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The Interim

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Surgeon, psychologist lose surgical transition malpractice suit

In legal first, a detransitioner successfully sued her medical care team

Paul Tuns

On Feb. 2, a White Plains, N.Y., jury awarded Fox Varian $2 million in damages after her psychologist and plastic surgeon failed to properly treat her history of mental illness before approving of a surgical "gender-affirming" mastectomy and provide professional standards of care during Fox's medical treatment.

Varian's is the first malpractice case of a detransitioner – someone who changes their mind after chemical and surgical treatment for gender dysphoria – to go before a jury. The jury awarded Fox, now 22, $1.6 million in pain and suffering and $400,000 in future medical expenses.

The record of the case was sealed but journalist Benjamin Ryan was present for the full three-week trial and decision, and reported on the case for *The Free Press* – the only journalist who witnessed the full proceedings.

Varian, whose parents went through a bitter divorce when she was six and was estranged from her father, suffered depression, anxiety, body dysmorphia (body-image issues), eating disorders, and social phobia, and was diagnosed as autistic. At 15, she questioned her gender with her psychologist, changed her birth name Isabella to Gabriel, and began living androgynously. Within a few months, she changed her name to Rowan, began binding her breasts and began self-identifying as transgender. Just 11 months after beginning this social transition, in December 2019, she underwent surgery to remove her healthy breasts when she was just 16 years old.



Fox Varian (pictured) won her malpractice suit against her psychologist and plastic surgeon for the mastectomy committed on her when she turned 16.

According to her testimony, Varian, who changed to the name Fox when she was 18, immediately regretted the surgery, and when she was 19 stopped identifying as transgender and began the detransition process to acknowledge the truth of her biological sex.

Varian's lawyer, Adam Deutsch, argued that her psychologist Kenneth Einhorn and plastic surgeon Simon Chin did not properly address her history of depression, anxiety, and autism before approving the procedure and thus failed standard medical practices. Furthermore, he argued that they failed to provide the necessary information to receive informed consent from Varian's legal guardian, her mother, Claire Deacon. Deacon said she felt pressured to approve the mastectomy because Einhorn said Varian was at risk of suicide if she did not align her physical looks with her chosen gender.

Deacon testified that her daughter's mental health issues continued after the surgery to remove her breasts, "some of which even worsened," as Fox began cutting herself. Fox said she did not confess her remorse due to shame and social pressures.

Einhorn began seeing Varian weekly for nearly three years before the surgery for a variety of complex and intermingling psychological problems and had no training in gender medicine.

Deutsch provided the court with medical records, including Einhorn's referral letter to Chin which did not mention gender dysphoria (the belief that one's gender is at odds with one's biological sex), but rather body dysmorphia (displeasure over some aspect of one's body). The journalist Benjamin Ryan reported that a body dysmorphia diagnosis "is actually a widely accepted reason not to perform plastic surgery."

Dr. Loren Schecter, chief of gender-affirmation surgery at the Rush University Medical Center in Chicago and president-elect of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH), testified on behalf of Varian. Schecter said he looked at the paperwork in Varian's case and couldn't find "enough to support Dr. Chin's care." Schecter said that surgery should only be pursued following "persistent, well-documented gender dysphoria," which was not present in Varian's situation.

Deutsch dissected Einhorn's referral letter to Chin, noting that contained numerous errors and omissions, including inflating Varian's well-being. Deutsch said that Einhorn referenced Varian's school attendance as evidence of "moderate success" when, in fact, Varian had withdrawn from school. Einhorn made no reference to the diagnoses of depression and anxiety in his letter to Chin; Einhorn said that the depression was not relevant while Chin said the condition needed to be included in the letter.

Deutsch also referred to Einhorn's case notes for Varian, in which the psy-

See 'Malpractice,' p. 11

Ontario woman euthanized after changing her mind about being killed

Paul Tuns

The Ontario coroner's MAiD Death Review Committee revealed that a woman in her 80s identified as Mrs. B was killed by euthanasia even though the elderly woman changed her mind about the procedure.

The woman had complications resulting from a coronary artery bypass graft surgery. Her condition worsened and she opted for palliative care. She was sent home with palliative support but as her condition worsened, her husband had difficulty caring for her.

The woman said she was considering euthanasia and her husband contacted a referral service for Medical Assistance in Dying. By the time the assessor arrived, Mrs. B changed her mind, citing her personal religious beliefs against euthanasia. She insisted she wanted further inpatient hospice care instead and the MAiD assessor said she was not eligible for euthanasia.

No hospice space was available so the request to be moved to inpatient care was denied. Her husband requested a second MAiD assessment, citing caregiver burnout. The new assessor said the woman was eligible for euthanasia, although questioned the whether the case was urgent as requested and said more evaluation was in order.

The MAiD Death Review Committee report stated a "MAiD practitioner expressed concerns regarding the necessity for 'urgency' and shared belief for the need for more comprehensive evaluation, the seemingly drastic change in perspective of end-of-life goals, and the possibility of coercion or undue influence." Despite this, the MAiD assessor requested another meeting with Mrs. B which the MAiD provider – a medical practitioner who carries out the euthanasia killing – refused, citing "clinical circumstances necessitated an urgent provision."

The MAiD provider rejected delaying killing Mrs. B by a day. A third assessor was called who signed off on the second assessor's eligibility finding and Mrs. B was killed that evening.

The review committee raised concerns about how the case was handled, with the truncated timeline not allowing "all aspects of Mrs. B's social and end-of-life circumstances and care needs to be explored." Among the issues raised by members of the committee were "the impact of being denied hospice care, additional care options, caregiver burden, consistency of MAiD request, and divergent MAiD practitioner perspectives." They noted that the primary request for the euthanasia death came not from the patient, Mrs. B, but her husband.

Alex Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, said, "This case proves that it can be easier to be killed by euthanasia than to receive palliative care in Ontario even when the person indicated that she wanted palliative care and not euthanasia."

Former Alberta premier Jason Kenney tweeted that being euthanized against her will is "cold-blooded murder." He noted, "this is the inevitable result of Canada's dystopian assistance in dying regime" and that "when I predicted this outcome over years of debates in Parliament, pro-euthanasia advocates would dismiss it as fear-mongering."

Plastic surgeons' group advises delaying gender surgery until age 19

Paul Tuns

On Feb. 3, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons issued a new recommendation that so-called gender affirming surgery should not be carried out on minors until the age of 19, citing professional ethics and the lack of quality research supporting such surgeries as reasons for the new guidelines. The next day, the American Medical Association issued a statement saying that "generally" it agrees with the new ASPS position.

The ASPS represents more than 11,000 plastic surgeons in Canada and the United States. In the nine-page statement, which is not a new set of clinical guidelines, the Society echoed both the Cass Report from the United Kingdom and the report on gender medicine issued by the Department of Health and Human Services which both found that research supporting gender medicine is of low quality, and that there is, in fact, "emerging evidence of treatment complications and potential harms" of breast removal or augmentation, penis inversions, and facial-feminization surgery on minors.

The Society stated, "This position statement does not seek to deny or minimize the reality of any patient's distress and does not question the authenticity of any patient's experience," before it "affirms that truly humane, ethical, and just care, particularly for children and adolescents, must

See 'American,' p. 13

Transgender surgeries for minors in Saskatchewan exposed

Paul Tuns

Rebel News reported that according to provincial data they obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request, "The thing that gender activists claim isn't happening, not only happened, but it happened 99 times" as records indicated.

Rebel News reported that, "What the documents show is a pattern of abuse, a staggering waste of medical resources, and an alarming rise in procedures, including on Saskatchewan children."

Lise Merle of *Rebel News* requested "records showing age breakdowns of surgical gender-related interventions" but reported "precise numbers were redacted for confidentiality"

Still, the data showed that "99 young women and teens" had what gender medicine activists refer to as "top surgery" to remove healthy breasts from girls who identify as boys or breast implants for boys who identify as girls or "bottom surgery" which includes hysterectomies on girls and orchiectomies (removal of the testicles) on boys under 19. Specific breakdown of each procedure was redacted, but the data shows that the number of teens receiving these surgeries increased steadily from 10 in 2020/2021 to 31 in 2023/2024 before dropping to 24 the following year.

Advocates of gender medicine claim that no "bottom surgeries" are committed on minors and that "top surgeries" are extremely rare in Canada. *Rebel News* presented data showing neither claim is correct as those numbers pertain to only one province, Saskatchewan.

Both hysterectomies and orchiectomies are irreversible.

The rise in body mutilating surgery for minors coincides with Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe's 2023 initiative to protect parental rights by requiring schools to notify parents when their children want to transition socially at school by using a different name, pronouns, or restrooms than their biological sex.

For adults, the number of removals of male genital tract and, separately, orchiectomies, was also redacted, but there were numbers for both hysterectomies and mastectomies. In 2020/2021, there were seven hysterectomies on women seeking gender affirming care and 23 mastectomies. By 2024/2025, there were 32 hysterectomies and 63 mastectomies on women seeking to pass as men.

Rebel News's Merle reported that despite long wait times for many diagnostics and surgeries, transgender and other "gender diverse people" in Saskatchewan "have access to unlimited and dedicated services through the Trans Navigator Program which fast tracks 'affirming healthcare pathways, including surgery referrals, hormone therapy, mental health resources, legal name/gender changes, community supports, and more'."

Despite losing on policies, CLC pleased with Conservative convention results

Interim Staff

At their recent national convention, the Conservative Party of Canada transformed an opportunity to lead the charge on the protection of Canada's founding values into an exercise in defending the modern political status quo.

Voting delegates from ridings across Canada gathered in Calgary from Jan. 29-31 to network with fellow party members, hear from distinguished speakers, and vote on amendments to the party's policy handbook and constitution, as well as on the leadership of Pierre Poilievre, who has led the party since 2022.

Beginning last October, Conservative Electoral District Associations nationwide prepared for the convention by selecting their voting delegates and supporting policy and constitutional proposals put forth by fellow EDAs, with the most popular submissions advancing to the convention floor.

Campaign Life Coalition, the national pro-life and pro-family advocacy group, took a particular interest in advancing policies pushing for harder stances against abortion, euthanasia, and LGBT ideology, as well as constitutional amendments to bolster power and fairness for the grassroots in matters of candidate selection after seeing more than 100 top-down candidate acclamations by the party during the 2025 federal election.

On the first day of the convention, CLC representatives held a strategy session for fellow social conservative delegates, educating on best practices for the numerous hours of voting that would take place on days two and three.

The opening ceremonies begun in the early evening, with a performance from Canadian country artist Brent Kissel followed by a rendition of *O Canada*, sung using the gender-neutral lyrics adopted by Parliament in 2018 under Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.



Campaign Life Coalition's Jack Fonseca addresses the Conservative convention talking about his Electoral District Association's policy proposal to that would commit the party to oppose the so-called conversion therapy ban.

On day two, the CLC team stood outside of voting rooms, well-received by a vast majority of delegates, dispersing literature in support of policy proposals to remove the party's 20-year policy against supporting anti-abortion regulation as well as protecting vulnerable people from euthanasia and allowing counseling for gender-confused children who seek to reaffirm biological reality, while condemning 2021's Conversion Therapy Bill which amended the Criminal Code to allow for up to five years in prison for parents who seek good-faith body-affirming therapy for their children.

Inconveniently for social conservative delegates, the voting for constitutional proposals took place concurrently with voting for social policy proposals, forcing many delegates to move strategically between rooms. The proposal "Delete 86" to remove the party's long-standing policy against abortion restriction was defeated, aided by the intervention of pro-abortion MP Roman Baber, who argued against the pro-life view on libertarian grounds of the mother's bodily autonomy, neglecting the right of the preborn child not to be killed.

The ten policies from each policy area (social, fiscal, government) and ten constitutional proposals which received the highest percentage of support advanced to a plenary voting session on day three, where a double majority vote in favour (a majority of delegates plus a majority in six of 11 provinces, with the territories counting as equal to one province) would pass the proposal, inserting it into the policy handbook or party constitution, respectively.

On day three, Jack Fonseca, director of political operations for Campaign Life Coalition spoke in favour of his EDA's policy proposal, also supported by notable Canadian anti-gender ideology activist "Billboard Chris" Elston, to allow good-faith counseling for gender confused children, which made it to the plenary session as the tenth most supported proposal in the social policy room. However, this effort was hampered by pro-abortion and pro-LGBT MP Tamara Kronis, who formerly served as advocacy director of Egale Canada, an LGBT advocacy group. The policy achieved the first majority of support with 51.85 per cent of delegates voting in favour, but ultimately fell short, receiving majority support in only five of the required six provinces, with just 49 per cent of Manitoba delegates and 47 per cent of Nova Scotia delegates voting for it.

Each of the other 39 policies and constitutional amendments were adopted.

Despite the failure of the most significant CLC-endorsed policy proposals to appear in the party's policy handbook, CLC national president Jeff Gunnarson said he was quite pleased with the organization's success. According to Gunnarson, ten "pro-faith, pro-freedom" policy resolutions endorsed by the group were passed, including "a commitment to protect Christian charities (including pro-life ones), a pledge to protect licensed professionals from having their accreditation revoked solely for voicing their opinion or refusing compelled

See 'CLC' p. 15

Convention affirms Poilievre leadership

"Meet the new boss, same as the old boss." Both literally and figuratively, the Pete Townsend-penned line from The Who's iconic, politically inspired track *Won't Get Fooled Again* rang ever-true as Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre retained his leadership with 87.4 per cent support among voting delegates at the party's 2026 Calgary Convention. According to a party spokesman who spoke with CBC, a total of 2,558 ballots were cast in the leadership review, marking a 95 per cent turnout of voting delegates.

The vote opened immediately following Poilievre's evening keynote address, where he delivered a typical speech, but with strong messaging on topics that have gained new relevance, such as increasing separatist tension in Alberta and Quebec, national security and sovereignty, and Canada-U.S. relations. He began his remarks with focus on his early family life, specifically on his childhood spent in Calgary. Later, towards the speech's end, he shared about the challenges of raising two children including his daughter Valentina, who he stated had recently begun speaking, overcoming difficulties caused by autism.

Inside BMO Centre, there seemed to be no discussion. Pierre Poilievre is, to most members, undoubtedly the man who will lead the party in the next federal election.

On the first day of convention, however, just outside the walls of the centre occurred the most visible opposition to Poilievre's leadership, coming from those attacking the Conservative leader from his right flank. The Dominion Society of Canada, a nationalist and anti-immigration advocacy group, held a demonstration outside the centre, where Founder Daniel Tyrie began with short remarks before unveiling from behind green linen a photo of the Conservative leader wearing a turban in the company of a group of turbaned Sikh men, affixed to the image the caption, "Conserve What?"

87.4 per cent voted to retain the leader

In interviews given to the *Western Standard* and *Media Berzigan* during the demonstration, Tyrie slammed the Conservatives as "Liberals in blue" for their silence on the issue of mass immigration, stating that Canada "is being transformed more dramatically than at any time in Canadian history," as well as criticizing a group of CPC MPs, including the leader, for "actively trying to pander to foreign ethnic groups and play dress-up." Additionally, he argued from an economic angle that Conservative support

See 'Building' p. 15

Costa Rica elects pro-life president

Paul Tuns

On Feb. 1, Laura Fernández Delgado was elected president of Costa Rica with 1.191 million votes and 48.3 per cent of the vote in a 20-candidate field, to become the second female president of the Central American country. If she had not won 40 per cent of the vote, the two candidates with the most votes would have faced each in a runoff election.

Her primary opponent, Álvaro Ramos Chaves, won just over 825,000 or 33.4 per cent of the vote.

Fernández Delgado's party, the Sovereign People's Party (PPSO), founded in 2022 and contesting the presidential and legislative elections for the first time, won 31 seats in the 57 seat Legislative Assembly, a two-seat majority.

Fernández Delgado ran on a fiscally and morally conservative platform that included increasing penalties for illegal abortion, getting tough on crime, greater free trade, and closer relations with the state of Israel.

The right to life is guaranteed by article 21 of the Costa Rican constitution which states, "The human life is inviolable." Yet under Costa Rican law, abortion



Newly elected Costa Rican president Laura Fernandez Delgado says the state has a duty to protect preborn children.

is allowed in cases to preserve the life of the mother, and until last October, when a mother's health was in danger. Costa Rican Penal Code's article 93 permits judges to pardon a woman who causes her own abortion in cases of rape, and articles 118 through 122 set out different punishments ranging from three months to ten years for abortions committed under different circumstances and the gestational age of the preborn child. Physicians who suspect female patients of having had an abortion are obligated to report them to the Organization of Judicial Investigation.

In 2022, then-president Rodrigo Chaves Robles struck a commission to examine the country's abortion law; in June of that year, the commission issued its report that there was no need to alter the law or lessen protections for preborn children. Since then, Chaves Robles strengthened legal protection for the preborn by prohibiting abortion to preserve the health of the mother except in cases to save the life of the mother.

Fernández Delgado, a former Minister of Planning and chief of staff to the outgoing president, has vowed to increase the maximum prison sentence for women who procure abortions from three to six years and repeatedly talked about the protection of the preborn as a central component of her political vision. On the campaign trail she said, "Defending the lives of Costa Ricans who have yet to be born is an obligation of the state."

She is on record describing abortion as "nothing other than murder" and has backed several legislative efforts to increase penalties for illegal abortions. She ran on a platform that called for increasing prison sentences for those who commit abortion without a woman's consent to 12 years.

The significance of *imago dei*



The pro-life movement in Canada strives to secure legal protection for the unborn; it seeks to establish robust defenses for those menaced by the prospect of euthanasia and the temptation to assisted suicide; and it advocates for sane policies regarding marriage, family, and the recognition of both sexes. The issues and controversies which our threefold campaign impels us to engage are myriad; and yet, they all spring from one single source: namely, from our firm convictions about the inviolable dignity of the human person. We believe that the man is the *imago dei*: that he is made "in"—or, in some translations, "to"—the image of God. But what does this telling phrase, drawn from the first creation account in *Genesis* (1:26), really mean? And how does the idea of the *imago dei* motivate our movement's daily work?

The Old Testament is uncompromising in its prohibition against idolatry which, in many ways, is the arch-sin against which the People of Israel are admonished. Idolatry, after all, not only deprives God of the worship which is due to Him alone, conferring it upon inert carved figures—and other, more metaphorical idols as well. More importantly, the act of idolatry is an affront to the unique relationship that God establishes with His people, and the unique revelation on which their covenant is based.

In *Exodus*, God reveals to Moses that He is Yahweh, "I am who am" or "I am what I am" (3:14). This revelation means, on the one hand, that comparisons are unnecessary: God is, without any recourse to images, analogies, or comparisons. At the same time, God's very act of creating man, communicating with man, and communicating himself to man definitely captures the character of that super-essential "is." God's being, in other words, is identical with His way of being: one that is active, generative, generous, self-disclosing, and bountiful—the very antithesis of what can be captured through a graven image with its dull marks etched in dead stone.

This is why the only possible "image" of God must, by necessity, be alive; it must thrive in the same vital element of abundant giving and receiving in which its "original," resides and it must course with the same lifeblood of dynamic, self-forgetting, fruitful love. Thus, the only image of God could either be a being like Him, man; or, as St. Paul tells the Colossians, it can be found in complete perfection Christ who is, at once, God and man, the Image of God and God Himself (*Col* 1:15).

But, in addition to vitality, there is another attribute which is essential to the *imago dei* as well. The Persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Spirit—are all defined by their relations with each other. This is obvious in the paternal and filial names of the first two Persons, but it also pertains to the third as well, as when we use turns of phrase about "capturing the spirit of" something as a way of indicating an otherwise elusive essence that has been fully expressed. Therefore, the Image of God must not only be living, but it must be embedded in affectionate and generative relationships as well. This is why, since the Renaissance, depictions of the Holy Family have been ubiquitous in Christian art: they not only depict Christ Himself but render Him in the vibrant and loving relationships which, through the Incarnation, He voluntarily embraced.

For this reason, while man as such can be properly said to constitute the *imago dei,* the family discloses this image with especial clarity. St. Paul indicates as much when he prays for the Christians of the Church in Ephesus: "I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name" *(Eph* 3:14–15). The apostle here reveals that God, in the Christian tradition, is not anthropomorphic; instead, man, as it were, is "theomorphic," a being whose very identity is rooted in the divine—and is so rooted by means of relationships established in the family.

These deep realities are the ultimate horizon for our ongoing efforts in the pro-life movement, the profound truths with which our daily work connects. For example, with the source of its sanctity in view, we can fairly characterize assaults on the family as a form of iconoclasm: they are violations of the very habitat and sanctuary of humanity's fundamental dignity. The ongoing horrors of prenatal infanticide and, more recently, the tsunami of suicides and involuntary liquidations that legal euthanasia has wrought should both, in and of themselves, be sufficient to prick the consciences of our countrymen. These are evils which can be opposed without any recourse to revelation. And yet, an awareness of the sacrilegious nature of these evils points us clearly towards the spiritual dimension of our struggle. Because the human person itself and the family through which the person emerges into the world are images of the divine life, their perversion, mutilation, and destruction are, at some level, assaults on God by means of the degradation of His creation.

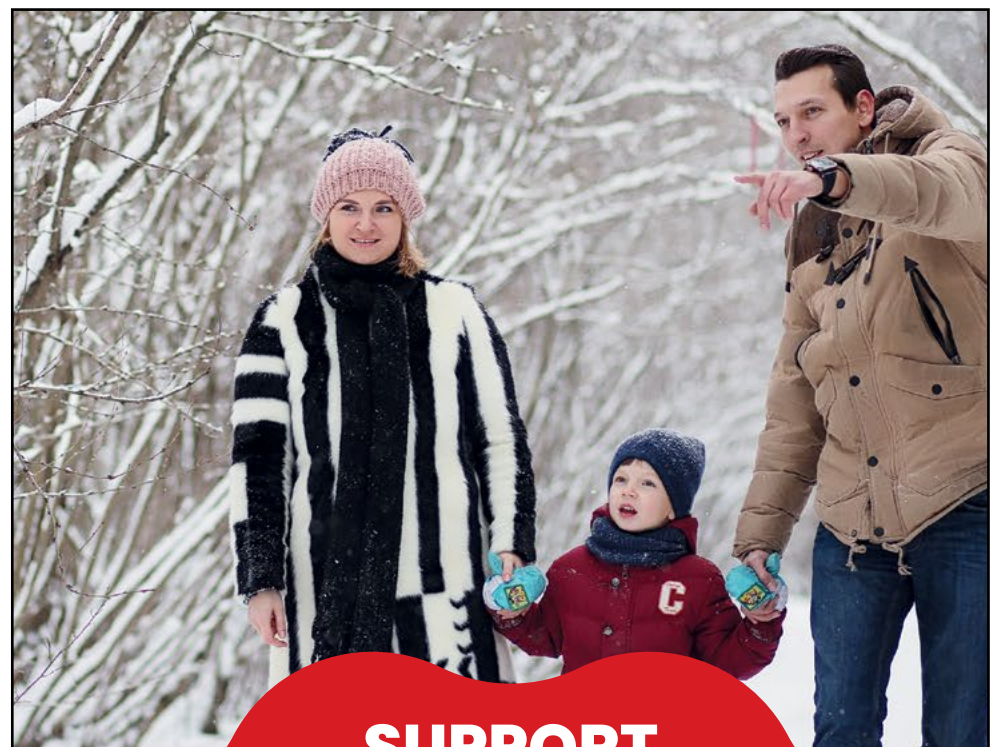
"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (*Eph* 6:12). St. Paul's clarifying counsel is as relevant for us as it was for the Ephesians. The people who advocate for and defend the reprehensible injustices which we seek to rectify may be our opponents, but they are not actually our "enemies." Ours is a conflict of an entirely different order, one that may seem to play out in the realm of politics. But politics is really only a screen for the eternal contest between good and evil. But the victory of good over evil is assured—indeed, it has already been accomplished by Christ on the Cross.

Satan may, for a time, be permitted to oppress those who follow the Lord, and to further deface the image of God through sacrilegious violence committed against man and the family. But, in the end, his defeat will be total and his very attempts to mar God's creation will be the means of its perfection and glorification. Although the outcome of this great struggle is sure, the timing of God's triumph is a mystery on which we wait, and for which, in the meantime, we continue to work, to suffer, and to fight. Many have participated in this battle before us—and many more will follow after us in the years to come. It is, therefore, our privilege to take up our place in this fight now and to contribute, in some small way, to God's great and inevitable victory.

Letters

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

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Musings on the passing scene



From the editor's desk

We sent our February edition with its cover story on the link between transgenderism and deadly violence to the printer in the last week of January. The edition started hitting mailboxes around Feb. 7. On Feb. 10, a man who identified as a woman, killed eight people in a mass shooting in Tumbler Ridge, B.C., at his family home and a nearby school. A few days later, another gender-confused man shot his ex-wife, one of his children, and then himself, in Rhode Island. Many media outlets described how some right-wing commentators peddled "conspiracy theories" about transgender killers. Statistics show that a mass killer is about three times more likely to be transgender than a so-called cisgender male (biological male). It is not a conspiracy theory to notice that gender confused individuals are more likely to commit a mass killing. Some readers were upset with *The Interim* for "exploiting" the tragedies, showing "insensitivity" toward the victims' families by publishing the story so near the times of these horrific crimes. While we pride ourselves in providing honest reporting, we are not prophetic. As noted above, the story was in the works long before these predictable tragedies occurred in British Columbia and Rhode Island, and the paper was published and in the mail nearly two weeks before the killings occurred.

**

In this edition, we report on the successful medical malpractice lawsuit by Varian Fox against her former psychologist and plastic surgeon for the double mastectomy they did on her shortly after she turned 16. *National Review Online* editorialized about the meaning of that decision: "The doctors played God, and forgot that they are not. A jury of their mortal peers reminded them." Despite howls from the practitioners of gender medicine that they are providing affirming, evidence-based care, doctors in fact were not following best practices but rather a fashionable ideology. May Varian's lawsuit be the first of many; if the fear of God does not encourage them to do the right thing and eschew body-mutilating procedures on impressionable and troubled youth, perhaps the fear of lawsuits will.

**

In a Feb. 14 speech at the Munich Security Conference in Germany, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio talked about the shared history of the U.S. and Europe: "For the United States and Europe, we belong together. America was founded 250 years ago, but the roots began here on this continent long before. The man who settled and built the nation of my birth arrived on our shores carrying the memories and the traditions and the Christian faith of their ancestors as a sacred inheritance, an unbreakable link between the old world and the new. We are part of one civilization – Western civilization. We are bound to one another by the deepest bonds that nations could share, forged by centuries of shared history, Christian faith, culture, heritage, language, ancestry, and the sacrifices our forefathers made together for the common civilization to which we have fallen heir." In reality, Canada shares these bonds although the Laurentian elite are in denial about them. On Feb. 17, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney was asked about Rubio's speech, which he proceeded to dismiss as a form of Christian nationalism. Carney said that Canada's nationalism stems not from the Christian faith but the country's "cold winters" and "diversity." Carney simply denied the cultural heritage of Canada – the history, Christian faith, language, and sacrifices we share with Europe – in favour of a cute comment about the weather and programmatic Liberal talking points about diversity, completely ignoring our vital cultural inheritance. Rubio described nutrient-rich soil in which civilizations thrive while Carney talked about barren ground from which no flourishing society can grow.

**

Six World Cup games will be held in Toronto this summer as North America – Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. – hosts the international soccer extravaganza. Organizers said the total cost to municipal, provincial, and federal taxpayers between $30-45 million, but expenses have ballooned to $380 million – 750 per cent higher than originally estimated. One cost being picked up by taxpayers is nearly $200,000 for condoms and other sex paraphernalia. Noah Jarvis, Ontario director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, writing in the *Toronto Sun*, reports that Toronto Public Health (TPH) has ordered 576,000 World Cup-branded condoms, 200,000 individual packets of sexual lubricant, 12,500 female condoms, and 16,000 dental dams. The items were purchased by TPH from Kitchener-based Pamco Distributing. Jarvis wrote of Torontonians, "So, the next time you pay your property taxes, remember that some of your money is paying for a mountain of condoms and lube for six soccer games that are costing taxpayers $63.3 million apiece." TPH says that cases of chlamydia and gonorrhea have been increasing in recent years and that the $199,960 expense will be used to combat its spread during the games, but also claims the branded condoms would be collected by soccer fans. I was unaware that there was a market for condom collectibles.

**

National Post columnist and former nurse Amy Hamm writes about the dangers of expanding euthanasia to include people suffering solely from mental illness and she worries that suicide hotlines in the future might provide the option for Medical Assistance in Dying to those thinking about killing themselves. Hamm notes that Dying with Dignity, a charity that blogger Patricia Maloney (Run with Life) has reported receiving millions of dollars in federal funding, describes its "vision" thusly: "everyone can choose their good death." Hamm sardonically observes, "As though choosing how to die is like choosing custom sandwich toppings."

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Et tu, Alberta? Since high school, I have closely watched the annual releases of various countries listing newborn names as potential signals about the cultural shifts that occurring but not yet visible, with the popularity of traditional names suggesting movement toward conservatism while a propensity for novelty names indicating an ascendent liberalism. Now, in places such as London (U.K.) and Toronto, the name Muhammad typically tops the list, indicating something else entirely about the culture. *Juno News* reports that, "The name Muhammad topped the list of most popular baby names for boys in Alberta last year, when all its spelling variations were counted." In total, 270 boys were born with that name, whether spelled Muhammed, Muhamad, Mohammad, Mohammed, Mahammad, Mehemmet, Mohamad, Mohamed, and some other variation. The next most popular boy's names were Noah (249), Theodore (205), Oliver (184), and Henry (180).

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Them Before Us (Katy Faust) tweeted: "Interesting how when a 'legally married hetero couple' has children, the child is united to both mother and father. But when a 'legally married gay couple' has children, the child always loses their mother or father. It's as if these two marriages are fundamentally different."

**

The pro-transgenderism worldview claims that gender is chosen, identified by one's feeling that they are whatever they want to be, and that this identity is fluid, dependent on however one feels at any given moment. Many left-wing politicians have trouble defining what a woman is, and essentially deferring to a version of U.S. Supreme Court Potter Stewart's line about obscenity: "I know it when I see it." But the nonsensical and incoherent world of transgenderism can lead to self-parodying moments. Kristen Schultz, a Democrat running for the State House of Representatives in Kansas was asked by a camera-wielding interlocutor "are you a girl" and she replied twice with, "I don't know." That the trans insanity leads a certain type of person to deny knowing whether or not she is male or female speaks to the moral and intellectual rot of the transgender ideology.

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I do not want to be (too) self-referential, but responding to recent videos making the rounds on social media of pro-LGBTQ politicians and pastors saying that transgenderism is compatible with Christianity, I tweeted: "God does not make mistakes; He does not put a person in the wrong body. It is wrong to mutilate and sterilize any children and it is perverse to defend doing so quoting Scripture. To subscribe to the trans ideology is anti-Christian."

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Genesis 1:27: "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

**

Do you remember about a dozen years ago there were news stories of "gay penguins" in zoos, in which two male penguins seemed to share a deep bond. The lesson, we were told, was that homosexuality was natural. It is strange enough that the modernist worldview which reduces mankind to mere animal spirits suggests we have something to learn from God's other creatures. (Never mind that these stories anthropomorphize animals by assuming deep bonds onto which a sexual orientation was foisted upon by officious narrators). But penguins or whatever other animals you choose are not, like man, made in the image of God (*imago Dei*). Another problem with assuming that mankind is just another species of animal and that we have something to learn from these other creatures is that the obvious cherry-picking of what traits we should emulate. Most of nature is brutal, involving life and death struggles against nature and between creatures, and it is a mark of our uniqueness that we do not live in such a Hobbesian world. Nicholas Wade in his new book *The Origin of Politics* remarks upon the fact that female chimpanzees can sometimes mate up to 50 times a day with multiple partners. Wade says that biologists have concluded that female chimps do this to confuse the males about the paternity of their offspring: females who mate with multiple males lead each one to believe he could be the father of her offspring, which in turn makes him less likely to harm or kill the baby chimp. This is hardly a model worth emulating, for mankind has developed more civilized practices (marriage, for example) to ensure protection of mother and child. It is another example of how we are not mere creatures but the creation of God in his likeness and image.

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The X (formerly Twitter) account Stop Abortion Now, that goes by the handle LifeNewsToo, tweets: "Why is a germ considered life on Mars but an unborn baby in the womb isn't considered life on Earth?" Good question.

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Priests for Life Canada states in its first newsletter of 2026 that "Conscience rights seem to be an abstract idea, but they're not." They explain that for many types of workers in the caring industries, from doctors and nurses to medical students and social workers, the threat to conscience is "a day-to-day problem." These professionals "are being forced to choose practicing and living out their faith and practicing their hard-won profession." Priests for Life Canada says we all must "speak constantly, to defend these people and these institutions upon which we rely. We need them and now they need us."

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Campaign Life Coalition in its February *CLC National News* explains this year's National March for Life theme, "Follow Me," is a multifold invitation: an invitation to discipleship, to be fishers of men, seeking to win not only arguments but hearts; an invitation to mothers and fathers to embrace the life they have created and the joys and trials that raising a family entails; an invitation to act, including attending the National March for Life in Ottawa on May 14 and in provincial marches for life also being held across the country. "Not all of us are called to work in the pro-life movement full-time, but all of us are called to sacrifice for the cause."

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40 Days for Life saves mothers from the tragedy of killing their preborn children, saves the lives of children in the womb, and rescues abortion workers whose eyes are opened to the injustice of abortion. There are 12 vigils taking place in Canada during this Lenten season: Montreal, Toronto, Guelph, Hamilton, Oakville (Ont.), Niagara Falls, Sarnia, Windsor, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria, and Sechelt (B.C.) Please pray for spiritual protection for those taking part in 40 Days for Life in Canada and around the globe, and if you are able, sign up for times in those communities through the 40 Days for Life website.

~Paul Tuns

Debriefing after the Conservative convention



Talk Turkey
Josie Luetke

Like a kicked dog coming back for more, I flew to Calgary for the 2026 Conservative Party of Canada convention at the tail end of January.

As pro-life candidates have been disqualified by the party and leader Pierre Poilievre has gone over to the dark side—fully embracing abortion, same-sex "marriage," and even the status quo on euthanasia—many of Campaign Life Coalition's supporters have had the self-respect to flee to greener pastures, i.e. parties more hospitable to social conservatives.

To be clear, this was a missionary trip for me.

The Conservative Party is the only party fielding pro-life Members of Parliament currently, so I think it behooves the pro-life movement to maintain a foothold in the party, and to increase it if possible.

Keeping "pro-life" in a mainstream party keeps "pro-life" mainstream.

Our coalition of pro-life and pro-family groups didn't walk away bruised and empty-handed: We were able to elect more national councilors accountable to grassroots members and Electoral District Associations, and pass some worthwhile policies and constitutional amendments (though not as we would have liked).

The top prize, though—removing the cursed Article 86 from the Policy Declaration—once again slipped through our fingers, just as it has at past conventions. It states: "A Conservative Government will not support any legislation to regulate abortion."

Cheers rang out in the breakout session when this policy submission was defeated.

A response like that can be expected from "pro-choice" delegates—and there are many such members in the party—but what's more infuriating is a debate on the policy submission's own merits, i.e. the dim prospect of a government legislating on abortion, was not had and does not get had. The magic word—electability—shuts the whole thing down, faster than you can ask, "To what end?"

For what reason should we elect Conservatives? Everyone at the convention was pulling their hair out over the past decade of Liberal reign and four successive election losses. Tories are desperate to save Canada…but how? What would they do differently from the Liberals? Lower taxes, stiffen bail conditions, and…? It's practically a moral imperative to restore the Conservatives to power and yet they offer no competing cultural vision to the Left. On social policy—which shapes a nation—they are mum. They cede this ground to the "natural governing party."

While I did make a big production of enthusiastically whipping up my voting card and holding it high, I didn't get the chance to speak in favour of the Delete 86 policy

A Conservative Government will not support any legislation to regulate abortion

submission at the mic. Had I been able to make 30-second remarks, I had planned to say: "Josephine Luetke. Mississauga—Streetsville. Abortion kills innocent human beings. Whether you're pro-life or pro-choice, I imagine you're uncomfortable with that and abortion-on-demand in any circumstance, and any stage of pregnancy, which is the status quo in Canada. But you're afraid—of the media, or about our electoral chances. A) We can speak persuasively and compassionately about this. Look at Charlie Kirk or Jordan Peterson. B) We don't deserve to govern if we cowardly back away from leading on issues literally of life and death."

What I didn't say (or even plan to say) is: "Better a lifetime spent in permanent opposition, both in Parliament, and to abortion, than to be the ones directly enabling the slaughter of the pre-born, with bodies at one's feet and blood on one's hands."

Let's say the naysayers are right (a concession I will not make, but a hypothetical I will entertain): Deleting Article 86 would threaten or even wipe out the Conservatives' election hopes. If a nation is so bloodthirsty that support for killing children is necessary to govern, any decent, ethical party, I think, would relish the opportunity to be the Official Opposition, officially holding such a morally bankrupt government to account. Whether history remembers such a party kindly or not cannot be guaranteed, but also, the highs and the lows to which a party ascends or descends are never the be-all and end-all.

As I said to a fellow delegate at convention, it's like most delegates forget that they're going to die.

Some are already quite willing and eager to sacrifice the preborn on the altar of convenience, pleasure, or whatever else motivates a woman to get an abortion and a man to effect such a fate. Others will reluctantly, maybe even bitterly, sacrifice the preborn on the altar of power, and they don't understand that that doesn't make them any better than the former group. There's a case to be made that it makes them worse.

The Conservative Party, like any entity with a major platform, isn't merely chasing popular opinion but actively forming it—with its Policy Declaration, but also with any bills tabled, petitions presented, and speeches made.

Nonetheless, I also heard the tired argument that popular opinion must change first. When opposing the killing of the innocent would incur no cost and require no risk and the expense of no political capital and it would only bring accolades, fortune, and favour, and a windfall of votes, then—and only then—will the party suddenly be bestowed the moral imperative to act. It's funny how duty always aligns with self-interest in these scenarios.

"That's a straw man," you may charge, and I'll grant I'm being hyperbolic. As per German chancellor Otto von Bismarck, politics is the art of the possible, right? There lies a happy medium somewhere afield, a sweet spot where the party does take a risk for the sake of the preborn, but it isn't political suicide either. We're not at that point currently, but perhaps when we float into some vaguely flowery period in the future, the Conservative Party of Canada will stick out a limb—just not its neck. After all, self-interest is one thing, but self-preservation is quite another.

It's a pity the preborn aren't capable of it.

Looking at life
Reflections on why we march

Donald DeMarco

The word "life" has several shades of meaning. In this article I call attention to just two of its meanings. The first is the life that is the focus of the various marches for life. It refers to the sacredness of life. All human life, including the life of the unborn, is invested with an indelible value that safeguards it against and from undue exploitation. This is a most important understanding of life insofar as it recognizes the dignity of life and demands that all examples of human life be treated with justice. Kudos to all who march for life in this sense. Their message is needed in a world where unborn life, in particular, is grossly undervalued and violently mistreated.

The second meaning of life I want to present is, so to speak, more down to earth. It is the life we are living. It is not an ideal in any sense but refers simply to the particular kind of life that people are living as they move from day to day. How well does this second meaning of life relate to the first meaning?

I am old enough to remember when hard core pornography, marijuana, abortion, and euthanasia were not only illegal, but criminal. Today, especially in Canada, they are all flourishing. The reason they were proscribed was because they were considered bad for people. Pornography was injurious to the mind as well as to the family and society in general. Maturity requires the ability to postpone gratification. Pornography is a form of immediate gratification and self-indulgence that is incompatible with the process of becoming a mature person. Science had supplied enough convincing evidence that marijuana, taken as a recreational drug, is harmful in a variety of ways. Abortion was understood as the killing of an innocent human being. Euthanasia, putting to death people who are sick rather than offer them palliative care, was unthinkable. Today the rate of euthanasia continues to escalate.

As these forms of hedonistic self-indulgence become part of the social landscape, certain correlative virtues are suppressed, such as modesty, chastity, fortitude, generosity, personal responsibility, and the extended care that is expected of the medical profession. The net effect must be highly deleterious to the way many people are living. Life in the 21st century is very different from life in the middle of the previous century. The situation is troubling. Many are deeply concerned. And that is why marches continue.

We ask the question: what kind of lives are people living today in North American society? The family is in trouble, suicide rates are rising, and young people question the very meaning of life. The age of anxiety has sharpened its focus. "How did we get here" people ask. The simple answer is by legalizing a number of acts that were formerly regarded as criminal. Liberalism has been very effective in sweeping away the bulwarks against vice.

The point I want to make here is that the way many people are living in today's culture has a significant impact on how they view the dignity of life. Surely the various marches for life would be more effective if more people were living lives that were receptive of their messages. Unavoidably, the marchers speak to people who are living their lives in such a way that they are deaf to the pro-life message. Not everyone is on the same page.

What can be done? Should there be other marches: for virtue, mental health, and palliative care? In the past, marches for civil rights were effective in convincing people of the gross injustice of racial discrimination. We look to education but find the predominance and influence of highly dubious ideologues. Churches are being vandalized and their leaders are ineffective. Politicians are busy placating the crowd.

There is hope, however, in those who live in a way that is receptive of the value of life. They must do more to spread the word, not only through the word, but by the way they live. In the final analysis, virtue must be more attractive than vice and a happy family should serve as a beacon of encouragement. We need to take to heart and put into practice the message that *The Interim* brings. Although it cannot march, it surely can inspire.

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Four groups call on government to scrap Bill C-9

Paul Tuns

On Feb. 12, Campaign Life Coalition, CitizenGo, Campagne Québec-Vie, and 4 My Canada held a joint press conference at the Canadian Parliamentary Press Gallery to raise concerns about Bill C-9, the *Combatting Hate Act*, which opponents say would criminalize quoting certain passages of Scripture.

Civil liberties, religious, and socially conservative groups have criticized the bill, introduced last September, for its restrictions on freedom of speech, expression, and religion.

Pete Baklinski, communications director for CLC, said, "In the name of combating hate, Bill C-9 opens the door to the criminalization of religious expression and belief." Baklinski explained, "While paying lip service to religion, Bill C-9 pulls the rug out from under people of faith," especially after the Liberal government agreed to a Bloc Quebecois proposal to amend the bill to remove the religious exemption for hate crime speech. Last fall, before being promoted to Minister of Culture, Liberal MP Marc Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs) said that certain, unspecified Bible passages were "clearly hateful."



(From left) Campaign Life Coalition's David Cooke, Brandon Tran, and Pete Baklinski were joined by CitizenGo's Gregory Tomchyshyn, and Campagne Quebec Vie's Georges Buscemi for a press conference at the Parliamentary Press Gallery to present petitions and arguments against Bill C-9.

Under current law, sincerely held religious views expressing disapproval of certain lifestyles and behaviours are not liable to hate crime prosecution.

David Cooke, CLC campaigns manager, said Bill C-9 posed a "threat" to fundamental freedoms, stating, "The Liberal government, together with the Bloc Quebecois, aims to tighten the noose on our free speech rights. With their support for Bill C-9 and its amendments, our God-given, constitutional right to express our beliefs freely in good faith, a right that we all have enjoyed up till now, is in jeopardy." Cooke said "The Bible is not hate speech" and "Biblical teaching must never be criminalized." He said with C-9 and the Bloc's amendment to scrap the goodwill exemption for religious expression, the Liberals and BQ "aim to tighten the noose on our free speech rights."

The four groups at the press conference reported that collectively their petitions garnered 60,000 signatures of individuals opposed to Bill C-9 because of its impact on Charter-protected rights such as freedom of speech and religion. The bill also statutorily redefines hate to be broader and more subjective, making it possible to charge citizens not only for actions deemed motivated by hate, but for hateful thoughts. C-9 would also make it easier for police to charge individuals with hate crimes by removing the requirement that they obtain the attorney general's consent before laying hate crime charges.

Brandon Tran, CLC director of public affairs and outreach, read a statement on behalf of 4 My Canada, which

See 'C-9,' p. 8

National March for Life theme announced: 'Follow Me'

Interim Staff

On Feb. 5, three months before the 2026 National March for Life in Ottawa, Campaign Life Coalition unveiled the theme, "Follow Me."

During the announcement video, Josie Luetke, CLC director of education and advocacy, said "'Follow Me' is, first and foremost, an invitation to be disciples of Christ—and to be fishers of men," explaining, "Because as a pro-life movement, we're not just working to save lives, but also to save souls; to not just win arguments, but to win people over for Christ with the same love and compassion that He had for all."

"Follow Me" was Christ's original call to His disciples: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (*Matthew* 4:19). CLC said "it is a call that changed history" because "Upon hearing the call, the hearers 'immediately … left their nets and followed Him'."

CLC said on its website, "This year's theme is also a call to action, an invitation to follow spiritual and pro-life leaders onto Parliament Hill on May 14 for the 2026 National March for Life." It said, "It is also an invitation that can be extended to our friends, families, schools, and faith communities to join the pro-life movement in Ottawa."

Luetke said that the theme "Follow Me" can "also be interpreted as a whisper" to new mothers and fathers to embrace the "beautiful journey" from "womb to tomb" accompanied by Christ "through every stage and season of life."



CLC vice president Matthew Wojciechowski said "Follow Me" means "saying yes to Christ … to love your neighbour" by joining the Canadian pro-life movement in Ottawa at the National March for Life.

Luetke said CLC has a challenge for pro-lifers watching the announcement video, available online, to make a short video inviting friends and family to "follow me" to the National March for Life, posting them on social media. The video should include reasons why the individual thinks it is important to take part in the march and to tag marchforlife.ca and CLC on their social media pages.

Gideon Spevak, a youth coordinator for CLC, in his "Follow Me" video said "I'm inviting you join me in Ottawa for the National March for Life" to call "for an end to the scourge of abortion," sharing his "truly held belief" that if every person who opposes abortion took part in the march, abortion would be defeated.

Kim Headley, another CLC youth coordinator, said in her video that she hoped all will heed "Christ's call" to "stand up for the preborn."

Luetke urged grassroots pro-lifers to organize buses from their community to bring people to the march and ask their pastors to publicize the march and theme.

Wojciechowski presented the program for the week. On May 12, there is a songs for life coffee house and on May 13 there is the annual candlelight vigil. On May 14 there are Masses and church services for life throughout Ottawa, the national pro-life rally on Parliament Hill, the march through the streets of the nation's capital, abortion testimonials on the Hill, and in the evening the Rose Dinner. On May 15, there is a youth summit for teens and young adults. There is also a pro-life expo on May 15 and 16 at the convention centre.

EWTN will broadcast the Parliament Hill rally and march.

The Rose Dinner keynote speaker will be announced closer to the event.

Christians should fear C-9



National Affairs
Rory Leishman

On Jan. 26, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights delayed consideration of Bill C-9, the *Combatting Hate Act*. That is not sufficient: Parliament should defeat this freedom-stifling bill altogether and also repeal the anti-hate law provisions in the Criminal Code.

Government should not stifle the expression of any political viewpoint, no matter how vile. Experience in Canada and elsewhere has amply confirmed that empowering the police and the courts to censor speech is far too open to error and abuse.

As it is, devout Christians have particular reason for concern about Bill C-9. In leading off debate for the Conservatives on the bill, Larry Brock, MP for Brantford—Brant South—Six Nations, pointed out: "Christianity is under attack in this country."

That assertion drew hoots of derision from some members of the House, yet it is manifestly correct. As Brock noted, there is compelling reason to believe that hate-mongering arsonists set fire to most of the 33 Christian churches that burned across Canada in the aftermath of the frenzy of anti-Christian hate whipped up by false and misleading reports in the secular mass media in May 2021 that a researcher had discovered the graves of 215 missing children near the former, church-run, Kamloops Indian Residential School.

Today, a pro-life Christian might faithfully obey the commandment of Christ to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you," but if he publicly testifies that abortion is a crime that can never be justified, he is liable to be denounced as a hate-monger. And the same goes for any devout Christian who insists that marriage is the voluntary union for life between a man and a woman or that a biological male who thinks he is a female deserves compassionate treatment for a gender identity disorder.

To safeguard Canadians who express religious beliefs that conflict with what now passes for the conventional wisdom of the secular world, the existing anti-hate provisions of the Criminal Code exempt anyone who, "in good faith, expressed or attempted to establish by an argument an opinion on a religious subject or an opinion based on a belief in a religious text." During committee hearings on Bill C-9, the Liberals and the Bloc Quebecois combined to eliminate this religious exemption from the legislation.

In defense of this blatantly anti-religious amendment, Liberal Justice Minister Sean Fraser maintained that believers have no reason for concern because: "Freedom of religion is a fundamental guarantee under section 2(a) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Nothing in this amendment changes that."

But can Christians really rely on the Charter for protection? Not at all. In 1985, Ian Hunter, one of Canada's foremost experts on constitutional law, pointed out that in one of the first Charter cases, *R v. Big M Drug Mart*, the Supreme Court of Canada twisted the plain words of section 2(a) into meaning that the Charter guarantees "freedom from religion rather than freedom of religion."

The censorship powers proposed by Bill C-9 and already conferred in the Criminal Code jeopardize the rights to freedom of expression of all Canadians, not just religious believers. In the United States all such legislation is unconstitutional and the same should go for Canada.

Instead of driving genuine hate-mongers underground, the law should permit them to spew their vile hatred in public so they can be readily identified, tracked, and roundly denounced.

Of course, any malefactor who moves beyond violent rhetoric in the abstract to the actual incitement of violence should be immediately arrested and charged. In dealing with law-breaking demonstrators, the police should immediately order them to desist and arrest those who disobey. Otherwise, a generally peaceful and law-abiding public protest is all too likely to escalate into an out-of-control mob.

In the end, there is only one effective means of combating hate: decent, law-abiding citizens must denounce, rebuke, shun and, if need be, boycott the genuine hate-mongers among us until these repulsive offenders get the message that their vile behaviour is absolutely intolerable in Canada.

Ottawa now wants to micromanage marriages



Law Matters
John Carpay

Benjami Franklin wrote 250 years ago that "Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters." For decades, the trend in Canada has been towards an ever-increasing body of laws and regulations, so many that even the most diligent and conscientious businessman, school principal, manufacturer and manager of a non-profit can barely keep up. That trend is accelerating.

Virtue exists among mature and humble people who habitually practice the Golden Rule or its variations: do unto other as you would have them do unto you. Human nature being the mix of good and evil that it is, no society will attain perfection. But virtue comes in degrees, so the number of meddlesome rules increases as virtue declines.

Virtue is not hereditary, and it cannot be legislated. It needs to be learned, earned, and cultivated anew in each generation, in the home, the school, and places of worship. Absent a commitment to living virtuously, people tend to degenerate into believing that virtue (and even reality itself) depends on their feelings. "Morality is whatever I feel is right" becomes the norm.

Bill C-16, now before Parliament, actually seeks to criminalize conversations between spouses, imposing prison sentences up to 10 years. Under Bill C-16, a new addition to the *Criminal Code* (section 264.01) would prohibit "a pattern of coercive or controlling conduct" that might cause one's spouse to believe that her or his "psychological" safety is somehow "threatened." This new crime will be very hard to prove in court, but will nevertheless increase the number of phone calls to the police and police visits to Canadian homes. Bear in mind that physical coercion, including violence and uttering threats, is already a crime, as it should be. But a "pattern of coercive and controlling conduct" extends, under Bill C-16, to tone of voice, facial expressions, and legitimate warnings about non-violent but real-life interactions, like "I cannot continue with my part-time job if you don't show up on time to look after the kids."

For anyone wondering whether the above is exaggerated, Bill C-16 provides us with actual examples of behaviours that will become crimes.

It becomes a crime to "control, attempt to control or monitor" a spouse's location, movements, actions or social interactions. Phone calls in which one spouse asks the other, "Where are you? You said you'd be home two hours ago," "Did you stop at the bar on your way home?" and "Did you have lunch with that attractive young receptionist again?" could result in criminal charges.

"I thought we agreed that you would stop feeding Sara sugary breakfast cereals!" and "Did you even read the reviews about the movie that you allowed our son to watch?" and other normal, run-of-the-mill parenting conversations will become the new crime of "controlling or attempting to control the manner in which the intimate partner cares for any person under the age of 18."

"You can't go back to school full-time. Our finances and child care needs mean you can't quit your job" becomes the new crime of "controlling or attempting to control any matter related to the intimate partner's employment or education."

"What is this $154.73 Amazon expense for? More impulse spending that clutters the home with things we don't need?" and "You love that hobby so much, why don't you pay that much attention to me?" become the new crime of "controlling or attempting to control the intimate partner's finances or other property or monitoring their finances."

A healthy argument about politics or religion could result in criminal charges for "controlling or attempting to control" your spouse's expression of thoughts, opinions, or spiritual beliefs.

Supporters of Bill C-16 would tell us not to worry: "This new *Criminal Code* provision will never be used for normal, healthy conflicts that spouses have about finances, parenting, in-laws, politics, religion or sex." Only the naïve would accept such reassurance. Further, even if this new Bill C-16 *Criminal Code* provision were never abused, it would hang over our homes like a cold, wet blanket, chilling healthy conversations, disagreements and conflicts.

Only in a country where virtue is lacking would politicians introduce criminal laws to micro-manage marriages and other relationships.

8000 babies saved by Abortion Pill Reversal

Paul Tuns

On Feb. 17, Heartbeat International announced that more than 8,000 lives have been saved through the Abortion Pill Rescue Network (APRN) in what it called "a significant milestone in its effort to provide immediate medical care to women who regret beginning a chemical abortion."

APRN connects women who have taken the abortion pill to licensed medical professionals who can prescribe bioidentical progesterone. When administered soon after a woman has taken mifepristone, the first drug in the chemical abortion regimen, progesterone often counteracts the effects of mifepristone and helps sustain the pregnancy.

The *Washington Times* reports, "The 'reversal' protocol, developed by pro-life physicians, is based on a straightforward theory: If mifepristone works by blocking progesterone receptors, administering supplemental progesterone quickly enough might outcompete the drug and allow the pregnancy to continue." Progesterone has long been used by women at higher risk of miscarriage.

While successful reversals can occur when Abortion Pill Reversal (APR) is undertaken more than a day after beginning the abortion pill regiment, APRN says that when progesterone is administered with 24 hours of taking mifepristone, about two-thirds of the time the reversal is successful and the baby is saved.

The abortion industry claims APR does not work. The Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada calls APR "a dangerous falsehood" and the website of the Brampton Women's Clinic falsely states that "you cannot reverse the effects of the medication (abortion pill) once you take it."

Heartbeat International reported that as the majority of abortions in the United States and many other western countries are committed by the abortion pill rather than surgically, "inquiries to the APR hotline have continued to rise."

In January 2024, Heartbeat International reported that 5000 babies had been saved by APR and in February 2025 that number had risen to 6000 babies saved globally, suggesting that the number of babies saved over the last 12 months (2000) is roughly double the number saved in the previous 13 months.

Jor-El Godsey, president of Heartbeat International said of 8000 lives saved that the "milestone represents far more than a number," as "Each life saved reflects a woman who had a change of heart and was met with immediate, compassionate medical care." Godsey said, "In a culture that moves at the speed of a click, our response must be just as fast" and "is here so that no woman who regrets starting a chemical abortion feels alone or without options."

Christa Brown, director of medical impact for Heartbeat International, said, "Progesterone has been used in pregnancy care for decades," and studies show that there is no increased risk of birth defects or preterm delivery.

Brown told *Pregnancy Help News,* that 8000 children are alive today because "Their brave mothers chose life for them despite challenging circumstances and influencers telling them that finishing the abortion is the only way."

All of Heartbeat International's 4000 affiliated pregnancy care centres are equipped to provide rapid response care for women who have changed their mind after taking the abortion pill. Brown said that more than 80 per cent of women who contact APRN after changing their mind are connected with a medical professional with an hour to make arrangements to be given progesterone.

In Canada, women who are having second thoughts can call Abortion Pill Reversal: A Second Chance at 1-888-612-3960 as soon as possible after taking the abortion pill or check out their website to chat online.

C-9 a 'direct assault on our freedom of speech'

Continued from p. 7

said "Canadians are paying attention and they are deeply concerned about this bill." 4 My Canada said that actual hate-motivated violence against protected groups already exists in law and that C-9 unnecessarily expands hate crime law "lowers the legal threshold of what constitutes hatred." The new definition "increases the risk that lawful expression could be swept into criminal proceedings."

Gregory Tomchyshyn, campaigns director for CitizenGo Canada, said that freedoms of religion and expression "are fundamental freedoms" and C-9 is "a direct assault on our freedom of speech and the ability to publicly share our beliefs."

Georges Buscemi, president of Campagne Quebec Vie, offered remarks in French.

Asked by a reporter from Quebec why CLC is concerned about C-9 considering that its focus is ending abortion, Baklinski said the organization is worried "that these restrictions could affect our ability to speak in the public square." Baklinski cited restrictions on pro-lifers to show the reality of abortion through abortion victim photography and said CLC was already prevented from using certain signage on Parliament Hill because security there said images of abortion victims could cause "hatred" toward specified groups.

The five speakers each called on Prime Minister Mark Carney and Justice Minister Sean Fraser to withdraw C-9.



Greenland has highest abortion rate in the world

Mary Zwicker
Europe Correspondent

The world's largest island is home to the world's highest abortion rate, a history of forced sterilization, and extreme anti-family policies.

"Greenlanders deserve better than abortion, and a government that protects and provides for both women and their preborn children," said Focus on the Family, a global pro-family ministry group.

Following Denmark's legalization of abortion in 1973, abortion was fully legalized in Greenland on June 12, 1975, available under any circumstances up to 12 weeks of pregnancy. After 12 weeks, abortion was available under certain conditions such as rape or incest, danger to the life, health, or mental wellbeing of the mother, birth defects, and in some cases, poor socioeconomic positions.

Since 1996, Greenland's abortion rate has been among the highest worldwide, and today, the island's abortion rate surpasses all countries, with 84.7 to 100.71 abortions per 1000 women annually. This rate that is six times higher than Denmark's own abortion rate, and far surpasses even communist China.

Since 2013, abortions have consistently exceeded the island's number of live births, with more than 50 per cent of pregnancies ending in abortion.

Abortion "is not empowerment," said National Right to Life. "It is erasure. It erases children who never get to live. It erases cultures by cutting off their next generation at the root. It erases women's true freedom by deciding for them that motherhood is a problem the state must manage."

Greenland also experienced the sterilization of its Inuit population during a period from 1960 to 1991, according to recent reports. Greenland took over control of its healthcare from Denmark in 1992.

On Sept. 9, 2025, an official commission led by the University of Greenland published a report which exposed the Danish government's involvement in the sterilization of more than 350 Greenlandic women and girls during the period between 1960 and 1991. The study, which began in June of 2023, found that these women, some as young as 12-years-old, were forcibly given IUDs, or injected with hormonal birth control. This was done without the consent or often the knowledge of these women.

The topic first became public knowledge in 2022, when an investigative podcast revealed that 4500 IUDs had been placed in Greenlandic women during this period. This so-called "coil campaign" was an attempt by the Danish government to control the rapidly rising Greenlandic population and to cut down expenses.

"For decades, these women carried the pain alone," said National Right to Life in a report on the situation in Greenland. "They thought their bodies had failed. They blamed themselves for miscarriages and infertility. Only later did they learn that a doctor with government orders had sabotaged their ability to welcome new life."

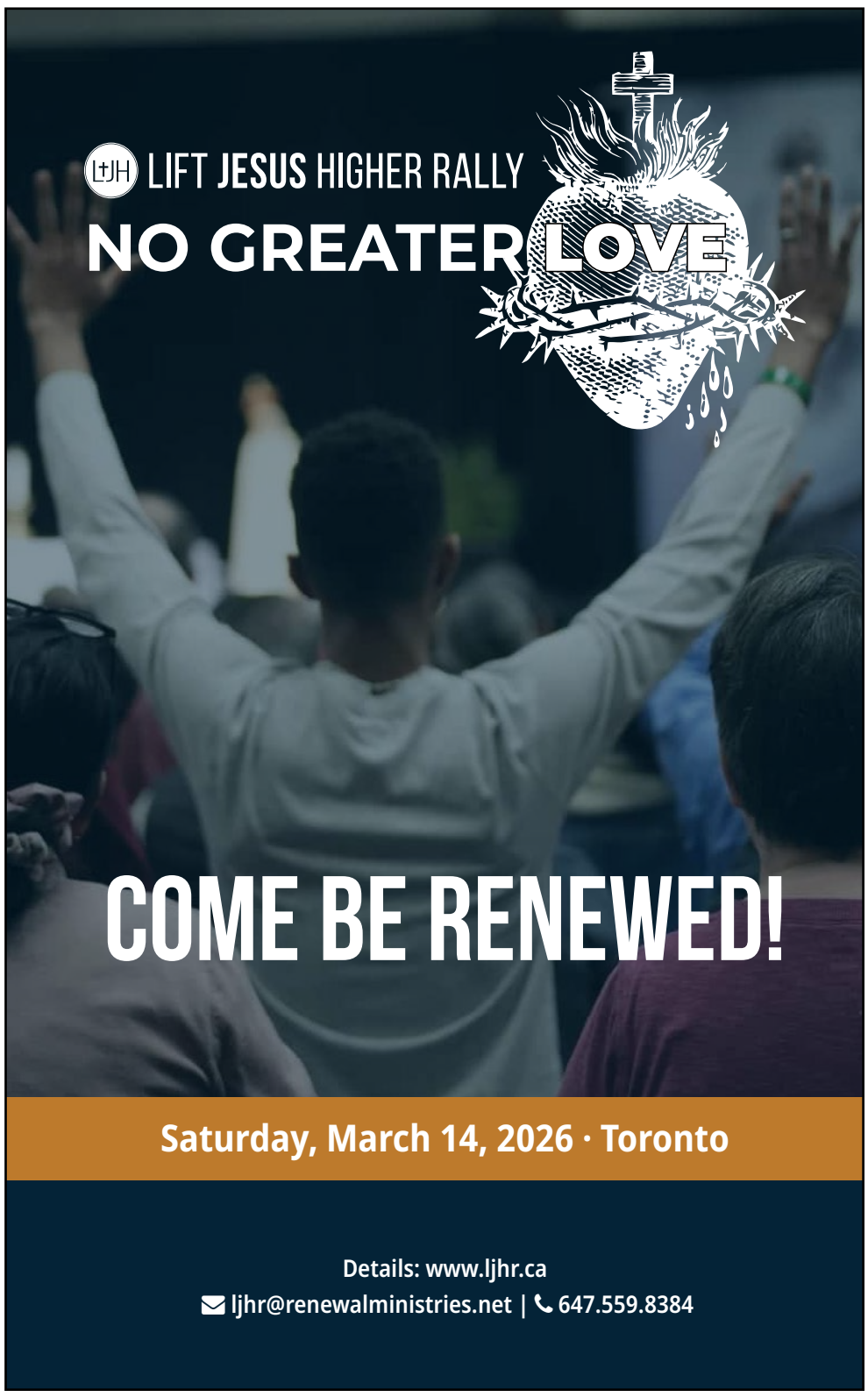
While Denmark apologized for their treatment of Greenlandic women last September, they still target the Inuit population through other means, including through a "parental competence testing" -- a set of tests performed by the Danish state in order to assess whether or not Greenlandic parents are competent enough to raise their own children. Until May 2025, such tests were only administered in Danish, regardless of whether or not participants speak the language, and were culturally incompatible. Parents who failed this test were forced to relinquish their children to the Danish state. While these tests have since been updated, the state still has the authority to remove children from their parents, both in Greenland and in Denmark.

In addition to Greenland's history of abortion and sterilization, the island also pushes various other anti-family policies, and is known as one of the most "progressive" nations in the world in regards to the rights of LGBTQ people. Same-sex "marriage" was unanimously legalized on April 1, 2016 by the Greenlandic Parliament, and in June 2016 same-sex couples received the legal rights to adopt children. That same year, it also became legal for individuals over the age of 18 to change their gender, based only on their own self-identification.

In 2010, the Greenlandic criminal code forbade insults against individuals based on their gender identity, and as of July 1, 2024, Greenland's Law on Equal Treatment and Anti-Discrimination made it a crime to discriminate against anyone due to their "sexual orientation" or "gender expression." This extends to every area of social life, including education.

As of 2023, sex-education is mandatory at the high school level, and delves into topics such as gender and sexuality, although these topics are also discussed in earlier grades.

Surrogate motherhood is also legal in Greenland, although only when unpaid. As of 2025, lesbians can carry the eggs of their partner.



Sodom on skates



Sporting Life
Victor Penney

Sports and smut. I'm not a fan of the combination. In general, mixing anything with sexual perversion is a horrible idea, but not everyone feels the same way, at least on the surface.

On Jan. 15th, for example, Gary Bettman, the commissioner of the National Hockey League, was asked about his opinion of *Heated Rivalry*, the sexually explicit hit series on the HBO Max and Crave streaming services. It's about two elite-level male hockey players who engage in morally illicit acts together while keeping their behaviour closeted.

Bettman's initial response sounded like a page straight out of a public relations playbook. First, he highlighted the NHL's ongoing commitment to the rainbow crowd. "I think we've meaningfully embraced the LBGTQ+ (sic) community," he told reporters at the Capital One Arena in Washington. Bettman was taking questions on the same day he visited the White House with the Florida Panthers, last season's Stanley Cup champions. In terms of the program itself, he described it as a "wonderful" and "compelling" story, but admitted the content "may be a little spicy" for young people. (That line got a good chuckle from reporters.)

When Bettman was finally asked if he had seen the show, he claimed to have watched all six episodes. "I binged it in one night."

That's a lot of raunchy TV all at once when you consider the material. *Heated Rivalry*, which is adapted from the *Game Changers* book series by Nova Scotia-based author Rachel Reid, has become famous for its excessive graphic content. Out of respect for Christian decency, I won't go into the details. To put it mildly: it's bad.

The timing of Bettman's revelation was interesting. The Washington Capitals were hosting their annual "Pride" Night celebrations that weekend. Team captain Alexander Ovechkin and a handful of his teammates made headlines for not using rainbow tape on his stick during the game. The Toronto Maple Leafs, meanwhile, held their own "Pride" Night back in November and brought in a legendary hockey hero for the festivities. In a brief interview the Leafs posted on their X account, Darryl Sittler, one of the iconic faces of the franchise, made the following statement: "We've been doing this the last few years and it's an exciting night, obviously. It's important for everybody to realize that equality and those sorts of things in our life are important. It's important to talk about things, get it out in the open so to speak, and it's important for the National Hockey League to support these sorts of things."

It's not even June, I know, and the Leafs probably won't be playing by then, but still–it's not even June! I guess the league can't help itself, which is a shame, because the message they're peddling is rife with spiritual peril and, wouldn't you know it, one of the Doctors of the Catholic Church agrees with me.

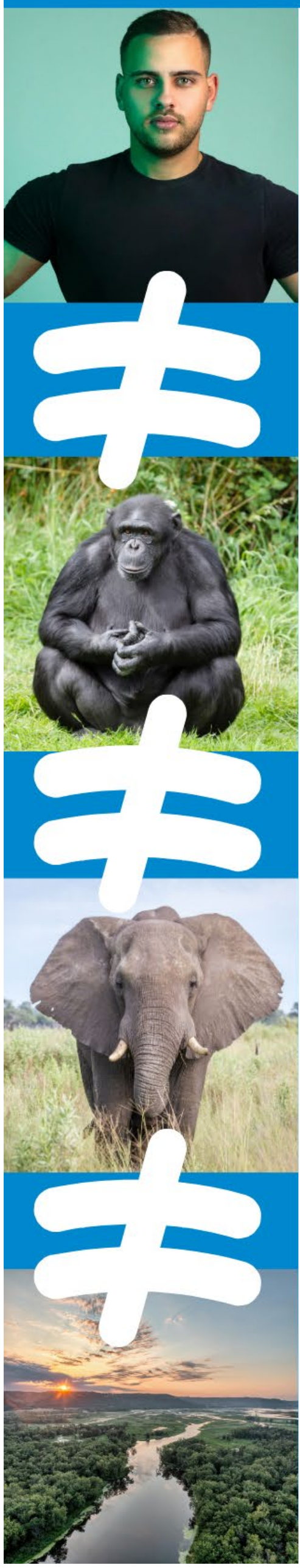
St. Peter Damian, a central figure in the Gregorian Reform movement of the 11th Century, found himself on the front lines of a battle against sexual corruption among the clergy. He also wrote *The Book of Gomorrah*, one of the most eloquent works you'll ever find from a Saint denouncing sexual perversions. Here's an excerpt from his chapter condemning sodomitic indecency: "Certainly, this vice, which surpasses the savagery of all other vices, is to be compared to no other. For this vice is the death of bodies, the destruction of souls, pollutes the flesh, extinguishes the light of the intellect, expels the Holy Spirit from the temple of the human heart, introduces the diabolical inciter of lust, throws into confusion, and removes the truth completely from the deceived mind."

The Saint doesn't mince his words, and while that paragraph may be difficult for some to read, the quote is precisely the kind of wake-up call our culture needs. It's a blunt assessment on the consequences of certain acts and a reminder that the heated rivalry we should be concerned with is our spiritual battle against sin and the devil.

The goal for any of us in this moment is not to shy away from the current onslaught against Christian sexual morals, it's to confront the promotion of savage vices through humility, purity, and prayer. Where does all this leave me and pro-hockey? We're not so good right now. I still love the sport, but the good old hockey game is not the best game I can name anymore, at least not in the interim.

WIDESPREAD EXPANSION OF PERSONHOOD TO ANIMALS AND NATURE RAISES CONCERNS

by Tanis Cortens
Feature Writer



In 2025, two Peruvian municipalities passed ordinances giving legal rights to wild stingless bees from the Amazon. According to the Earth Law Center, which campaigned for the ordinances, among the "inherent rights of the bees and their ecosystems" now recognized under law are "the right to exist and thrive, the right to maintain healthy populations, the right to a healthy habitat free from pollution, the right to ecologically stable climatic conditions, the right to regenerate their natural cycles, (and) the right to be legally represented in cases of threat or harm."

Though this campaign is the first time such standing has been granted to insects anywhere in the world, the animal rights movement is hardly a new concept. As far back as November 2014, the Nonhuman Rights Project (NhRP) filed a habeas corpus petition in New York state for the liberation from captivity of Tommy the chimpanzee, on the grounds of chimps' highly complex cognitive abilities as demonstrated by science. (The NhRP has since filed habeas corpus petitions on behalf of other apes, elephants, dolphins, whales, and even beagles.) The court ruled against the NhRP, saying, "(Chimpanzees') incapability to bear any legal responsibilities and societal duties…renders it inappropriate to confer upon (them) the legal rights – such as the fundamental right to liberty protected by the writ of habeas corpus – that have been afforded to human beings."

Very shortly afterward, a similar petition succeeded in the case of Sandra the orangutan, formerly living at the Buenos Aires Zoo. She now resides at the Center for Great Apes in Florida, having been granted legal personhood by an Argentine court. Another case two years later (also in Argentina) resulted in a victory for the Association of Professional Lawyers for Animal Rights when the Third Court of Guarantees in Mendoza ruled that Cecilia the chimpanzee had "inherent rights" as a "nonhuman legal person."

More recently, the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe sued the city of Seattle in 2022 on behalf of the salmon of the Skagit River, alleging that the city's hydroelectric dams obstruct the fish's natural life cycle. Rather than asking for the removal of the dams, the tribe sought a declaratory judgment from their tribal court "that Tsuladxw (salmon) possesses inherent rights to exist, flourish, regenerate, and evolve, as well as inherent rights to restoration, recovery, and preservation. These rights include, but are not limited to, the right to pure water and freshwater habitat; the right to a healthy climate system and a natural environment free from human-caused global warming impacts and emissions."

Despite the superficial resemblance of such cases to the battles waged by the early animal welfare campaigners – many of them evangelical Christians who also fought against slavery – the two social movements are fundamentally distinct: According to an essay by Janet M. Davis, published by the Organization of American Historians, "While the (animal protection) movement's mainline Protestant founders believed in biblical stewardship, their descendants embraced Darwinism."

Marc Bekoff, writing a piece entitled "Animal Minds and the Foible of Human Exceptionalism" for Psychology Today on July 30, 2011, put it this way: "Charles Darwin stressed that variations among species are differences in degree rather than kind. There are shades of gray, not black and white differences, so if we have something 'they' (other animals) have it too." As an example of this "evolutionary continuity," he mentions that "we share with other mammals and vertebrates the same areas of the brain that are important for consciousness and processing emotions. We need to abandon the anthropocentric view that only big-brained animals such as ourselves, nonhuman great apes, elephants, and cetaceans (dolphins and whales) have sufficient mental capacities for complex forms of consciousness."

Such mental capacities were cited in favour of personhood for all three of the apes discussed above. Furthermore, the 2012 Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness said, "Nonhuman animals, including all mammals and birds, and many other creatures…possess (the) neurological substrates (that generate consciousness)," prompting People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals founder Ingrid Newkirk to say simply, "A rat is a pig is a dog is a boy."

The idea of "nonhuman rights" has been extended beyond animals. Ecuador's Constitution of 2008 recognizes the "rights of nature" in Title II, Chapter seven: "Nature, or Pacha Mama, where life is reproduced and occurs, has the right to integral respect for its existence and for the maintenance and regeneration of its life cycles, structure, functions and evolutionary processes. All persons, communities, peoples and nations can call upon public authorities to enforce the rights of nature.…Nature has the right to be restored. This restoration shall be apart from the obligation of the State and natural persons or legal entities to compensate individuals and communities that depend on affected natural systems."

On Earth Day 2010 (April 22), the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth proclaimed the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth. The Declaration described "Mother Earth" as "a living being," contrary to the scientific definition of that term; it also stated that "Mother Earth and all beings (defined as 'ecosystems, natural communities, species and all other natural entities which exist as part of Mother Earth') are entitled to all the inherent rights recognized in this Declaration without distinction of any kind, such as may be made between organic and inorganic beings, species, origin, use to human beings, or any other status" — effectively asserting that the moral and legal standing of animals and nature is equal to that of humans.

The granting of such rights would not be out of step with the times, as various countries have declared natural features "legal persons." New Zealand is particularly notable in this regard, having accorded personhood to Te Urewera rainforest (2014), the Whanganui River (2017), and Mount Taranaki (2017), the guardianship of which has now been given wholly or partly to Indigenous tribes. Also in 2017, India's Ganges and Yamuna rivers were given the same status as humans, a decision celebrated by the NhRP for "show(ing)…that a nonhuman can be a legal person."

That same year, the group Deep Green Resistance (whose vision, according to their website, is "a world without industrial civilization") went to court on behalf of the Colorado River, asking the judge to recognize its "rights." In the end, the plaintiffs filed a motion to dismiss the suit in response to the state's threat of sanctions under a rule against frivolous arguments. Four years later, however, Quebec's Magpie River was granted legal personhood to protect it against the threat of hydroelectric development projects, marking the first time a Canadian river has received that status. And it may not be the last: An August 2023 report published by Raincoast Conservation Foundation encouraged the granting of legal rights to the Fraser River Estuary in British Columbia.

The Australian Earth Laws Alliance extended nature rights beyond our planet in 2021 with their Declaration of the Rights of the Moon, describing the moon as "a sovereign natural entity" with "fundamental rights." Commenting on this for *Science & Culture Today* on March 20, 2021, Wesley J. Smith against the temptation to not take this movement seriously – "that's how it will win." Smith wrote, wrote, "The best approach is to mock the movement, explain why only humans and our juridical entities are entitled to rights, and thwart the environmentalist radicals at every turn."

Smith went into detail about the threat nature rights could pose to humanity in a moderated debate with Thomas Linzey, which was presented by the Gonzaga University Center for Climate, Society, and the Environment on October 19, 2021. Referring to a recently proposed constitutional amendment in Florida, he said, "Not only would these rights of water extend beyond keeping water clean, it could prevent people from managing waterways or using waterways altogether. For example, the right to exist would, among many other likely scenarios, prohibit swamps from being drained, and because it would be a right as opposed to being the subject of a reasonable regulation, swamp draining could become prohibited, regardless of the human benefit or productive purpose." Smith explained further: "Water would also have the right to flow. That would seem to prohibit any damming, flood control projects, and diversions of natural waterways, because there is no wording about the human need and the human benefit. And if you don't have grandfather clauses, and the Colorado River gets the right to flow, goodbye Hoover Dam. And if you don't have Hoover Dam, goodbye all that electricity that's generated without using coal, natural gas, or any other fossil fuel."

Later in the debate, Smith gave another example: "One of the things that is, I think, most urgently needed to help destitute people in Africa would be a conti-

See 'Human,' p. 11

‘Human exceptionalism is founded on our unique status as moral agents’

Continued from p. 10

nent-wide electrical grid that would allow for clean water, would allow for hospitals. But you can’t do that without using current technologies.…(A) nature rights approach would keep those people mired in destitution. And in many ways, that’s why I think nature rights is — not intentionally, perhaps — but I think it’s distinctly anti-human because it would have a terrible impact on most people. It would reduce economies, and it would prevent emerging countries and developing countries from being able to develop into a (sic) full, robust human societies that have prosperity and can enjoy the best of life.”

Another facet of the nonhuman rights movement that Smith has criticized is its attacks on animal testing. “I am eager for the number (of) animals used in experiments to be reduced as much as possible — but only to an extent consistent with assuring scientific progress — because I care more about reducing human suffering,” he wrote in article for *National Review* last month. He discussed a recent Spanish study of pancreatic cancer in mice leading toward a possible cure for the disease, pointing out that “(if we) materially impede medical and scientific progress by limiting research to exclusively non-animal methods and experiments in sick humans…more humans will die and treatments will take longer to develop. Some probably won’t be discovered at all.”

Smith is known in the field of bioethics for his opposition to assisted suicide and euthanasia — which, like his work against nonhuman personhood, is a consequence of his human exceptionalist worldview. By contrast, well-known animal rights advocate Peter Singer has publicly declared his support for euthanasia and for post-birth abortion of disabled infants.

Human exceptionalism, according to Smith, is founded on our unique status as moral agents. “Granting rights to nature is intellectually nonsensical. ‘Rights’ can only be understood in the human context,” he wrote for *First Things* on October 19, 2012. “University of Michigan professor of philosophy Carl Cohen put it this way: ‘A right…is a valid claim, or potential claim, that may be made by a *moral agent*, under principles that govern both the claimant and the target of the claim.’ Since only humans are moral agents, only humans are capable of possessing rights.” Earlier in the article, he explains why human exceptionalism is crucial to human dignity: “By asserting that flora and fauna…perhaps even geysers and other geographical phenomena…have ‘rights,’ the (nature rights) movement degrades liberal principles arising from the ‘Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God’ in the same way that wild inflation devalues the worth of currency. Indeed, if a squirrel or mushroom and all other earthly entities somehow possess rights, the very concept withers.”

Princeton professor Robert P. George also believes in the importance of human exceptionalism. As a guest on the Dec. 8, 2025 episode of Smith’s podcast *Humanize* (run by Discovery Institute’s Center on Human Exceptionalism), he said, “There are things that are very, very special and unique about human beings and that…confer upon us a standing, a worth, a dignity, that…mean that we’re not mere things.” He stressed humans’ rational nature as “the ultimate source of our dignity…what makes possible moral deliberation and moral judgment, and imposes on us moral obligations.”

Malpractice decision will change legal landscape

Continued from page 2

chologist described his patient was in a state of chaos and had impaired judgement.

Deutsch argued that Chin should have followed up receiving the reference letter with questions about any reference to a gender dysphoria diagnosis.

Chin admitted that had he been aware of all of Einhorn’s notes about Varian’s condition, “I would not have proceeded with the surgery.”

Einhorn’s lawyers, Sabrina Sellers and Neil Kornfield, argued that their client did nothing wrong and that Varian and her mother were seeking to assign blame for their own decisions. They argued Deacon was a nurse capable of making decisions about which health services her daughter should receive, including not vaccinating her as an infant.

Deacon testified that Einhorn spoke sternly with her and insisted that Varian was a high risk of suicide if she, Deacon, did not consent to having her daughter’s breasts removed. “I was scared out of my wits by the things that Dr. Einhorn was so confident in repeatedly telling me and my daughter.” Deacon said that Einhorn said the mastectomy would “cure” her daughter, “make everything better in her life,” and that she was scared about the talk regarding the potential of her daughter committing suicide without the surgery. She said she felt coerced to give consent.

Yet Einhorn testified that he did not believe that Varian was at risk of attempting suicide when he was treating her, confirming that he made no reference to suicide or suicidal ideation in his session notes. He testified, “Surgery in and of itself is not a treatment or mechanism to prevent suicide.”

Varian also said she felt pressured to have the surgery, with her psychologist’s talk of suicide scaring her: “It made me even more desperate to have” the surgery, “because I didn’t want to die, I didn’t want to kill myself.” Varian testified that Einhorn never questioned her desire to have her breasts removed, a fact affirmed by Einhorn’s own testimony. Varian said she might have had second thoughts had she been pressed on the matter by her psychologist.

Deutsch said in court that Einhorn’s “obligation was not to empower (Varian) with every crazy idea that came into the head of a 16-year-old kid.”

He argued that neither Einhorn nor Chin told Varian or her mother that the surgery might not solve her psychological problems, or that Varian might regret her decision. Einhorn and Chin maintained that they did. Deacon also said that Einhorn said that 94 per cent of patients who have the surgery do not regret it, but neither Einhorn nor his defense team could provide any evidence for the claim.

Varian testified “I was 16 and I was really, really mentally ill, obviously.” She continued: “I obviously wasn’t mature enough to make the decision to have surgery, and I certainly wasn’t mature enough to handle the aftermath.”

After five hours of deliberation, the jury found that Einhorn was 70 per cent responsible for Varian’s injury, while Chin was responsible for 30 per cent. They will split the $2 million decision accordingly, although they could appeal the decision.

A total of 28 other civil lawsuits by detransitioners against their former medical providers have been filed and a handful were dismissed due to statute of limitations, but several of those are being appealed.

The Free Press’s Benjamin Ryan reported that Charles LiMandri, partner at LiMandri and Jonna, a California law firm representing several detransitioners, including the most high-profile case of Chloe Cole against healthcare giant Kaiser Permanente, said the Varian verdict will change the transgender lawsuit landscape, but more importantly, it was a “shot across the bow to all the doctors and malpractice insurance carriers that the financial risks and the risks to doctors’ careers and reputations, are real and substantial.”

Critics of transgender “medicine” are hopeful that the Varian verdict drives up malpractice insurance rates and give physicians pause before pushing so-called gender-affirming care upon impressionable youth. Yet at the same time, the Varian case is exceptionally narrow.

Deutsch never questioned the legitimacy of gender medicine, but rather that, in the case of his client, the psychologist and surgeon deviated from standard medical practices that prevented Varian and her mother from understanding the consequences of their decision and thus could not provide their full consent. Ryan explained, “as much as Varian’s story will be fodder for the wider culture war, the question for a jury in a medical malpractice case such as this is whether the care providers failed to observe standard safeguards and whether any deviation from those standards harmed the patient.” Deutsch argued that Einhorn and Chin “horrifically failed at meeting those standards of care” for a “fragile and vulnerable kid.”

Laura Edwards-Leeper, a critic of gender medicine, told *The Free Press* that the Varian decision “should be a wake-up call to American medical and mental health organizations to stop ignoring the growing body of research showing how the patient population has changed and revealing serious flaws in current practices.” She predicted further successful malpractice lawsuits. The next detransition case is scheduled to begin in Nebraska in August.





Canada: Falling apart together



Amusements
Rick McGinnis

At the core of Darrell Bricker and John Ibbitson's new book *Breaking Point: The New Big Shifts Putting Canada at Risk* is a simple truth that doesn't get repeated enough.

"Canada is not a love story," they write. "It is a marriage of convenience, a survival strategy conceived a century and a half ago for a collection of colonies that were determined to protect their autonomy from America's Manifest Destiny. Since the first grand bargain of Confederation, Ottawa and the provinces have lurched about like awkward dance partners, stumbling over obstacles and arguing endlessly over who should take the lead. The result is a nation held together not by a shared vision but by barely managed tensions."

And now, in the aftermath of ten years of Justin Trudeau's federal Liberals, the COVID lockdowns, and under pressure from a suddenly hostile America under Donald Trump, those tensions are reaching a crisis point. "Canada has survived on compromise, inertia, and a stubborn refusal to confront its contradictions," they write.

Up front they put much of the blame on Justin Trudeau, whose decade in power "became synonymous with higher costs, diminished prospects, and a government increasingly disconnected from the realities of everyday Canadians." It was, according to them, the beginning of the end of the so-called Laurentian consensus that has governed Canada for well over a century, which they confidently predicted in their 2013 book *The Big Shift: The Seismic Change in Canadian Politics, Business, and Culture and What it Means for Our Future*.

Boiled down to the essentials, the Trudeau years left us with massive national debt, let our military degrade even further, ignored or exacerbated critical issues such as housing and immigration, ramped up the political and demographic divisions in the country and added the alienation of the western provinces to the longstanding problem that is Quebec nationalism.

"This growing political divide is shaping the nation's future," they write. "The federal government can continue pretending Western grievances can be ignored, bur the anger is not going away. The question is whether Canada's political establishment will finally take the West seriously or continue to gamble that Alberta and Saskatchewan's patience will never truly run out. That gamble would be risky in the extreme."

Much of the fallout from Justin Trudeau's decade was the product of a political vision that Ibbitson and Bricker describe as shifting the Liberal Party of Canada to the left of the NDP instead of its customary centrist positions (a shift fully embraced by the prime minister, and one that ended up taking Jagmeet Singh and the NDP to near-extinction in the last election). But it wasn't unprecedented, and all that Western alienation has built up over decades, thanks to programs like the National Energy Policy, a legacy of the rule of Justin's father, Pierre Trudeau.

In hindsight it's become clear with time that the first Trudeau, despite his immense self-regard, wasn't nearly as smart as we thought he was. The second Trudeau, by contrast, had poorer judgment than his worst critics imagined.

Breaking Point does a fine job of listing all the calamities threatening the country's future, but the authors are generous with potential solutions. They begin by stating that "we must face this simple truth: Canada is a resource-based economy pretending to be something else." This is obvious to anyone objectively analyzing the country's potential from the outside, and it used to be common knowledge here until a couple of generations ago.

"Our elites, especially the Laurentian elites in Central Canada," the authors write "treat the resource economy as something of an embarrassment, still chasing the fantasy of a green-tech utopia. And our national identity has faded into something vague and performative, flickering like a radio signal just out of range. Postnational, some call it."

Bricker and Ibbitson insist that we need to get government "out of the way" and stop managing the economy. It should be easier to lay a pipeline, start a business, build housing, train young people for jobs that exist, reform the Senate, reboot the CBC, let First Nations communities manage themselves, and even end the system of transfer payments that take money from Western provinces and give it – disproportionately – to Quebec. But even if some theoretical government was moved to enact any of these policies in earnest, they would have to overcome generations of Canadian fondness for in-depth regulation and federally favoured monopoly.

My favorite prescription is moving select federal departments, their staff and ministers out of Ottawa to where their policies have effects. So, Parks Canada to Jasper or Banff, natural resources to Calgary, agriculture to Winnipeg, fisheries to Halifax, Northern and Arctic affairs to a territorial capital like Yellowknife or Iqaluit and the environment to Kelowna.

My favorite, though – mostly because it sounds so much like something I'd suggest in one of the satire columns I write here after a federal election – is that "it would offer an entirely new and refreshing perspective if the Canada Counsil for the Arts and the rest of the Heritage Department were situated in Saskatoon." The outrage to this would be so broadly comic that I'm certain Bricker and Ibbitson aren't at all serious about this whole idea.

(I'm actually *sure* this is a joke because everyone knows the most natural place to send the Department of Agriculture would be Saskatoon, while the Canada Council would be most at home in Winnipeg. Outside of Quebec, I can't think of a place in Canada with more government-subsidized arts organizations.)

There are stretches where the authors reveal their own biases. Bricker, the CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs and a former staffer in Brian Mulroney's government, and Ibbitson, a journalist who worked for the *Ottawa Citizen*, the *National Post* and the *Globe & Mail*, give a recap of Mark Carney's selection as director of the Bank of England by stating that it "helped that he projected good looks and a certain charisma – he was dubbed 'the George Clooney of finance' in the British press." Only a pollster and a journalist would imagine Carney as a dynamic finance hunk.

They spend several pages talking about the steep decline of legacy media in Canada and insist that instead of subsidizing them with government money and the Online News Act's fund, extracted from aggregators and search engines like Google, we should offer tax breaks for subscribing to embattled papers like the *Globe*, the *Calgary Herald* and *Le Journal de Montrea*l, and news sites like the Tyee, the Hub "or, yes, even *Rebel News*."

"Let readers and viewers choose where to flow the funds needed to sustain journalism. Let the market decide." Unsurprisingly, they can't imagine that the market has been judging the worth of legacy media for a generation and deciding how much they want to pay for the biased source that flatters their worldview.

We have arrived, they write, at "A Crisis of Crises" where "the cracks threaten to tear us apart: between regions, between generations, between Indigenous and settler peoples, between new arrivals and native-born. The worst possibility is that Trump is right: that Canada doesn't make sense anymore, that we have lost collective trust in our country and in each other, that we have lost identity, lost affordability, lost even sovereignty. As each crack appears and worsens, the whole structure feels unsteady; the very possibility of Canada becomes uncertain."

In response they reach into the CanCon playlist and produce a lyric from Leonard Cohen: "There is a crack, a crack in everything / That's how the light gets in." Which is all very inspirational but I can quote Cohen just as easily: "Destroy another fetus now / We don't like children anyhow / I've seen the future, baby / It is murder."

Bricker and Ibbitson prescribe a long list of programs, demanding plenty of changes and lots of money spent, and state that "what we need is the will to sacrifice what we must to create the best possible Canada." They admit that Canada "has always been a hard country to hold together: more improvised than inspired, more negotiated than created. We were never united." It's possible we are no longer able to fight the gravity of this simple truth and that Cohen is right about the future.



U.S. senate holds hearings on abortion pill safety

Oswald Clark
U.S. Correspondent

In January, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee held hearings on the abortion pill, with Republicans and their witnesses calling for more regulation and Democrats and their witnesses maintaining that mifepristone is perfectly safe.

The committee is chaired by Senator Bill Cassidy (R, Louisiana), a former physician who called upon Robert Kennedy Jr. and Martin Makary to complete a safety review of the abortion pill during hearings for their nominations as Secretary of Health and Human Services and Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration respectively last year. Neither HHS nor the FDA has completed a review of the abortion pill.

The hearings were titled "Protecting Women: Exposing the Dangers of Chemical Abortion Drugs" and Cassidy said the goal was to spur the HHS and FDA to complete their reviews of the abortion pill.

Health and Human Services has said the department is "conducting a study of reported adverse events associated with mifepristone" with an eye to whether further regulations, such as rescinding the Biden administration's relaxation of rules governing the abortion pill, are needed.

Dr. Monique Chireau Wubbenhorst, a practicing obstetrician and gynecologist, and a research assistant at Notre Dame's Center for Ethics and Culture, testified about the potential harms of the abortion pill and the increased risks associated with the relaxation of regulations. She said that the abortion pill can cause "bleeding, infection, hemorrhage," and sometimes the injuries are so severe that a blood transfusion is necessary.

Wubbenhorst said that the relaxed oversight of the abortion pill exacerbates issues with human traf-

See 'Senators,' p. 13



American Medical Association gives qualified support to ASPS policy statement

Continued from page 2

balance compassion with scientific rigor, developmental considerations, and concern for long-term welfare."

The ASPS said that most gender confused youth who do not have surgery outgrow their gender dysphoria, suggesting that such interventions are unnecessary: "when the likelihood of spontaneous resolution is unknown and when irreversible interventions carry known and plausible risk, adhering to the principles of beneficence and nonmaleficence requires a precautionary approach" to surgery.

The document further states, "patient autonomy is more properly defined as the right of a patient to accept or refuse appropriate treatment; it does not create an obligation for a physician to provide interventions in the absence of a favorable risk-benefit profile." In other words, surgeons should not have to carry out invasive and irreversible surgeries simply because patients want them.

Dr. Scot Glasberg, a former president of the Society who was part of the deliberations on the organization's position, told *The New York Times* "There's no data to suggest that you can predict who will benefit from surgery and who will have a negative outcome."

The new policy statement is part of an evolution by the ASPS, which had previously been in lockstep with most other professional medical bodies, including the American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Psychiatric Association, and the Endocrine Society, in support of gender medicine. In 2019, the Society stated plastic surgery could "help gender dysphoria patients align their bodies with whom they know themselves to be." But by 2024, it said it would re-evaluate its position on youth gender treatments in light of "considerable uncertainty as to the long-term efficacy for the use of chest and genital surgical interventions."

The new document said "this position statement is not a retroactive judgement, but a forward-looking response to evolving evidence."

Responding to the new ASPS position, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a statement: "The AAP continues to hold to the principle that patients, their families, and their physicians – not politicians – should be the ones to make decisions together about what care is best for them."

The American Medical Association took a softer tact. The AMA issued a statement: "Currently the evidence for gender-affirming surgery intervention in minors is insufficient for us to make a definitive statement," so "in the absence of clear evidence, the AMA agrees with ASPS that surgical interventions in minors should be generally deferred to adulthood."

Critics of gender medicine say that the AMA's inclusion of the word "generally" was weaselly, but at the same time it marked the first time the body has shown any hesitation pushing gender affirming-care.

Claire Abernathy is detransitioning from her chosen gender of male back to her biological female sex. She wrote in *National Review Online* that "while the standards are moving in the right direction" and will save countless impressionable adolescents from heartbreaking regret, "they can't turn back time" and fix the problems puberty-blockers, cross-sex hormones (giving girls testosterone and boys estrogen), and mutilating surgeries have caused tens of thousands of teenagers and young adults who regret their medical interventions.

Abernathy said, "there has been no apology to the children like me who were placed on a conveyor belt toward irreversible outcomes without adequate evidence or truly informed consent." She said, "A minor cannot consent to the permanent loss of healthy body parts, sexual function, fertility, or the ability to breastfeed – especially when those risks are minimized, dismissed, or never mentioned at all."

Pro-transgender activists and many medical experts have claimed that few minors undergo surgical interventions when suffering gender confusion. LGBTQ magazine *The Advocate* reported that "some teens undergo top surgery (mastectomies) or facial modifications" but that genital surgery is "almost never" done on teens.

The Manhattan Institute released a report last year which examined insurance claims and found that between 2017 and 2023, at least 5200 teen girls ages 12-18 had their breasts removed as part of gender-related surgery. Writing in *Unherd*, Benjamin Ryan affirms those numbers, reporting "approximately 1000 minors received such interventions annually in recent years." The Associated Press reports that 1 in 1000 U.S. adolescents "receive gender-affirming medications." (The ASPS said there is little evidence to support cross-sex hormones or puberty-blockers but limited its policy to its expertise, surgery.)

The Trump administration decreed last year that hospitals that provide medical treatment, including puberty-blocking drugs and hormone therapies, would no longer receive any federal funding. Last July, the Supreme Court of the United States upheld state-level restrictions on gender treatments for minors when it affirms Tennessee's restrictions on such medical interventions.

Deputy Health and Human Services Secretary Jim O'Neill issued a statement on the Society's new position: "The American Society of Plastic Surgeons has set the scientific and medical standard for all groups to follow."

In Canada, the major bodies of medical professionals, including the Canadian Pediatric Society and Canadian Psychological Society, endorse gender-affirming care. The CBC reported in 2023 that while few minors have had genital surgery inflicted on them, "older teenagers may be eligible for chest surgery."

Senators call for rollback of lax abortion pill regulations

Continued from page 12

ficking, child sex abuse, and domestic violence because "abusers have been known to force abortion pills down women's throats" or slip them into women's and girl's drinks or food.

Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murril said there have been numerous cases in her state of coerced abortion by parents or partners who obtain the abortion pill through the mail from other states because women no longer have to visit a doctor in person to be prescribed the abortion pill and take the drug in front of the physician. Louisianna is suing the FDA to reinstate the former regulations.

Democratic senators dismissed concerns about mifepristone's safety or the fact that it is forced upon women to cover up abuse and human trafficking.

Senator Maggie Hassan (D, New Hampshire) said pro-life senators and witnesses highlighting the abortion pill's links to crimes was "gaslighting" the American people. She shrugged off these concerns claiming that coercion and assault on pregnant women is a "longstanding part of human history."

Senator Angela Alsobrooks (D, Maryland) said the Republicans were disingenuous talking about the safety of women because "these people don't care about humans."

Dr. Nisha Verma, an obgyn and fellow at the pro-abortion Physicians for Reproductive Healthcare, claimed that receiving the abortion pill through telehealth and delivered by post was as safe as obtaining the abortion pill in-person. Wubbenhorst countered her claims, say-





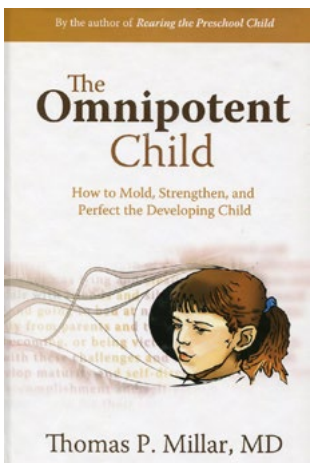


Classic review

Defeating "the terrible twos" before adulthood: Parenting as removing the omnipotence delusion

Russell E. Kuykendall
Review

The Omnipotent Child: How to Mold, Strengthen, and Perfect the Developing Child, Fourth Edition
by Thomas P. Millar MD
(New Westminster, B.C.: Palmer Press, 2005.
241 pp.)



In his first edition of *The Omnipotent Child* in 1983, the child psychiatrist Thomas Millar took on the still-popular approach to child-rearing: Dr. Benjamin Spock's *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* (1946) which, in general, urged parents to adopt a more permissive style of child-rearing. By the time of Millar's first edition, in its various editions Spock's 1946 book had sold some 50 million copies, reputed to be second only to sales of the Bible. Millar credited – or blamed – the widespread adoption of Spock's permissive approach to parenting for rearing a generation or two of self-centred, self-indulgent, self-congratulatory Baby Boomers who believed they could do anything, and that constraints on their power to change were unfairly imposed by "the system." Millar found the cultural expression of the consequences of the blanket adoption of the Dr. Spock method in Lawrence Kasdan's semi-autobiographical film, *The Big Chill* (1983). Self-consciously or otherwise, *The Big Chill* is a telling portrayal of a Baby Boomer generation who had not been told "No," who rebelled against the responsibilities of marriage and family, and for whom the realization of mortality and inevitable death was something of a revelation!

Drawing a line between himself and Spock, Millar describes the infant as born with two great (and necessary) illusions: the illusion of omnipotence – that she is all-powerful, and the illusion of being the centre of the universe. According to Millar, these illusions are necessary to an infant, for without them, if the infant were self-conscious of just how helpless and dependent she was, she would suffer in constant anxiety. These illusions are a mercy to that utterly helpless and dependent child!

Millar's theory is that the task of wise parenting is the gradual removal of those illusions so that when a child reaches adulthood, she no longer believes that she is all-powerful nor the centre of the universe. She is, thus, well able to function as a responsible member of the wider human community, equipped to get along with others. In the first edition, Millar describes the first time an infant begins to become aware that he is not all-powerful and not the centre of the universe, is the first time his mother or father does not immediately feed him when he cries. That one can hear the tone of the cry evolve from "Feed me, now" to an angry cry of, "Where's the damn bottle?"

In his fourth edition of *The Omnipotent Child*, Millar shifted away from cultural commentary on generations of Baby Boomers reared according to Spock, to taking on the over-prescription of behaviour-modifying drugs such as Ritalin, without sufficient attention to diagnosis. According to Millar, too many psychiatrists diagnose a disorder requiring prescription drugs after hearing parents' complaints for forty-five minutes and spending five minutes with their child! That many, if not most, such diagnoses should have entailed a change in parents' approach to the rearing of the child. Millar questions the *bona fides* of any diagnosis of "attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder" (ADHD).

Throughout his book, Millar describes case studies of children who exhibit what he calls "Omnipotent Child Syndrome" which entails "the omnipotence delusion," "egocentricity," "intolerance for 'unpleasure'," and "poor self-esteem." His prescription is an approach to parenting that removes that delusion and engenders the child's trust in her parents' desire for her well-being. To remove the delusion requires parents' winning the battle of "the terrible twos," when a toddler experiences the anxiety of her awareness that she is not the centre of the universe and, instead, begin guiding the toddler to trust her parents' wisdom and desire for her welfare.

The remainder of the book is about various tactical disciplinary methods designed to address the variety of children, including those who are deaf or who have other differences from the typical child, and the variety of behaviours, including the temper tantrum. Millar concludes with an outline of "remedial parenting" in which he delineates between non-negotiable "You musts" and "I wish you woulds," with the latter subject to parents' "judicious neglect."

Dr. Millar founded Palmer Press in order to publish the first edition of *The Omnipotent Child* as well as other books on child-rearing. Millar died as he was completing this fourth edition of his book, after "a short, but intense battle with cancer," but one of his daughters continued to publish and distribute his books.

So, is the late Dr. Millar correct?

Is ADHD a false diagnosis? This is surely a matter for debate in evidence-based, peer-reviewed medical and scientific journals. Anecdotally, I know of at least two diagnoses of ADHD which were later over-turned in favour of a diagnosis of fetal alcohol syndrome/disorder. It may well be that ADHD is too often too easy a diagnosis to make. But I leave that to medical diagnosticians.

Did the Spock method of child-rearing produce generations of self-consumed, self-centred, self-indulgent, obstreperous adults who resisted fulfilling the adult responsibilities of marriage and parenthood, who cast aside an ethos of service and caring for others? It is tempting to blame the disorder and chaos of student protest in the 1960s on university campuses in North America and Europe on this style of parenting, much as it is tempting to blame current cultural and political phenomena similarly.

The danger for parents, for teachers, for governments, for churches – in short, for leaders – is to parent, to teach, to govern, to do church, or to lead, primarily in reaction to what has come before. Will we be informed primarily by recent history, by our personal experience, or will we endeavour to fulfill the responsibilities of leadership grounded in a longer view and understand the vagaries of historical memory? Can we, instead, ground ourselves in what is timeless – in the claims of eternality accompanying principles found in Scripture?

Will we ground ourselves and our dealings with others in what Christ identified as "the Greatest Commandment:" to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength? In the Second-Greatest Commandment": to love our neighbour as our self? And, above all, to place our trust for redemption in Jesus alone for our eternity?

Parents who love God will surely love their children and point them to Him. Parents who love their neighbour will surely seek for their children something better than what they received. But they will not seek redemption in doing a better job of parenting than what their parents achieved.



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Jesse Jackson, RIP

Paul Tuns

Jesse Jackson, the civil rights leader and candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1984 and 1988, died at the age of 84 on Feb. 17.

Jackson is famous for having marched with Martin Luther King Jr. in the 1960s and in 1971 founded People United to Save Humanity (Operation Push), later renamed People United to Serve Humanity. He was a self-appointed leader in the civil rights movement and ran for the Democratic presidential nomination twice in the 1980s, finishing third in 1984 and runner-up to Michael Dukakis four years later.

Jackson was an early opponent of abortion calling it murder, and organized PUSH to oppose the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973. He said if abortion were readily available in biblical times, Jesus and Moses might have been killed in utero. These positions put him at odds with T.R.M. Howard, an abortionist charged twice with committing illegal abortions in the 1960s, who was a board member for Operation PUSH.

Jackson endorsed a constitutional amendment banning abortion in 1975 and supported Rep. Henry Hyde's legislation to ban funding abortion through Medicaid. In 1977, the *National Right to Life*



Jesse Jackson

News reported Jackson saying, "What happens to the mind of a person, and the moral fabric of a nation, that accepts the aborting of the life of a baby without a pang of conscience? What kind of a person, and what kind of a society will we have 20 years hence if life can be taken so casually?"

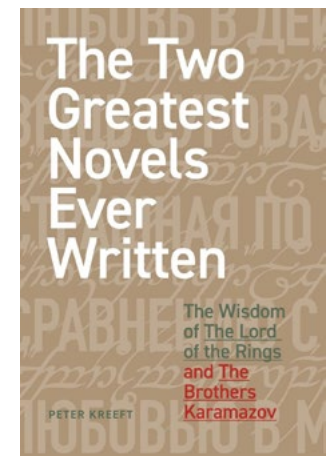
However, after being pilloried for his pro-life views in the 1984 campaign, he reneged on his pro-life position. In the 1988 campaign he insisted that government should not interfere in a decision made between a pregnant woman and her physician and came out in favour of federal funding for abortion. He supported the pro-abortion Democratic administrations of Bill Clinton and Barack Obama.

By 2022, when Jackson was far removed from day-to-day politics and suffering from Parkinson's disease, he returned to his criticism of the *Roe* decision, comparing it to the infamous 1857 *Dred Scott* decision that upheld slavery.

The philosophic depths of Tolkien, Dostoevsky

Paul Tuns
Review

The Two Greatest Novels Ever Written: *The Wisdom of The Lord of the Rings and The Brothers Karamazov* by Peter Kreeft (Word on Fire, $24.95 USD, 164 pages)



Philosopher Peter Kreeft says that J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings (LOTR)* and Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov (BK)* are not merely masterpieces but the two greatest novels ever written because they "brilliantly illuminate" life and deaths issues, they are lights to see Christian truths about the most important issues. In that way, fiction can be truer than fact.

The issues illuminated by these novels include good and evil, courage and heroism, humility, justice, faith, hope, and charity, although they are addressed or alluded to in vastly different ways. Tolkien situated Middle Earth as a premodern, pre-Christian society in which Christian truth is in the background; Dostoevsky's cast of characters struggle overtly with Christian themes and an Orthodox monk, Father Zosima. Kreeft argues *LOTR* is "sacramental" while *BK* is "psychological" but both novels "show us strikingly similar truths about ourselves, our world, and our lives."

Kreeft divides his book into two topics: evil and good. He argues that "all stories are about some kind of evil." Although God is not mentioned in *LOTR* he is present, with Tolkien explaining in his correspondence that the book is "about God, and His sole right to divine honour," to which Sauron has no right. Kreeft use *BK*'s conversation between Ivan, the middle brother, and Alyosha, the youngest, to delve into the case for God through the Redeemer Son who forgives rather than the omnipotent God the Father, noting "it is easy for an atheist to attack the person who created it all and is not incarnate, but much harder to attack the person who came and suffered and died out of love for us."

Kreeft says that in both *LOTR* and *BK* the attraction to evil is the desire for power or control, "my will be done" not "thy will be done." The father, Fyodor Karamazov, Kreeft says, "worships three gods: the pleasure of sex, the power of money, and himself." *LOTR*, being premodern, "is not obsessed with sex" but instead the main issue is pride (versus humility).

Kreeft says that all three protagonists in *LOTR* (Aragon, Gandolf, Frodo) are like Christ in that they each sacrifice their lives (though in different ways), exemplars that show we are all called to give up our selves for the sake of justice, which is giving each what is their due, including God. Kreeft says that "deep hope" which stirs man (and hobbits) to heroic action and genuine faith comes after the death of "ordinary hope," with both books being literary proof that it darkest before the dawn. Kreeft says "at the end of both novels this deep hope is validated."

Building on successes for 2028 convention

Continued from p. 3

speech, opposition to political debanking, defunding the pro-abortion CBC, and more."

Additionally, five constitutional amendments endorsed by the group were passed, and nine of 11 available seats on National Council, the party's governing body, were filled by CLC-endorsed candidates.

Fonseca also remains confident for a greater success at the next party convention in 2028, likely to be held in Toronto. Speaking to pro-life and pro-family delegates, he challenged each of them to "bring one or two additional socon delegates...as we witnessed, only a small number of additional pro-life delegates would make a huge difference."

CLC took no position

Continued from p. 3

for high immigration levels is an "elitist project" to suppress wages, benefitting corporate "big wigs" at the expense of the average Canadian.

Campaign Life Coalition, the national pro-life and pro-family advocacy group, sent representatives to Calgary to participate actively at the convention and run strategy sessions with socially conservative voting delegates, pursuing the best possible outcomes to advance social conservative priorities. Though the organization held an officially neutral position on Poilievre's leadership due to the lack of an acceptable alternative candidate, they noted that he had betrayed the pro-life and pro-family views which once allowed him to hold their endorsement before he became party leader.

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act like men, be strong."

~ 1 Corinthians 16:13



"Daniel in the Lion's Den"
by Peter Paul Rubens
(c. 1614-1616)

March 2026

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

Thousands of youth march for life in Paris

On Jan. 18, about 10,000 people gathered in front of the 'iconic' Invalides palace in Paris, France. (The palace includes the Cathedral of Saint-Louis-des-Invalides; the resting place of Napoleon Bonaparte; and was commissioned as a hospital and retirement home for disabled soldiers by King Louis XIV in 1670.) The *National Catholic Register* described the crowd as "largely young, visibly engaged, and unapologetic" about defending the dignity of human life. The 2026 March took place two years after abortion was enshrined in the French Constitution and a few days before the bill to legalize assisted suicide in France was to be debated in the Senate. (90 per cent of French people are in favour of right-to-die legislation.) So, French pro-lifers had much to march for. One large banner read: "Treat and Support. Never Suppress." A photo showed young people with the words "La Vie" (Life) written on their foreheads. Organizers estimate that the average age of the marchers was about 20 years old. Marie-Lys Pellessier, 24, the March organizer, told the *Register*, "It is the only moment of the year when we can publicly express our opposition to abortion and euthanasia and propose concrete solutions. The rest of the time, the media never give us the floor." She explained that young people have been "formed in a context of moral relativism and increasingly permissive bioethical legislation," compelling them to "make their opposition visible by taking to the streets." With the exception of retired Bishop Dominique Rey of Frejus-Toulon who attends every year, not one active French bishop showed up. Every year, most ignore the invitation that the March organizers send them and refuse to make an announcement in their churches.

The guilt of abortion and spiritual conversion: one man's story

Jeff Joaquin was looking forward to college and then playing in the NFL. However, his life was shattered when his girlfriend revealed that she was pregnant. So unable to face his mother's ire and his own football dreams, he drove her to an abortion mill and waited in the car while she went in alone to end the life of their child. "I sacrificed my child for my own selfish reasons." The guilt of what he had done did not leave him, so he turned to booze and drugs. When he was courted by the Buffalo Bills, they found out about his substance abuse, especially cocaine, and he was rejected. At 23 years of age, he experienced a cocaine-induced heart attack, which made him wake up to how he was living his life. Things had to change. He eventually married, but his wife wasn't able to get pregnant. They went to a fertility clinic and rejected IVF, deciding instead to trust in God. Shortly thereafter, his wife became pregnant and gave birth to a little girl, Faith McKenzie. But Joaquin still had to deal with the abortion. A Catholic, he went to confession and confessed the abortion and how he had abandoned his girlfriend. "I wept and the priest wept, and he gave me absolution." But the priest told him he still had to approach his former girlfriend and talk with her about what they had done. He did this. Joaquin started praying at an abortion facility and approaching men: "I urged them to understand the gravity of their decisions" and that "the pain of abortion never goes away; it just sticks with you." He now tells his story at retreats and conferences across the U.S. and Canada, preaching a message of mercy.

Prison Nursery Programs: Do they work?

What if there were a program where pregnant moms could serve their incarceration in a state prison while giving birth to and bonding with their babies? A U.S. program, passed by bipartisan legislation in 2022, allows just that; nine states have signed on to the program and many others are studying it. Stateline, a state-focused nonprofit news organization released its findings about prison nursery programs on Jan. 9. "As more women enter state prisons while pregnant, lawmakers and corrections officers are expanding prison nursery programs, betting that keeping mother and baby together can reduce trauma and recidivism." Research shows that "pregnant inmates face systemic barriers to timely care," it stated. While some criminal justice advocates "reinforce the notion that incarceration should remain the default response for pregnant inmates" others believe that prison nurseries can "strengthen early bonding, improve maternal mental health and support the transition back into the community after new mothers have time to parent their infants in a structured, supportive environment." Live Action highlighted Missouri's correctional center in Vandalia launched its program in February 2025. As of January 2026, it boasts of 15 moms and 16 babies (including one set of twins). The nursery wing is located in a separate part of the prison, together with the housing wing that holds "cozy communal spaces, a colorful infant development center, a private kitchen and yard, and seven bedrooms for up to 14 babies and their moms." The new mothers stay with their babies while also taking classes, completing treatment programs, and learning life skills. Paid caregivers support moms and provide childcare when the moms are learning. The program manager says, "we teach life skills: how to cook, how to clean, how to manage money …The program "changes lives. A lot of these ladies would not have been able to keep their babies."

How housing drives baby booms and busts

Daniel Hess, an American demographer and engineer, has developed ideas on how to stop the global low birthrate crisis and begin to increase births. In his Substack, *More Births*, writes about "Pro-Natal Policy #5: How housing drives baby booms and busts," in which he uses data-driven technology to explore the impact of housing on birthrates, based on housing type, density, and cost. In 1946 when World War II veterans were returning home from war, American entrepreneur William Levitt created a suburb of New York City. He purchased a seven-square-mile tract of land near the city, subdivided it into modest parcels and mass-produced houses, at a rate of one house every 16 minutes each with its own yard and the basic amenities a family would need. Each house cost $7,000 in Levittown ($87,000 in 2026 dollars), and when the building finished in 1951, 17,500 houses had been built accommodating nearly 100,000 people (for an average of 5.7 people per house). As Hess says, "America was transformed from a nation of renters to suburban homeowners." In addition to the U.S, the top three countries that adopted the Levitt concept and saw a massive increase in babies were Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. To raise the birthrate significantly, Hess says that "we must get family-friendly houses into the hands of young people early, while the fertility window is open." He is convinced that we should build more suburbs; give preference to young people in mortgage programs; open government land to build homes; and don't exempt people from property taxes which will encourage older people to downsize leaving young people to move in and form families. He has a warning for Canada, where 89 per cent of the country is government-controlled 'crown land' "off limits to building." Canada's birthrate has fallen to just 1.25 births per woman—"not a model to follow."

Hannah's Children: affirming children as the greatest blessing.

Catherine Pakaluk is an American economist and social philosopher at The Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. Her husband, Michael Pakaluk is a philosopher at the same institution. Catherine is the author of *Hannah's Children: The Women Quietly Defying the Birth Dearth* (Regnery, 2024). The couple is parents to 14 children—Michael has six (and a seventh a crib death) from marriage to Ruth who died in 1998; and eight children with Catherine, whom he married in 1999 when she was 23. They are grandparents to 29 children. *Hannah's Children* draws parallels to the biblical figure Hannah, who was barren, but whose deep faith led to the birth of her son, Samuel, whom she dedicated to the Lord. She was blessed with three more sons and two daughters. Catherine held in-depth interviews with the women she chose for the book, to uncover their motivations and experiences and how they challenged stereotypical views of what is expected of women and why give up a promising career to birth and raise children. The author raises important questions about fertility and societal values. She critiques pro-natalist policies that do not address deeper motivations behind large families. In fact, the interviews confirm that personal and emotional reasons drive women's choices to have children and the limitations of public policy. Hannah's Children according to an article in *Public Discourse* is seen as a "significant contribution to discussions about family, motherhood and societal values."





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Jacob Runstedler
Alma Ryan
Aquinas Ryan
Rev. C.C. Ryan
Edward Ryan
John Ryan
Rev. Lloyd Ryan
Minna Ryan
Reginald Ryan
Fr. Leo Sands CSB
Giovanni Santilli
Elisa Savelli
Richard Savelli
Anne Scala
Margaret Scandiffio
Dr. M.A. Scandiffio Sr.
Harry Schadenberg
Francis Schafer
Carl Allen Scharfe
Margaret Scharfe
Mary Scheer
Mello Schiebel
Clara J. Schollen
Phyllis Schiafly
Fr. M.J. Scully
Georgette & Al Selinger
Jack Selman
John Senica
Bridget Shaw
John Sheridan
Mike Schwartz
Mello Schiebel
A. & J. Schillaci
Phyllis Schley
Dirk Schuurman
Margaret Sim
Msgr. Simpson
Roy Seymour
Gertrude Schnieders
Giuseppe & Marianne Scime
Fred Sgambati
Roy Shannon
Catherine Sheehan
James and Alma Sheehan
Paul Sheppard
Fr. Vladimir Shewchuk
Reta Shibley
Stella Silbernagel
Margaret Sim
J. A. Sirdevan
Ray Sisk
Fr. Francis Skumavc
Annette Slattery
Charles Slattery
Niel Slykerman
Peter Smit
Art & Anna Smith
Elisabeth Smith
Albert and Helen Smith
Robert Smith
Thurston & Mary Smith
Rev. Leo Smythe
Carol Snelgrove
Terry Snyder
Dorothy Sobchuk
Andrew & Tess Somers
Margaret Somerville
Msgr. Peter Somerville
Fr. Stephen Somerville
Norman Sonmer
Joseph Spadolla
George Spencely
Joanand George Spencley
Mr. and Mrs. E. Squires
Deacon Michael Stadnyk
Mother St. Henry
Katherine Stang
Shirley Stanton
Kenneth James Stapleton
Beth Staudinger
Peggy Steacy
Gerry Sterling
George Sternik
Rev. Msgr J. K. Stephenson
Frank Stewart
Ralph Stewart
Heather Stilwell
Phyliss Stokes
Charlotte Stone
John Stone
Edwin Stroeder
Jim Sullivan
Dr. L. J. Sullivan
Sullivan & Ferrie
families
Julia Sulyma
Louise Summerhill
Stephen Summerhill
Stanley John Surman
Joseph Sweeney
Madeline Sweeney
Mona Sweeney
John Swiderski
Raymond Switzer
Therese & Walter Szetela
Fr. Liam Tallon
Paul Tarantello
Mr. & Mrs. C. A. Teixeira
Henry Thalheimer
Abraham Tharakan
Joyce Thomas
Greg Thompson
Helen Thompson
Fr. Joseph Thompson C.S.Sp
Therese Thorniley
Bill Tiernay
C. Timmermans
Theodora Timmermans
Margaret Timmons
Dr. Kevin Toal
Eileen Tobin
Russel Tolchard
Monica Townsend
Mary C. Tracey
Agnes Treacy
Lorenzo Treacy
Remo Trifone
Fr. Michael Troy C.S.Sp.
Margaret Trudeau
Teresa Tse Lau
Rev. Francis Turk
Mary Turmball
Margaret J. Turnbull
Marie Vachon
Cecilia Vaillancourt
Edmond J. Valin
John Valcour
Rosemary Valcour
Leo Vallieres
Fr. Henk Van Den Berg
Martin Vandenbroek
Mary VanHee
Tony Van Den Heuvel
Dr. Ellen van Der Hoeven
K. van der Hoeven
Clemens van der Zalm
John Van der Zalm
Mary van der Zalm
Ted van der Zalm
John Van Veen
Frits Van Ommen Kloeke
Gerard van Ruyven
Apolonia "Polly" van Ruyven
Nora Pritchard Veitch
Richard Vendryes
Bishop Austin Venner
Ita Venner
Philip Vince
Dr. Dick Vinden
Fr. Gino C. Violini
Zdene Vizintin
Nettie Von Dehn
Harry & Anna Voortman
Czeslawa Vostrez
Irene Vosylius
Juozes Vysniauskas
Leonard Waechter
Jennie Wagenaar
Marina Wainwright
Rita Wales
Br. Eamon B. Walsh
Mary Walsh
William 'Billy' Walsh
Rev. Fr. Peter Watters
Molly Walton
Margaret Wappel
Donald Ward
Alex Wassill
Angie Weber
Mary Weber
Judy Weicker
Ed Weidinger
Maureen Wesson
Fr. Francis West, S.J.
Mr & Mrs Johannes Wever
Const. Catherine Wever
Frank Whelan
Fr. James Whelan
Noreen E. White
James Whyte
Mary Whyte
Frank & Ivy Wickett
Dr. Jack & Barbara Willke
Henry 'Harry' Williams
Lorraine Williams
Charles Williamson
Steven Wilhems
Fr. Clarence Wilson, CSP
Dr. J.K. Wilson
Chester Wing
Cyril Winter
Luke & Ethel Winterburn
Kay Winterburn
Norman and Jean
Winterburn
John Wishak
Cornelia Witteveen
James Woods
Josephine Wygerde
Iris Yawney
Catherine B. Young
Jerry Young
Olga Young
Cecilia Yu Shuk-Han
Joseph Zamida
Peter Zandstra
Sister Marie Zellie C.S.J.
Fr. Cecil Zinger C.S.B.
Michael Zygocki

TUESDAY, MAY 12

SONGS FOR LIFE COFFEE HOUSE
7PM

Saint Francis of Assisi Parish (20 Fairmont Ave, Ottawa)
Baby item drive/free will offering for Birthright Ottawa

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

CANDLELIGHT VIGIL HUMAN RIGHTS MONUMENT
9PM

Pro-life Mass at 7:30pm
St. Theresa Church
(95 Somerset St. W.)
followed by candlelight procession to the Human Rights Monument (corner of Lisgar St. & Elgin St.)
Holy Hour 10 – 11pm
(St. Theresa Church)

THURSDAY, MAY 14

MASSES - 10AM

National Mass for Life –
Notre Dame Cathedral – Bilingual (385 Sussex Dr.)
St. Patrick's Basilica – English (220 Kent St.)
St. Clement – Latin
(528 Old St. Patrick St.)
Check website for more prayer services

RALLY & MARCH ON PARLIAMENT HILL

12:30pm - Rally on Parliament Hill
1:30pm - March downtown Ottawa
2:30pm - Silent No More Awareness Testimonies
3:00pm - Closing Prayer Service: Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute



MAY 14 CONT'D

PRO-LIFE EXPO*
THURSDAY, MAY 14
5 - 6:30pm
& 9 - 11pm
FRIDAY, MAY 15
8am - 3pm

The pro-life expo is an opportunity for attendees to connect with pro-life organizations & ministries.
FREE to attend

ROSE DINNER GALA*

Reception 5pm
Dinner 6:30pm
TICKETS: $150/person
Early Bird Tickets
$125 - ends April 10th
Youth 18 & younger
$75
SPEAKERS:
Alex Schadenberg, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition &
Ales Primc, Movement for Children and Families
Get your tickets at
marchforlife.ca/rose-dinner-2026

FRIDAY, MAY 15

PRO-LIFE YOUTH SUMMIT*

9:30am – 2:45pm
Optional Mass - 8am
TICKETS: $90 Youth**
Speakers: TBA
Register at
marchforlife.ca/youth-summit-2026

For more details on the National March for Life, visit our website at marchforlife.ca

**Ottawa Conference and Event Centre*
200 Coventry Rd., Ottawa
***Group discounts available*