypocrisy of Christians who do not live out their values materially harms them while the hypocrisy of the elite further entrenches their privileges.

Ungar-Sargon has a number of profiles of working-class Americans that show how dysfunctional home life with divorce or abuse has harmed them so it is curious that she did not spend some time exploring the cultural contributions to the economic crises of Americans who are falling behind. The difficulty for policymakers is that the levers of government policy are notoriously unwieldy to tackle cultural instability in people's lives.

David Leonhardt, an editor at the *New York Times,* has written an excellent exploration of the stagnating standard of living for many Americans: life expectancy has fallen, economic inequality has grown, and the promise of progress seems elusive to many. Leonhardt is a pro-free market liberal but sees that capitalism as currently practiced in the United States favours the wealthy and leaves too many people behind. There have been good critiques by the American Enterprise Institute that show inequality is not the problem many opponents of capitalism suggest it is so it is unnecessary to litigate those claims here.

Leonhardt explores a number of policies that would make the American Dream more attainable for more workers, the central one being to make it easier to unionize. He looks fondly upon times in U.S. history when pushes to organize labour resulted in broader sharing of the wealth that companies created.

Proof of Leonhardt's fairness in looking at those left behind can be found in how he deals with abortion, admitting what few partisans or activists will acknowledge: "Access tends to be more restricted than most voters favour in red states, and somewhat less restricted than what most voters favour in blue states." Unlike hysterical critics of the conservative legal movement and pro-life groups, Leonhardt says that "the anti-abortion movement has nonetheless used the tools of democracy to achieve its victory" in getting Roe overturned. He also calls the legalization of same-sex "marriage" "arguably the greatest recent triumph of the political left" which he claims "reflects a successful democratic movement" ignoring that the Supreme Court struck down the traditional definition of marriage.

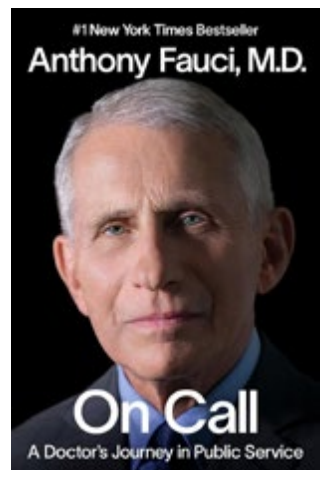
Leonhardt believes in American democracy. He writes, "if there is a central reason for the decline of the American dream over the past half century, it has been the lack of a strong political movement dedicated to protecting that dream." Democratic capitalism, he says, has been abandoned and with it, "the most successful strategy for lifting mass living standards."
Ultimately, Leonhardt believes that the progressive movement must become more "inclusive" in order to successfully promote a fairer capitalism. He advises Democrats to become more patriotic, less weird, and move away from the "Brahmin values of professionals and college graduates." That includes being more respectful of the opinions of people with deeply held religious views. Sounds good in theory but there is no political impetus for this to actually occur as Democrats and Republicans are about evenly divided in the country and the political incentives are for both to torque their bases, not to expand them.

To Leonhardt's credit, even though his background is an economics reporter, he takes culture and the cultural concerns of working-class Americans seriously. If more liberals took his tact, many conservatives would not feel the existential dread they do when contemplating a Democrat in the White House. It would also probably mean Democrats would coast to electoral victories.

If Leonhardt's almost utopian view of politics or Ungar-Sargon's policy prescriptions do not become reality, it is a safe bet that books explaining the white working class's resentments and frustrations will continue to be a staple of punditry for years to come, and an even safer bet that most books will continue to misdiagnose their challenges.

Oswald Clark is The Interim's *Washington correspondent.*





On Call: A Doctor's Journey in Public Service
Anthony Fauci, M.D. (Viking, $48, 464 pages)

The autobiography of Anthony Fauci, the public face of both the Trump and Biden White House responses to COVID, provides plenty of fodder for both fans and critics of Fauci's handling of the pandemic. The books' errors of fact and evasion of controversies might be forgivable but the vanity is not. There is no shortage of self-serving commentary on his own career, as when he says he became "hero to the millions of Americans who saw me as a physician bravely standing up for science, truth, and rational decision-making." Although Fauci told Congress "I don't recall" more than 100 times during hearings on COVID, he has no trouble remembering every bit of praise that others have heaped upon him, from colleagues, employees, and even celebrities. Fauci began his government career in 1968 when he joined the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and rose through its ranks, eventually heading the agency. In the 1980s, Fauci bolloxed the agency's response to AIDS and HIV, from falsely claiming that the newly discovered disease could be spread by "routine close contact" to wrongly predicting a heterosexual breakout of the disease to hyper-focusing on developing an anti-HIV vaccine that took resources from other amelioration strategies to highlighting a NIAID scientist's fraudulent claim to have discovered the virus. *On Call* does not mention the first three incidents and doesn't admit Fauci's error in backing the fraudulent claim. Fauci discusses his role in the George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations dealing with bioterrorism threats and predicted doomsday pandemics such as bird flu and swine flu that never quite materialized. "One might imagine that it would be terribly frustrating to put in enormous efforts of preparation for events that never happen," Fauci writes. "However, that is not how I feel." Fauci does not easily admit error and does not express regret for his disastrous COVID guidance supporting lockdowns that have since shown to have little benefit in preventing the spread of the virus nor does he show the science upon which he based his advice. Yet, the book does shine a light on why Fauci ultimately made the decisions he did: he is keenly aware of his public profile and his belief that activism and fear-mongering ensures both publicity and funding for his brand of politicized but ineffectual science.

The Occasional Human Sacrifice: Medical Experimentation and the Price of Saying No



Carl Elliott (Norton, $39.99, 355 pages)

Medical ethics professor Carl Elliott's *The Occasional Human Sacrifice* is unlikely to engender greater trust in the medical profession as it explores six controversial cases in which medical researchers treated human beings as guinea pigs. Often the patients consented to the interventions, albeit without fully understanding what was occurring. From the Tuskegee syphilis experiments on black sharecroppers which began in the 1930s to the Willowbrook study in which researchers intentionally infected "mentally defective children" with hepatitis from in the 1960s, Elliott explains the medical research being done and the whistleblowers who exposed the supposed scandals. In Elliott's telling, these are not always really scandals and the whistleblowers are often not really heroes. One case from the early 1960s involved patients at the Jewish Chronic Disease Hospital in Brooklyn being injected with live cancer cells, which was actually harmless. The whistleblower in this case had a personal beef with the doctor who did the research and was found to have made up details that were not true. Elliott himself once blew the whistle on his own university for research on a psychotic patient that he would later regret making public. His exploration of whistleblowers paints them mostly as cranks and malcontents even before they went public exposing alleged medical scandals; most of them had hard-left politics and colourful histories in radical movements. Elliott is less interested in the details of allegations of medical abuse and the resultant institutional cover-ups than he is the psychology of whistleblowers and what becomes of them and their exposure. Elliott says that sunlight is seldom enough to instigate change with most shifts in policy being accompanied by other developments and movements (Tuskegee and the civil rights movement). The last case Elliott explores was the lethal synthetic trachea transplants at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden in 2016, which resulted in five deaths, so he does not examine the experimental COVID jab.

Friends for Life

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

~ Philippians 4: 4-7



"The Thankful Poor"
by Henry Ossawa Tanner (1894)

October 2024

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And then there was this … (By J.M. Glover)

Moms for the Motherland

A recent CBC online story has reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin is pushing towards more traditional Russian conservative values, aligned with the Orthodox Christian faith. He is encouraging Russian women to have more children. Russia's fertility rate -- the average number of children born to a woman over her lifetime -- is 1.4, considerably less than the replacement level of 2.1. (Canada's fertility rate is a dismal 1.3.) He has put forward a number of financial incentives to persuade women to have babies, including targeting full-time female students to give birth. In the Ural Mountains, the payout to a new mother is nearly $15,000. In Moscow, there will be an expansion of free fertility testing. Russian school children in grades 5 to 9 will receive a new course designed to encourage large families. And, Russia is intent on curbing access to abortions, although no plan has yet been revealed. Senior officials in Moscow are supporting Putin's plan. For example, the Minister of Health told a Russian news outlet that "having a busy career isn't an excuse for not having a family." (He also made the preposterous suggestion that people could choose to "create offspring" during work breaks.) There has been pushback from feminists, and from ordinary Russian women who complain online anonymously. One complainant said that she felt like a "surrogate for the state." Others do not trust the government to collect their personal, intimate fertility data. One woman revealed to the CBC reporter that the government family planning scheme "created a feeling of coercion and invasion of personal boundaries." An independent Moscow-based demographer says that the family studies classes will "brainwash" the students. In his opinion the days of large Russian families is long gone. Other countries are also trying to raise their fertility rate, but, in "non-democratic states" like Russia, he maintains that the tone is authoritarian, where the government is equating a larger population with state power.

The abortion pill and emergency room visits

The Charlotte Losier Institute advises and leads the pro-life movement with groundbreaking scientific, statistical, and medical research. Its staff and over 70 credentialed associate scholars provide the pro-life community with groundbreaking information on abortion, women's health, treatment for the unborn, and related issues. A group of its research scholars has just published a study on the increasing severity and frequency of emergency department visits following use of abortion drugs. The study is entitled Comparative Acuity of Emergency Visits Following Pregnancy Outcomes Among Medicaid Eligible Women, 2004-2015. Its lead research scientist is Dr. James Studnicki. Their key findings include: the likelihood of an Emergency Department (ED) visit with a severe or critical acuity code following the use of abortion drugs was more than twice as high as that of women who were not pregnant; compared to surgical abortions and live births, abortion drugs were associated with significantly higher rates of severe or critical ED visits; the overall acuity and number of ED visits have increased across all pregnancy outcomes from 2004 to 2015, with the most dramatic rise seen following the use of abortion drugs. The entire research report is available by googling the title and then going to the end of the script and clicking on 'Read complete article' which will take you to the article published in The International Journal of Epidemiology and Public Health Research.

UN bullies Poland on abortion 'rights'

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who assumed office last year for a four-year term, is considered a "centrist" and a globalist who leads a coalition government. He replaced the previous pro-life government which took a strong stand for life. Tusk's coalition is being pressured to advance the abortion agenda. The United Nations is one of those pressuring Poland. The CEDAW Committee that focuses on "women's rights" claims restricting abortion violates women's rights, and demands that Poland support "the right to abortion as a fundamental right" and adopt standards in line with the guidelines of the World Health Organization including "total decriminalization and legalization of abortion." However, nowhere does the CEDAW treaty use the word "abortion" either explicitly or euphemistically, nor is there any internationally recognized human right to abortion in any UN human rights treaty or General Assembly resolution. This is simply bullying a nation to accept abortion as a bogus human right under international standards. The Polish government has responded to the CEDAW Committee stating in "its dedication to guarantee equal access to healthcare services provided by national law including abortion … women will experience a radical improvement in terms of their rights, dignity, health and safety." But note that the Polish government did not mention defense of legal protections for the unborn, including their right to life. Nor did it suggest that the UN committee exceeded its mandate by insisting that Poland recognize abortion as a fundamental freedom. As C-FAM's Rebecca Oas concludes: "The notion that abortion is an international right, or that these entities have the ability to make it so, is a claim that requires stronger contestation than the current Polish government is willing to provide."

Is praying silently a free-speech violation?

Adam Smith-Connor is a 49-year-old British father of two and an army veteran who served in Afghanistan. On Nov. 24, 2022, he was praying near an abortuary in Bournemouth, England, when he was approached by two police officers, who asked him what he was doing. He said that he was praying, so they asked him what the nature of his prayer was. He said that he was praying for his deceased son who had been aborted many years before. On Dec. 13, 2022, Smith-Connor received a fixed penalty detailing that he had been "praying for his deceased son" on the previous month near an abortion facility in Bournemouth where a "buffer zone" was in place. In an earlier filmed encounter with Smith-Connor who was praying silently at the same place, the police who approached him informed him that he was not breaking the law, remarking that "this is England and it's a public place and you're entitled to do that." Jeremiah Igunnubole, Alliance Defending Freedom UK legal counsel for Smith-Connor, remarked that "In other circumstances, the police and the courts have made it clear that silent prayer is not a criminal act. And yet, the Bournemouth City Council now argues that the buffer zone extends to a ban on silent prayer." He further stated that "Both domestic and international law have long established freedom of thought as an absolute right that must not ever be interfered with by the state." A ban on "influencing" within 200 metres of an abortuary in England and Wales will commence in October. It is not clear if praying silently is considered "influencing." The three-day trial of Adam Smith-Connor began on Sept. 17. No verdict had been reached as of publishing time.

Choosing life and accepting one's cross

This is the story of baby Remy Benedict and his parents who took up their cross and embraced life, until Remy passed from this life. The story begins with Stephanie and Bradley Vergano who met in December 2020 in Sydney, Australia and married in December 2021. Stephanie became pregnant almost immediately and thought that the pregnancy was proceeding normally. However, a 20-week scan indicated that something was wrong: the baby was not developing physically as it should. There was only a 10-30 percent chance that the baby would survive, and would be severely disabled. They were told that Stephanie would have to have a C-section, which risked her ever conceiving again. Then, she was told to abort the baby and try again. Stephanie told the doctor that this was her first pregnancy, that it was not a "wheel of fortune." "This is the child we have been given," she pleaded. On July 12, 2022, Remy Benedict Vergano was born, weighing in at 390 grams. Remy's life and that of his parents was "incredibly painful and challenging." He was baptized: "It was important for us that we could help him to receive the greatest gift of all from God: his eternal salvation." Determined to include Remy in a wider circle, his parents set up a daily prayer livestream. Although death loomed in the shadows, God filled their hearts with supernatural joy. "The Lord allowed us to … learn the pain of the Cross. Not to bring an end to the suffering, but rather to accept it and let it transform us." Remy Benedict lived for 53 days. His parents chose to embrace suffering, to love a life that "was given a chance, a life that had a name, a life that had a memory." Remy Benedict now has a baby sister—Felicity Clare. As their parents said: By choosing life, we have the greatest blessings of all: two children. One in heaven and one on earth. We could not have asked God for more."

Remy Benedict lived for 53 days. His parents chose to embrace suffering, to love a life that "was given a chance, a life that had a name, a life that had a memory." Remy Benedict now has a baby sister—Felicity Clare. As their parents said: By choosing life, we have the greatest blessings of all: two children. One in heaven and one on earth. We could not have asked God for more."

Nordic countries relax abortion laws

Interim Staff

In May, Denmark broadened its abortion law by expanding the permissible window for abortion-on-demand from 12 weeks to 18 weeks gestation. In August, Norway announced it would follow suit similarly increasing its 12-week abortion limit to 18 weeks.

In the Danish legislature, the Socialist People's Party, Red-Green Alliance, Danish Social Liberal Party and The Alternative party voted to raise the abortion limit to 18 weeks and newly allow teenagers 15-17 years of age to obtain an abortion without parental consent. Denmark legalized abortion up to 12 weeks in 1973. Abortion was also permitted after 12 weeks gestation if the mother's life was in danger, the pregnancy was the result of rape or if the fetus showed signs of "severe and incurable illness or disability" if it was approved by two doctors and a municipal official.

Interior Minister Sophie Lohde said "after 50 years, it is time for abortion rules to move with the times."

The law takes effect June 1, 2025.

In August, the Norwegian government announced it would change the 12-week cutoff to 18 weeks. Health Minister Jan Christian Vestre said that the limit is routinely ignored by physicians so the proposed change, which has yet to be introduced in the legislature, would bring the law "into line with practice" because "no one is refused applications for abortion after the 12th week."



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The Perennial Challenge of Writing Excellence: Father Ted Colleton Scholarship

A challenging opportunity comes knocking for the 23rd time. Yes, the Father Ted Colleton Scholarship program and writing contest, sponsored by Niagara Region Right to Life (NRRTL) is being offered once again.

It is an opportunity not to be missed. If you have a child or grandchild attending a Canadian high school encourage him/her to participate and get their application package in by October 11, 2024. Homeschooled students are also eligible. The scholarship program is targeted for senior high school students, those in grade 11 or 12.

The challenge is to do research and write an original essay (1200 words in length with proper citations to support the thesis and facts presented) on the following topic:

Abortion is a hot and contentious public issue, generating arguments and justifications on both sides of the divide. Analyze the impact of abortion on several of the key components of Canada's social fabric, for example: the practice of religious worship; demographic trends and immigration policies; changes in male and female roles and family structure; social cohesion and attitudes towards crime and violence; continued economic viability of the country; national unity and cultural character.

What reward is there for this work? Well, in addition to learning much about a crucial public issue, students also have a chance to win one of three prizes: $2000, $1500 and $1000 for first second and third place, respectively. Don't waste time. Get started. There are only three weeks to go. Application packages have begun arriving at NRRTL headquarters.

Detailed information and application can be downloaded at the website of of Niagara Region Right to Life, niagararegionrighttolife.ca/projects/father-ted-colleton-scholarship-program or that of *The Interim* newspaper, theinterim.com/category/fr-ted-colleton-scholarship.

At the start of the new year in 2025 *The Interim* will proudly publish the essays of the three prize winners.

By the way, this program needs your support in a different way and you can help by donating to Niagara Region Right to Life to ensure that young Canadians are given scholarly incentives to learn and to become youthful contributors to the culture of life.
By donating to Niagara Region Right to Life you will receive a charitable tax receipt. Donate online at niagararegionrighttolife.ca/donate or by remitting to them at:
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