

LIFE MATTERS JOURNAL

SUMMER 2012
VOLUME 1 - ISSUE 4

FOREVER DEDICATED TO ALL



VICTIMS OF VIOLENT AGGRESSION.

This journal is dedicated to the aborted, the bombed, the executed, the euthanized, the abused, the raped, and all other victims of violence, whether legal or illegal.

We have been told by our society and our culture wars, that those of us who oppose these acts of violence must be divided. We have been told to take a lukewarm, half-way attitude toward the victims of violence. We have been told to embrace some with love while endorsing the killing of others.

We reject that conventional attitude, whether it's called "Left" or "Right", and instead embrace a consistent life ethic toward *all* victims of violence.

We are Life Matters Journal, and we're here to defang the viper that is legalized homicide.

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cover art: "Be Consistent" (detail) by Aimee Murphy

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INTRODUCTION - LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers, supporters, and friends,

Greetings! --and apologies...

These last few months have been overwhelming for me, in both body and mind, in spirit and in heart – not necessarily in a bad way, in fact I would venture to say quite the opposite. I am so glad to be “relaxing” and working on the Life Matters Journal again. As you may know, in the last three months I had my bridal shower, attended two weddings, moved twice, prepared everything for my own wedding, attended all of my wedding-week activities, said my vows, went on honeymoon, prepared to move for a third time in three months, and I am currently typing this from a hotel room in Salt Lake City, where my new husband, Kyle Murphy, is on a business trip. Oh, and by the way, yes, I did change my last name: I am no longer Aimee Bedoy. Needless to say, it’s been a pretty crazy quarter, and when we get back to Ohio we move again and I have to work on painting our new apartment. I’m excited, and a little scared, and a lot overwhelmed for this next step in my life.

But as two friends of mine pointed out on the Thursday before my wedding, as I posted a photo from LiveAction about gender equality in the womb, activism and dedication to a cause do not cease because of grand events. Granted, getting married and moving right before the deadlines this month made my life a little more difficult, and it will make this issue smaller than past issues, but we must keep on trekking. Whatever obstacles remain in our path, we must fight through. Activism isn’t only for when it’s convenient, or only when we disagree with the political party. To remain “ever the activist,” we must push through political differences and be willing to see both sides of the coin – largely, we are neither Democrats or Republicans – we are Consistent Life Ethicists, and we fight for all life. The SCOTUS decision has already been divisive amongst us, but I do agree that there are better ways forward than the ones we have fallen into; let us be decisive about our action and take steps forward together.

To our readers that have been waiting for this issue – my sincerest apologies. Though life did not get in the way of our activism as a whole, it did impede expedient publication of this issue. Hopefully as I settle into my new life as Mrs. Murphy, publication and work on this journal will become a much more fluid and simple task.

For peace and all life,



Aimee Murphy

Have a letter for the editors here at Life Matters Journal? Please write us at lifemattersjournal@gmail.com to let us know what you think.

Just put in the subject line “Letter” and we will post it in our next issue along with our responses.

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The views presented in the journal do not necessarily represent the views of all members, contributors, or donors. We exist to present a forum for discussion within the consistent life ethic, to promote discourse and present an opportunity for peer-review and dialogue.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear LMJ,
I had some thoughts for you...

Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them? Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgment. For even the very wise cannot see all ends.

Gandalf, in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*

You shall not murder.

Exodus 20:13 (New Revised Standard Version)s

All around the world there are forms of killing that are accepted. However, did you know that there are several forms of legalized killing currently employed in the United States? These forms of legal killing are abortion, euthanasia, wars of aggression, and the death penalty.

I really became interested in these problems after being involved in the anti-abortion movement for a while, and I studied it in depth after I realized that to be truly pro-life you must oppose all killing of the innocent. We have a serious problem with our culture in this respect:

- Abortion, the act of killing an unborn fetus, has occurred almost 50 million times since *Roe v. Wade*. [1] These abortions have been performed despite the fact that the fetus is biologically a human being, as can be proven by the fact that it has human DNA.

- Euthanasia, also known as mercy killing, is the act of killing someone, generally someone elderly, who is in pain. We do not have the right to end someone else's life, however, even if they want us to.

- Wars of aggression are wars fought offensively as opposed to merely in self defense. Such wars violate just war theory, which holds that war must be for self defense rather than aggression, must be used only as a last resort, and must be waged in a just fashion. Waging war in a just fashion means that, if we must go to war, we must avoid civilian casualties.

- The death penalty, putting to death those convicted of certain crimes, might have killed innocent people. [2] Using death as a punishment for crime may appear to be a good solution, but the risk is just too high. Some claim it is cost effective, but is killing off

prisoners the solution to overcrowded prisons? An alternative solution is to reduce sentences for non-violent crimes in order to prevent overcrowding and to have rehabilitation programs for those in prison rather than letting them learn to better their criminal craft in jail.

The idea seems to be prevalent that those who oppose war and the death penalty should support abortion and that those who oppose abortion should support war and the death penalty. Why not oppose them all? We should kill another human only in self defense and as a last resort. We must oppose other forms of killing as they are harmful to society. They tend to disproportionately affect minorities. We can show our opposition in the way we vote or by educating others on the horror of these acts. We must change our mentality from a culture of death to a culture of life. We must oppose all killing unless it's an act of self defense. If we do go to war, we must do so only defensively and as a last resort.

If we do this and embrace a culture of life we can reduce violence and end our culture of death. We can rest assured that we have handled things morally and in a non-violent manner. Even if death appears to be the easiest solution, it is not the best solution. To be part of the solution, we need to work toward a consistent culture of life.

[1] Abort73.com, "US Abortion Statistics." http://www.abort73.com/abortion_facts/us_abortion_statistics/.

[2] Death Penalty Information Center, "Executed but Possibly Innocent." <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/executed-possibly-innocent>.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Wirz

Benjamin,
Thank you for your thoughts and your commentary! We would love to hear from you again in the future, maybe with a full essay or commentary piece? Or maybe you'd like to apply for an internship? (See our ad on page 9)
Thanks!

~LMJ Staff

ART, ETC: "IT'S JUST A CLUMP OF CELLS"

by *Jacqueline Carpentier*



"It's just a clump of cells"

By Jaqq · 1 year ago

The film was for a course that focused on exploring different methods and materials in making art. The final assignment was to use either miniatures or monuments and to express change over time in a non realistic and/or nonlinear fashion. I was really intrigued by the concept of having something growing and melting - of having the process itself speak directly to the question of existence I have always been so fascinated by. This idea quickly and naturally morphed into the concept of using a representation of a human hand, for what better to bring the question of human existence closer to the viewer's own humanity? The organic nature of the material, butter, brought this relationship even closer. Fat as a substance is considered so unimportant, when in reality all of us must have some in order to survive. A small amount of fat taking form into a hand speaks to a clump of cells taking form into a human. Without that clump of cells there would be

nothing: nothing then and nothing now. But the presence of those cells, their growth, their developing cannot be labeled as nothing. My hope is that this piece provokes questioning and thought about the beginning stages of life and their significance.

The film can be found at <http://vimeo.com/22974749>.

Jacqueline Carpentier is a student at University of Rochester, and a member of University of Rochester Students for Life.

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CURRENT EVENTS AND CONSISTENT LIFE

INCONVENIENT GRACE

by Lilianna Serbicki

Spring Commencement at Franciscan University is an exciting event. While some graduates may be so exhausted, nervous, or distracted that they do not even process the entire commencement speech, they generally expect the speaker to endorse the school's Catholic values. This is anticipated even if the speaker is not Catholic; while Franciscan employs quite a few non-Catholic individuals, they ask that all people involved with FUS in an official role "understand and support the mission of Franciscan University of Steubenville." (Franciscan.edu)

What exactly is the mission of Franciscan University? A statement on Franciscan's website declares that the University "hold[s] faithfully to the teaching authority of the Magisterium while boldly pursuing all truth accessible to the curious mind...[i]n the classroom, on campus, and beyond, every University activity arises from our commitment to promote the moral, spiritual and religious values our students need..." (Franciscan.edu)

Why examine Franciscan's goals? This year's commencement speaker was General Michael Hayden,



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former director of the CIA and advanced interrogation advocate. To not only honor a pro-torture individual, but invite them to serve as the commencement speaker, seems contrary to a truly pro-life, truly Catholic “mission”. This is a hypocrisy that any thoughtful person – pro-life or pro-choice – should be able to point out.

“Pro-torture” is a harsh term that should not be applied to any individual without first examining his or her own words. What precisely has Hayden condoned? A year ago he wrote in *The Wall Street Journal* (my italics added):

“I’ve been personally asked about the appropriateness of waterboarding and—recognizing the immense challenge of balancing harsh treatment with saving innocent lives—usually respond: “I thank God that I did not have to make that decision.” At the same time, I thank those who preceded me, made such decisions and thereby spared me the worst of the dilemma. *Those who deny the usefulness of enhanced interrogation techniques might consider similar caution.*” (WSJ.com)

Just in case one finds that paragraph to be too noncommittal, the subtitle of Hayden’s article was: “The latest lunacy to get a popular hearing is the idea that the harsh CIA interrogations yielded no useful information.” (WSJ.com)

Imagine an intelligent, well-spoken pro-choice advocate making a similar statement about abortion – perhaps something about “recognizing the immense challenge of balancing the harsh treatment of fetuses...” Franciscan University would never consider honoring this hypothetical advocate, and representatives of the University would probably speak out against said advocate’s destructive attitude. How can the University act this hypocritically?

Catholics and non-Catholics alike may have the

same question at this point: *does the Church actually say anything explicitly about the use of torture?*

The Catholic Church’s stance on torture is explicit and unwavering. The Catechism of the Catholic Church declares:

“Torture *which uses physical or moral violence to extract confessions, punish the guilty, frighten opponents, or satisfy hatred* is contrary to respect for the person and for human dignity.” (Catholic Church 2297)

Vatican II’s document *Gaudium et Spes* similarly states:

“[W]hatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself, whatever insults human dignity, ... all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed...they do more harm to those who practice them than those who suffer from the injury.” (Gaudium et Spes para. 27)

But surely that must be taken with a grain of salt, a Catholic may protest. Aren’t there extenuating circumstances? Keep in mind that many pro-choice advocates use very similar phrases.

It is easy for all of us to respect life when it is convenient for us. The pro-life contingent commonly makes the following accusation of pro-choice individuals: “They’re disregarding life because respecting it would be *inconvenient* for them.” Certainly disregarding human dignity in any capacity is wrong; however, this is far from the only case of disrespect based on *convenience*. It is convenient for us to think that someone who has committed evil acts deserves “whatever is coming to them”.

A common argument against calling this “hypocrisy” is that an innocent child’s life is not the same as the life of a potential criminal or terrorist. Obviously an unborn child is innocent of any intentional act, and a potentially

ON THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT RULING

by Mary Stroka

dangerous criminal may be guilty of horrific evil. However, if we believe that those who have committed evil acts deserve “whatever is coming to them”, there is little that separates us from a dangerous, vengeful vigilante à la Liam Neeson in *Taken*.

Pro-choice advocates are often, in my personal experience, highly-educated, well-spoken, thoughtful individuals who will spot any hypocrisy in your worldview as quickly as you point out the flaws in their own. *If you truly desire to be taken seriously, then you must ask yourself if you are being consistent in your desire to respect life.* People will not – *should not* – take you seriously if you only respect the dignity of the human person when it is personally convenient to you.

Works Cited

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- [4] Catholic Church. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. 2nd ed. Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000. Print.
- [5] Pastoral Constitution. *On The Church In The Modern World — Gaudium et Spes*. Promulgated by Pope Paul



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The United States Supreme Court ruled June 28 that the Affordable Care Act the Obama Administration developed and made a law in March 2010 was constitutional in a 5-4 decision. Conservative Chief Justice John Roberts’ surprising, affirmative vote made the final decision, which found that the mandate is constitutional because of Congress’s ability to tax.

However, the Supreme Court did not rule on the constitutionality of the part of the law that would require most employers, including religious groups that maintain an opposition, to pay for contraception, sterilization, and abortifacients with no co-pay from their employees.

The highly controversial law and the decision has been a cause for rejoicing for some and a cause for deep disappointment for others. With about 17 percent of Americans lacking health insurance in 2011, the highest percentage since 2008 according to a Gallup study, the issue is becoming more and more relevant to all Americans. The law allows children to stay on their parents’ insurance plan until age 26, extends Medicaid to more low-income families as well as expanding the program’s benefits, and necessitates that insurance companies include people with preexisting conditions. Some say that all of these items, as well as others the law includes, are beneficial; however, others argue that they may create problems for the economy. The law doesn’t really address wasteful spending in health care. There’s no tort reform. Also, these taxes that would be levied on individuals and companies that do not wish to comply would be punitive and restrictive, some might say. The law increases the costs of hiring, which may encourage companies not to hire new employees, thus affecting the unemployment and underemployment rate. There are several lawsuits by organizations that oppose the law’s measures that may affect the law’s future, regardless, so there may be hope for those who do not agree with the majority ruling of the Supreme Court.

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ESSAYS

DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE CONSISTENT LIFE MOVEMENT

by Nicholas Neal

Legalized homicide takes many forms in America. Two examples are abortion and the death penalty. Ironically the opponents of these forms of homicide are usually divided by political ideology. Progressives oppose the death penalty while supporting legalized abortion, and conservatives take the opposite position. However there are those who connect abortion and the death penalty as both being immoral and unnecessary forms of homicide that should both be rejected. While this group is small, they are still worth examining because they have a different perspective on the cultural and political wars that is almost never discussed. Further, examination of such a group would help us understand how many people actually believe in the political spectrum as conventionally defined. After all, holding the consistent life ethic viewpoint would naturally involve rebelling against the typical idea of a left-right political spectrum.

People often complain about the inconsistencies of their opponents. There is a famous bumper sticker slogan that states “war is not pro-life”; added to that, there is a pro-life t-shirt with a graphic of a fetus inside a peace symbol that states “give peace a chance, or at least a nine month cease fire.” So there already is this perception that the usual political stances are inconsistent, but who is willing to make their own views consistent? That in essence is my research

question. “What groups are most likely to oppose both abortion and the death penalty?”

When I began this project I had thought that Catholics would be the most likely to oppose both abortion and the death penalty. Pope John Paul II expressed a consistent life ethic in his famous work *Evangelium Vitae* in which he condemned both abortion and the death penalty as violations against the sanctity of human life. Several other Catholic intellectuals and political activists, such as the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, Sr. Helen Prejean, Fr. Daniel Berrigan, and many in the Catholic Worker movement, have also called for consistency in respecting human life. However, as we shall see, being Catholic, while significant, is not the most significant indicator for advocating a consistent life ethic.

Like me, James D. Unnever, John P. Bartowski, and Francis T. Cullen thought that Catholicism would be a significant indicator for advocating a consistent life ethic when they conducted a study on opposition to both abortion and the death penalty[1]. One thing should be noted, however, in regard to this study: Unnever and the others only studied those that supported abolishing capital punishment and who opposed abortion under *any* circumstance. I took a more moderate approach in defining

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opposition to abortion and instead lumped together those who opposed abortion in *most* circumstances and those who opposed it in *all* circumstances under the label “pro-life.” Just from experience, I think this is a more accurate way to define the pro-life movement.

Contrary to their expectations, Unnever and the others found that there was no denominational correlation for supporting a consistent life ethic. The main religious factor that caused the respondents in their study to embrace a consistent life ethic was a general belief that God loves humanity. The way to measure this was by studying if respondents felt they had “a close relationship with God,” if they felt God’s “presence,” and if they felt joy in moments of worship. Unnever and the others had two dimensions, closeness to God and emphasis on the Love of God. Both closeness and emphasis on God’s love had a positive correlation to opposing both abortion and the death penalty. This makes sense, because both the pro-life and anti-death penalty positions are based on humanist (not necessarily secular humanist) philosophies that include the idea that human life is to be loved.

Other literature I reviewed involved the demographics of opposition to each practice. One was a study by Philip E. Secret in the *Journal of Black Studies*[2]. It tested for a racial difference in opposition to abortion during the 1970s and early 1980s. Secret found that blacks were less approving of abortion than whites, though this difference was small when socioeconomic factors were held constant. When observed in the early twenty-first century, it appears that race is no longer a significant determining factor in opposition to abortion. The Guttmacher Institute, which is the research arm of Planned Parenthood, showed similar results[3]. By running multiple regressions on data from eight surveys, the Guttmacher researchers showed that blacks were less approving of abortion than whites. This Guttmacher Institute article merely analyzed trends of the 1970s however.

Clyde Wilcox’s article on the 1988 General Social Survey showed that racial differences on abortion were decreasing: though it showed that black men were significantly more opposed to abortion than white men, it also showed that black women were significantly more supportive of legalized abortion than white women[4]. In regard to possible split on gender lines, however, a 2011 Gallup poll showed that gender was not a determining factor for either opposition to or support for legalized abortion. Instead, age was a determining factor: the youngest and the oldest respondents were the most likely to be pro-life, while middle-aged baby boomers were more likely to be pro-choice [5].

I could not find any twenty-first century study of race and abortion. The closest I could get was a Gallup poll that stated that black Democrats were less likely to be pro-choice than white Democrats--though 52% of black Democrats were still pro-choice [6]. While the racial difference has essentially disappeared, I am not sure whether or not to interpret this disappearance as the result of more black Americans becoming pro-choice or more white Americans becoming pro-life. From Gallup polls it appears that from the 1970s to the beginning of the twenty-first century, opposition to abortion in general has not been constant and currently the nation is virtually split on the issue [5].

Except when comparing black women to white women, there doesn't seem to be evidence that blacks are less likely to be pro-life than whites. Thus, because blacks are more likely to oppose the death penalty than whites, those blacks that do oppose abortion have a higher chance of also opposing the death penalty.

Attitudes toward the death penalty continue to be marked by significant racial differences. In a 1992 article in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Robert L. Young studied the effect of religion, race, and region on attitudes toward the death penalty[7]. What he theorized was that religious fundamentalism would correlate with support for the death penalty, while evangelism (a theology, not necessarily synonymous with fundamentalism) would correlate with opposition to the death penalty. The reason for this was that several prominent fundamentalist leaders had publicly supported capital punishment and thus, if they followed their leaders, fundamentalists would likely do the same. Evangelism however, because it involves trying to convert as many people to Christianity as possible, would correlate with opposition to the death penalty because execution puts the lost soul out of reach of the Gospel. Young also factored in race and region. He theorized that with the history of legal and illegal execution of blacks in the southern United States, black southerners would likely oppose the death penalty. Black religiosity is also to be considered a reason for opposition to the death penalty since it influences political attitudes in a more liberal direction, as was the case in the civil rights movement.

Young took data from the 1988 General Social Survey (the same survey used to examine black and white racial attitudes on abortion) and used the questions to create four different variables of religiosity: "fundamentalism," "evangelist," "reborn," and "devotionalism." "Fundamentalism" was measured by whether respondents interpreted the Bible literally and whether they attended a conservative denomination. "Evangelist" was measured by whether

respondents said that they have attempted to share the Gospel with others. "Reborn" was measured by whether the respondents called themselves "born again" and whether they had a moment in their life where they made a conscious decision to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior. "Devotionalism" was measured by the rate of church attendance, Bible reading, and prayer.

Using logistic regression, Young found that there was a conflict between fundamentalism and evangelism in attitudes towards the death penalty. Biblical literalism increased support for the death penalty while evangelism decreased support for it. Black evangelists were the least likely to support the death penalty. Since opposition to abortion is also tied (statistically, if not necessarily philosophically) to religious views, blacks' likelihood to hold a consistent life ethic could be tied to the black churches.

A 2011 Gallup poll on the death penalty revealed that non-whites are 28% more likely to oppose the death penalty than whites[8]. This imbalance has been consistent over the years, even though the majority of Americans support of the death penalty. On both abortion and the death penalty, it's still highly likely that blacks will take the consistently anti-legalized homicide view, though not significantly more so than whites in regard to abortion. Also, the correlation between evangelism and opposition to the death penalty could be connected to Unnever's theory that a belief in a loving God correlates with a consistent life ethic.

The readings I found did not appear to contradict each other. They agree that blacks are more likely to oppose the death penalty than whites, and they agree that while there was a time when blacks were more likely to oppose abortion than whites, that racial difference has, for whatever reason disappeared. Finally, they all seem to agree that religion in a broad sense has some effect on attitudes toward legalized homicide.

Now the information I used was from an ABC News/

Facebook poll on the 2008 presidential election. It should be noted that this poll could be misleading as far as opinions on the death penalty, since Gallup found a significant drop in support for the death penalty in 2011. However, I still think this study can be useful in gathering information on opposition to both abortion and the death penalty. I created a variable titled “consistentlife” that identifies people who answered that they believed both that abortion should be illegal in most or all circumstances and that the death penalty should be abolished. Obviously this variable was pretty small: only about 12% of the respondents were both pro-life and anti-death penalty. At first, I ran several logit regression models, factoring in two main religious labels: “catholic” and “evangelical” (the latter was a combination of Pentecostals, Baptists, and Southern Baptists). I also factored in gender, party, and ideology. The condition of being Catholic, however, was not a significant indicator, by itself, of being consistent life. Then I held race constant, factoring in black, Hispanic, and Asian Americans. When doing so, being Catholic did become significant, but what was more significant and more positively correlated with being consistent life was the condition of being black. Even when holding income and education constant, the condition of being black was positively correlated to being “consistentlife.” The condition of being female was also positively correlated to being a consistent lifer, though still not as much as being black. Another interesting result was that the condition of being a liberal was a significantly negative indicator for opposing both abortion and the death penalty while the condition of being a conservative was not a significant indicator at all.

I should also explain that my findings did not show that a majority of blacks were consistent lifers. After running a t-test on “consistentlife by black,” I found that, on average, 30% of blacks opposed both abortion and the death penalty compared to 10% of other races. Thus, while a majority of blacks in the study were not consistent lifers, blacks were more likely than other races to oppose both abortion and the

death penalty. The same was true for women and Catholics though their mean differences were much smaller.

(Please see graphs on pages 14-15)

There are number of possible explanations for the positive correlation between being black and being consistent life. One is that it’s more a matter of coincidence than a real connection. Blacks are very likely to oppose the death penalty, and not unlikely to oppose abortion, so some percentage of blacks will oppose both. In other words, the real reason for the correlation is that black pro-lifers are more likely to be anti-death penalty, just like black pro-choicers.

Another reason for the correlation could be the black churches’ influence. Black churches have a politically complex history of contributing to some liberal causes such as civil rights and abolition of the death penalty but also preaching a socially conservative message on issues such as abortion. Combined with this is the fact blacks do tend to be more religious than whites and have had a historic, cultural, and even political tie to the church. All of this rolled together could create within some black Christians, a desire to defy conventional political categories and see both abortion and the death penalty as an assault on the sanctity of human life.

Another explanation is a feeling among some blacks of being targeted by legalized homicide. There is a disproportionate number of black executions, according to the ACLU: 43% of the total executions since 1976 have been of blacks and 55% of those on death row today are black. Added to these statistics is the history of vigilante executions of blacks, particularly in the south. There are also a disproportionate number of abortions among blacks. Life Dynamics, a black pro-life group, studied where the majority of Planned Parenthood clinics were set up. After looking through the zip codes of every Planned Parenthood clinic, Life Dynamics found that the vast majority of them were placed in zip codes that had a
(continued on page 16)

ESSAYS - DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE CL MOVEMENT

. ttest consistentlife, by (female)

Two-sample t test with equal variances

```
-----+-----
Group |  Obs   Mean  Std. Err.  Std. Dev.  [95% Conf. Interval]
-----+-----
  0 |   530  .0943396  .0127087  .2925768  .0693739  .1193054
  1 |   612  .1486928  .0143935  .3560764  .120426  .1769596
-----+-----
combined | 1142  .1234676  .0097391  .3291173  .1043591  .1425761
-----+-----
diff |    -.0543532  .0194707          -.0925556  -.0161508
-----+-----
diff = mean(0) - mean(1)          t = -2.7915
Ho: diff = 0          degrees of freedom = 1140

Ha: diff < 0          Ha: diff != 0          Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.0027    Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0053    Pr(T > t) = 0.9973
```

. ttest consistentlife, by (catholic)

Two-sample t test with equal variances

```
-----+-----
Group |  Obs   Mean  Std. Err.  Std. Dev.  [95% Conf. Interval]
-----+-----
  0 |   873  .1134021  .0107378  .3172654  .0923271  .134477
  1 |   237  .1518987  .0233639  .3596823  .1058703  .1979271
-----+-----
combined | 1110  .1216216  .0098148  .3269956  .102364  .1408792
-----+-----
diff |    -.0384967  .0239338          -.0854573  .008464
-----+-----
diff = mean(0) - mean(1)          t = -1.6085
Ho: diff = 0          degrees of freedom = 1108

Ha: diff < 0          Ha: diff != 0          Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.0540    Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.1080    Pr(T > t) = 0.9460
```

. ttest consistentlife, by (black)

Two-sample t test with equal variances

```
-----+-----
Group |  Obs   Mean  Std. Err.  Std. Dev.  [95% Conf. Interval]
-----+-----
  0 |  1024  .1054688  .0096033  .3073066  .0866243  .1243132
  1 |   94   .3085106  .0478946  .4643552  .2134015  .4036198
-----+-----
combined | 1118  .1225403  .0098113  .3280555  .1032896  .1417909
-----+-----
diff |    -.2030419  .034845          -.271411  -.1346728
-----+-----
diff = mean(0) - mean(1)          t = -5.8270
Ho: diff = 0          degrees of freedom = 1116

Ha: diff < 0          Ha: diff != 0          Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.0000    Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000    Pr(T > t) = 1.0000
```


EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1) consistentlife	(2) consistentlife	(3) consistentlife
consistentlife				
	black	1.483*** (0.314)	1.536*** (0.322)	1.536*** (0.322)
	secular	0.702 (0.657)	0.743 (0.706)	0.743 (0.706)
	evangelical	0.129 (0.295)	0.111 (0.300)	0.111 (0.300)
	catholic	0.728*** (0.253)	0.659*** (0.253)	0.659*** (0.253)
	liberal	-0.780** (0.317)	-0.784** (0.323)	-0.784** (0.323)
	conservative	0.290 (0.241)	0.309 (0.241)	0.309 (0.241)
	democrat	0.171 (0.258)	0.0186 (0.260)	0.0186 (0.260)
	republican	0.197 (0.269)	0.0916 (0.273)	0.0916 (0.273)
	south	0.0218 (0.220)	0.0534 (0.222)	0.0534 (0.222)
	income	-0.107 (0.0719)	-0.0787 (0.0719)	-0.0787 (0.0719)
	education	0.00710 (0.106)	-0.00873 (0.109)	-0.00873 (0.109)
	hispanic	-0.932 (0.600)	-0.930 (0.615)	-0.930 (0.615)
	female	0.705*** (0.217)	0.705*** (0.217)	
	Constant	-2.081*** (0.454)	-2.460*** (0.463)	-2.460*** (0.463)
	Observations	953	959	959

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Robust standard errors in parentheses

disproportionately large minority population compared to the proportion of minorities in the state population. Added to this is the eugenicist history of Planned Parenthood in the early twentieth century, when the organization targeted blacks with birth control in order to reduce the black population. Now, I should say that although I am a consistent lifer, I am not one to believe that every politically incorrect statistic is due to some type of sinister motive. I recognize that correlation does not equal causation and therefore am not willing to say that either abortionists or executioners are secretly racist. I believe the homicide that they carry out is immoral and should be stopped, but I don't think they're racist. However, while the disproportionate representation of blacks among those executed and aborted might not be the result of conscious racism, it might cause among some blacks a feeling of being targeted and thus a reluctance to support either acts of legalized homicide.

On a philosophic level, it could be that blacks are turned off by the dehumanizing aspect of legalized homicide. Whenever society justifies killing certain human beings, the justification is almost always couched in dehumanizing language. Fetuses are referred to as "parasites," "trash," "tumors," "potential humans," and so forth. People on death row are often referred to as "monsters," and "beasts" (regardless of whether we know for sure they are guilty). Blacks have also historically been dehumanized by American law and custom, and by the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century that labeled them sub-human. It could be that some blacks recognize this dehumanization involved in abortion and the death penalty and reject it because it was once used to justify oppression against them.

Now, there are some flaws to my study. I would have loved to have interviewed black clergy and black churchgoers to see if there is a relation between black spirituality and the consistent life ethic. There also was no question in the ABC/Facebook poll about a general belief in a loving God (not that I would expect there to be.) This means I could not explore on the Unnever theory.

These findings have implications for consistent-life strategy. Consistent lifers should make an effort to make ideological allies within the black community, especially the black churches. Doing so would help build a demographic base for the consistent life movement, something that consistent lifers are terribly lacking. Black churches have a history of effective political activism, such as in the civil rights movement. Any type of audience that would be friendly toward the consistent life ethic would be good for consistent lifers.

Such an alliance also has implications for effecting the Democratic Party. Since blacks are the most solid voting bloc for the Democratic Party, a consistent life influence among blacks could cause an inner debate within the Democratic Party (though admittedly it has not not yet done so).

These findings also have implications for black studies in general. My study found that 30% of blacks do not see legalized homicide in the same way the conventional political spectrum frames it. They are willing, in essence though not nominally, to defy the left/right divide on legalized homicide and that is an important subject for future studies of black political thought.

A NO-WIN SCENARIO FOR CONSISTENT LIFERS?

by John Whitehead

History has a way of challenging your beliefs. Past human experience, with all its complexity, ambiguity, hard cases, and agonizing choices, can cast doubt on previous certainties about justice or right and wrong. Advocates of the consistent life ethic might find their beliefs challenged in this way by the extremely dark chapter of human experience recounted in *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (2010), by Yale historian Timothy Snyder. The history covered in this book raises disturbing questions about how to fight aggression and injustice. Both consistent lifers who adhere to pacifism and those who adhere to just war theory might find that these questions defy any easy answer.

Snyder's book follows the history of the region of Eastern Europe consisting of Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, and western Russia—which he dubs the “Bloodlands”—from roughly 1932 to 1953. During those years, the inhabitants of the Bloodlands suffered the brunt of both Stalin and Hitler's crimes, such as the massive Ukrainian famine of 1933 that was at least partly caused by Stalinist policies; the death at German hands of Soviet POWs during the Second World War; and, above all, the mass murder of almost six million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators in the Holocaust. What all these and many other atrocities have in common, as described by Snyder, is that the victims were not combatants in war but civilians or POWs. All told, Snyder reckons that a staggering 14 million people

were killed in the Bloodlands in this way during 1933-1945. The result of Snyder's research is a sickening catalogue of evils.

Much of the book deals with events during the Second World War, and the account of this period raises the most disturbing questions for consistent lifers and others concerned with avoiding violence and pursuing peace. Nazi Germany's attempted conquest of Europe is viewed by pacifists and just war advocates alike as a great evil. Where pacifists and just war theorists likely part company is on the proper response to the aggressor: a pacifist might argue that nonviolent resistance should have been attempted, while a just war theorist might argue that the use of military force was a legitimate response. Although it does not directly address this debate, *Bloodlands*, taken together with other accounts on the period, throws both views into doubt.

Nonviolent resistance was successfully used against the Nazi regime, perhaps most notably in German-occupied Denmark during 1940-45 and in Germany during the *Rosenstrasse* protests of 1943. The Danes used methods such as strikes, sabotage of property, and symbolic acts of defiance to impede the production of German arms and the transportation of German soldiers; to maintain some domestic autonomy, and to foster Danish national pride. Moreover, in 1943 the Danish resistance pulled off the astounding feat of smuggling almost all of Denmark's Jewish population to neutral Sweden, out of the Nazis'

reach. [1] In the *Rosenstrasse* protests of 1943, hundreds of German women in Berlin gathered at the building on Rosenstrasse 2-4, where their Jewish husbands were imprisoned, to demand the men's release. These protests eventually expanded to a thousand people and forced the release of 1,700 Jews. Fear of similar protests might have played a role in the Nazis' decision later that year to release French Jews married to Gentiles. [2]

The heroism of the Danish resistance and the *Rosenstrasse* protesters should not be underrated, and their achievements show that in some cases nonviolence can succeed even against an opponent as brutal as the Nazis. Nevertheless, would such resistance have succeeded in protecting the lives and freedom of the Bloodlands' inhabitants? This seems unlikely. Although they acted on behalf of Jews, the primary actors in both these nonviolent resistance movements were Danes and Germans, who were viewed favorably in Nazi ideology as fellow "Aryans." The Nazis were likely less willing to employ extreme violence against such opponents. This was not the case in the Bloodlands, whose inhabitants were often either the hated Jews or Slavic peoples who were viewed by the Nazis as "sub-humans."

The Nazi approach to the Bloodlands' people, in both theory and practice, is made vividly clear by Snyder. The intended policy toward the millions of Jews in the Bloodlands was clear by the end of 1941, at the latest: total extermination. [3] The policy toward Slavs was only marginally better. The Nazis' "Hunger Plan" envisioned that the inhabitants of the Soviet Union would produce food for the German occupiers but be left with little for themselves, with millions of deaths from starvation being the result. Over the long term, the Slavs of the European portion of the USSR would die off, be deported to Asia, or serve as slaves for future generations of German colonists. [4] Although these barbaric plans were never fully realized in practice, Snyder recounts how close the Germans came. Millions of Jews died by bullets or gas; millions of Soviet POWs and civilians were starved to death; hundreds of thousands of Slavs were killed

in reprisals; and millions were enslaved. [5] In such an environment, could a sufficient number of people have survived and remained committed to a nonviolent resistance movement?

This question is never directly addressed by Snyder, but his work offers reasons to doubt the prospects for nonviolent resistance. One disturbing fact mentioned in *Bloodlands* is that if Soviet guerrilla fighters prevented Belarusian peasants from giving food to the German occupiers, the Germans would often kill the peasants in retaliation. [6] In this case, the failure to give material support to the occupiers was the result of coercion by the guerrillas, but what if the peasants opted to deny food or other supplies to the Germans as an act of voluntary nonviolent resistance? Would the German response have been any less savage? One cannot know for certain, but I am skeptical. If such acts of nonviolent non-cooperation with the Nazis carried a death sentence, not many would be likely to engage in them (although in fairness Snyder also notes that German control over Soviet farms and food supplies was never complete, so perhaps some evasion was possible). [7] Fleeing to the woods or swamps to join the violent resistance of guerrilla bands might actually have been safer in such a situation.

If the Nazi occupation of the Bloodlands presents problems for pacifists, however, it also presents problems for just war theorists. Nazi crimes, while ample, are only part of *Bloodlands*: the remainder recounts Stalinist crimes, including many during World War II. The descriptions of these crimes raise serious questions about the justice of the war against Nazi Germany. To qualify as a "just war," a war effort must not only be waged in a just cause—which stopping the Nazis certainly was—and as a last resort—which the Soviet war effort against the Nazis might well have been—but must also adhere to other standards. For example, the war effort must distinguish between combatants and civilians and not target the latter. The Soviet war effort did not meet this just war standard (also, although this topic was beyond Snyder's scope, the Anglo-American war effort in Western Europe

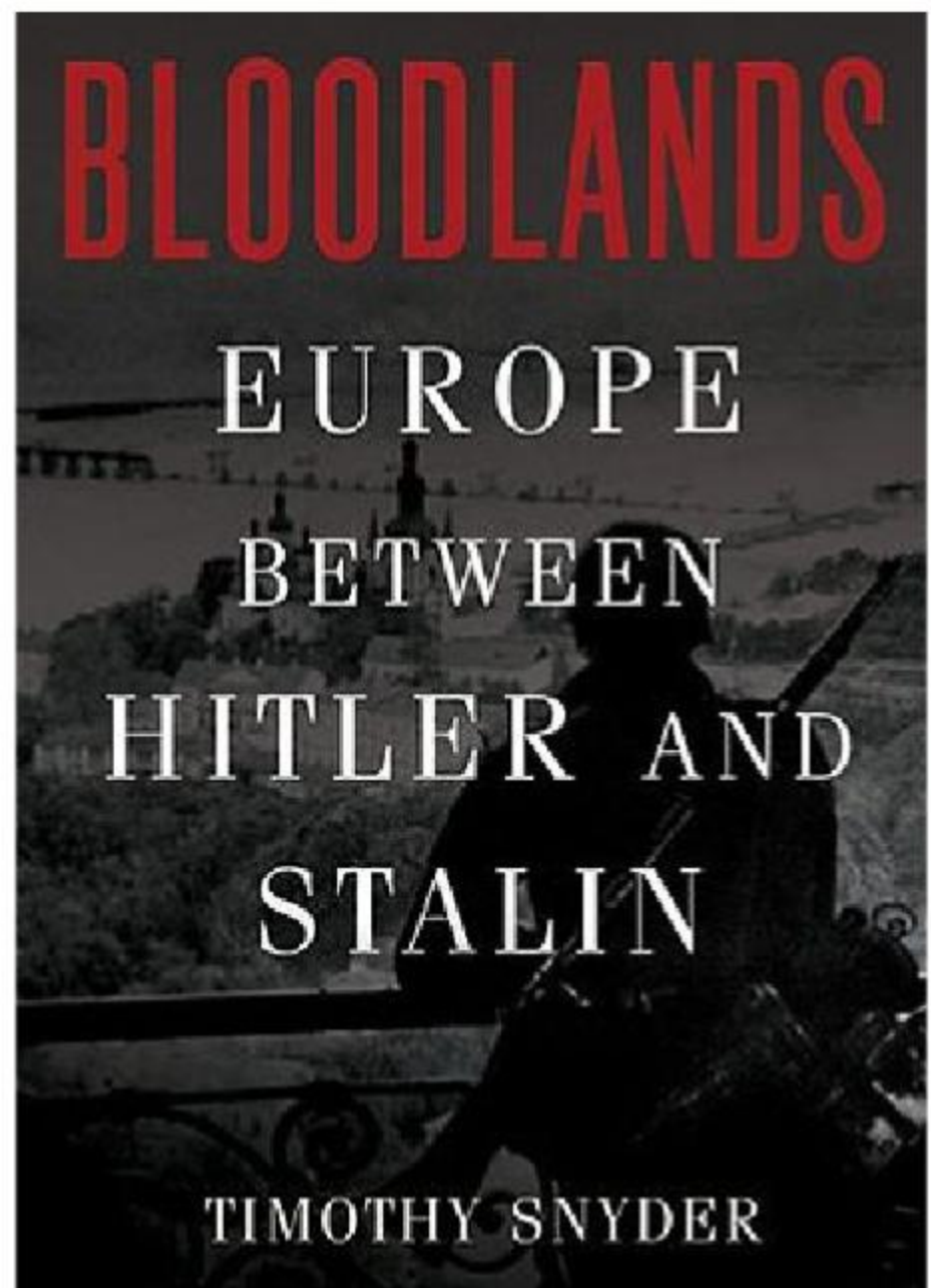
and in the Pacific theater violated the principle of civilian immunity as well).

During the course of the war, the Soviets exacted revenge of various kinds on enemies real and perceived. Ethnic minorities within the Soviet Union—Balkars, Chechens, Finns, Ingush, Kalmyks, Tatars, and others, along with a large number of ethnic Germans—who were believed to be disloyal were deported from their homes to Central Asia and Siberia.[8] In the case of the Chechens, Ingush, and Tatars, tens of thousands died during and after the deportation. Those Chechens and Ingush who could not or would not move were simply killed on the spot, in massacres similar to the Nazis' crimes. [9] Meanwhile, as the Soviet Army advanced westward through Eastern Europe, German civilians were sometimes killed and German women suffered rape by Soviet soldiers on a massive scale. [10]

Another standard sometimes championed by just war theorists that was violated by the Soviet war effort was that of "right intention." One way of characterizing this standard is that it requires a participant in a war to be genuinely pursuing the just cause of the war and not some other, unjustifiable cause. The fact that the Soviets established a tyrannical rule of their own in the Eastern European countries liberated from Nazi rule indicates that right intention was lacking. A particularly striking incident covered by Snyder is the behavior of the Soviets toward the Polish resistance during the latter's 1944 uprising in Warsaw against the Germans. Despite the Soviets encouraging an uprising and promising assistance to the Poles, the Soviet Army outside Warsaw did not intervene on behalf of the resistance, which was eventually crushed by the Germans. This failure to intervene could be attributed to military necessity—German resistance was formidable—but the Soviets not only refrained from intervening but blocked the other Allied forces from providing aid to the resistance. [11] One interpretation of these actions, which Snyder endorses, is that the Soviet regime was deliberately leading the Polish resistance into a futile revolt in order to decimate the resistance and remove potential

opponents to the pro-Soviet Polish government the Soviets would later install. To betray a supposed ally to the enemy in order to conquer that ally later is the epitome of "wrong intention."

Granted, Soviet rule in Eastern Europe, while repressive, never reached the genocidal scale of Nazi rule. Moreover, the number of people killed and brutalized by the deportations of minorities and the crimes against German civilians was smaller than the number killed by Nazi policies of mass murder. These arguments might be persuasive according to a utilitarian ethical code that is concerned only with results, but just war theory is not such a code. From a just war perspective, justice in a conflict is not simply a matter of calculating who created a higher body count. According to just war principles, civilians should not be targeted in war and a war should be waged with right intention; the Soviet war effort violated this principle.



The conflict recounted in *Bloodlands* leaves the consistent-life reader with a problem, then. Nonviolence seems unlikely to have prevailed against Nazi Germany, at least in Eastern Europe, yet the violence that was used by the Soviets and the other Allies to defeat Germany cannot be considered wholly justified, either. What should either a pacifist or just-war-endorsing consistent lifer make of such a situation, in which neither nonviolence nor violence seems to offer an adequate response to extreme injustice? Does one abandon principle and embrace a utilitarian ethic? Does one accept the injustice, with all the suffering and loss of life involved? Does some other option exist?

Hard cases, as the saying goes, make bad law, and the Second World War—one of the hardest of cases—should not necessarily determine general principles about how to handle conflict. Consistent lifers committed to either the pacifist or just war perspective need not lose confidence. Both philosophies can provide useful critiques of contemporary conflicts. Nevertheless, hard cases should be faced and considered. This is what *Bloodlands* and other accounts of this terrifying period in human history force us to do. The questions raised by *Bloodlands* are disturbing, but well worth pondering.

[1] Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 207-231

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 236-238.

[3] Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), pp. 187-189, 197-199, 213-215.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 159-163, 166-175.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 244, 411.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 238.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 168.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 207, 330.

[9] Naimark, Norman M., *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., USA: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 96-98, 102-103.

[10] Snyder, *Bloodlands*, pp. 316-319.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 305-307.

COMPARING EVILS AND CONDEMNING THEM BOTH

by Nicholas Neal

In the 142nd episode of *Life Report*, a pro-life podcast hosted by Josh Brahm, Scott Klusendorf, a famous pro-life intellectual and president of the Life Training Institute, stated “I would like to take the seamless garment and use it on my car to dust off the wax. It is a horrible, horrible way--and I’m not saying that as my own outside-the-[Catholic]-Church position. This is what leading Catholic thinkers have said about it. It has justified the killing of millions of unborn children and needs to be gotten rid of.”

Now, this is not the only time that Scott has criticized the consistent life ethic. He has also stated “The so-called consistent life ethic, though well-intentioned, has damaged the pro-life cause. Cardinal [Bernardin] set us back decades with his framing of it and, more damaging, it fails to distinguish between contingent evils and absolute ones. As a result, liberal Democrats who support absolute evils like abortion get a pass because they promise to oppose contingent ones like war.”

The purpose of this response to Klusendorf is not to discourage people from listening to Josh Brahm’s show. I think it’s an excellent resource for pro-life news and arguments for unborn rights. I don’t even want to discourage people from reading Scott Klusendorf’s work on unborn rights. What I will argue against is a) that the consistent life ethic is an excuse for supporting pro-choice Democrats, b) that

there is no moral similarity between different acts of legalized homicide, and c) that consistent lifers should be purged from the pro-life movement.

First, let me list my pro-life credentials, because Scott often insinuates that advocates of the consistent life ethic are somehow “fake pro-lifers.” I’ve been opposed to abortion ever since I was in 3rd grade, when I first heard about what abortion was. In high school, I read *Pro-life Answers to Pro-choice Arguments* by Randy Alcorn, which cemented my pro-life views and even encouraged me to present the case for fetal humanity in my high school debate class. In college, I was a founding member of our campus pro-life group. As part of that group, I have participated in forms of activism such as sidewalk chalking to raise awareness about abortion, setting up a graveyard of the innocents, and raising money for pro-life pregnancy centers. I attended the March for Life, which protests *Roe v. Wade*, twice and have argued for unborn rights in my political science classes, which wasn’t a popular thing to do on my feminist-dominated campus. On a philosophical level, I support full legal protection for the unborn, including unborn children who were conceived as the result of rape or incest. So when Scott claims that I “[justify] the killing of millions of unborn children” simply by opposing both war and capital punishment and framing that opposition within the context of my pro-life beliefs, I am annoyed, to say the very least.

In the past, I've responded to David Pakman's criticism of the consistent life ethic, and it should be noted that Pakman was attacking the consistent life ethic from a Left/liberal perspective. In other words, Scott is wrong in thinking that Left/liberals automatically like what we consistent lifers have to say and see us as tools to trick pro-lifers into voting for pro-choice politicians. Now, I am responding to the conservative criticism of the consistent life ethic.

In regard to voting strategy, because few politicians hold our beliefs, consistent lifers have not really developed much of a voting strategy. For conservatives and liberals, voting is far more easy because there are a good number of politicians who hold their views. This doesn't make the consistent life ethic wrong, just politically powerless. So, I'm not going to argue voting strategy, because I admittedly don't have one. However, I will argue against Scott's faulty logic, according to which if you oppose the inconsistencies of the Republicans you therefore support the inconsistencies of the Democrats. This is a non sequitur: what the consistent life ethic supports is opposition to all forms of legalized homicide that are being advocated by the Left and Right.

For example, in the Mexican state of San Luis Potosi, they passed a personhood amendment that both prohibited abortion and abolished the death penalty[1]. By prohibiting the death penalty, Mexico did not make its prohibition of abortion void. It prohibited *both*. Scott should be able to understand the simple meaning of *both*.

I will now address a more thorny philosophic issue, comparing evils. Scott also makes another non sequitur by stating that opposition to all these forms of legalized homicide means that we give all of them equal priority and equal moral weight. This is not correct, as I will show.

Let us say we lived in a world where it was legal to rape very young children. This would be a grave moral evil that people of good will should work to abolish. However, let us also say that in this world the rape of older people was illegal and that perpetrators of this illegal variety of rape were punished with a "rape penalty," in which the state rapes the rapist—a penalty

that I would hope Scott is willing to concede would go beyond the moral limit of punishment. I would be perfectly willing to admit that the legalized rape of young children is worse than the "rape penalty." However, that does not mean that I could not oppose both or that I could not consider both to have some form of moral similarity and oppose both on the same grounds. For example, a common denominator of these two evils is that they both have more moral alternatives. I will get further into moral similarities between acts of homicide later, but the point is that opposing two evils based on a similar ethic is not to say that the two evils are exactly the same or of equal gravity.

Scott brings up the Catholic doctrine about contingent evils vs. intrinsic evils. This is supposed to be a death blow to consistent lifers since the consistent life ethic originated out of Catholicism and many consistent lifers are Catholic. However, what Scott never addresses is what are the evils of war and the death penalty contingent on? Under what circumstances has the Church stated such practices are evil? Well, an inconvenient fact that Scott often overlooks is that Pope John Paul II condemned the Iraq War, as well as the very concept of preventative war, in no uncertain terms[2]. He did so not because he was a pacifist, but because he recognized that attacking countries based on suspicion and taking more lives than were lost in 9/11 violates just war tenets that state that wars have to be defensive and that the casualties have to be proportional to the crime. Pope John Paul II also condemned the death penalty in *Evangelium Vitae*, a document beloved by pro-life Catholics, stating

It is clear that, for these purposes to be achieved, *the nature and extent of the punishment* must be carefully evaluated and decided upon, and ought not go to the extreme of executing the offender except in cases of absolute necessity: in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society. Today however, as a result of steady improvements in the organization of the penal system, such cases are very rare, if not practically non-existent. [3]"

When the Pope says that the one condition justifying the death penalty is practically non-existent in the developed world, that 's a pretty good indicator that the death penalty in a developed nation such as America goes beyond the moral limits of punishment. So the consistent life

ethic is not merely some opinion held by liberal dissenters. Pope John Paul II may not have held all these acts of homicide to be morally equal, but he still held all of them to be immoral. (By the way, I would like to see Scott argue that Pope John Paul II “set us back decades” in the struggle for unborn rights.)

However, that’s Catholic theology. I happen to be a Protestant. Is there a non-denominational rationale for the consistent life ethic? In my essay in the first issue of *Life Matters Journal*, “What is The Consistent Life Ethic?” I explain in more thorough detail the areas of similarity between four forms of legalized homicide: abortion, war, capital punishment, and euthanasia. I’ll be briefer here and discuss how these similarities apply to the forms of legalized homicide that conservatives favor, war and capital punishment.

The first similarity is that in most circumstances they are non-defensive. An example of a non-defensive war would again be the Iraq War, in which, on the basis of suspicion, we attacked a country that had not attacked us. It is one thing to repel an invasion. It is another thing altogether to bomb and invade a country based on what we think they will do in the future. (As if we have not learned from our mistakes, the same arguments are currently being used for bombing Iran.) Suspicion is not defense. While there are some cases where responding with force is legitimately defensive, there are also some cases where abortion is defensive (to save the life of the mother being the only case I would accept). That does not mean one has a default support for such homicide. The death penalty is also not defensive. An imprisoned criminal is detained perfectly well and is hardly a threat to society any longer.

The second similarity is that there are non-homicidal alternatives. For war there is diplomacy, such as Ronald Reagan’s diplomatic efforts with a far more dangerous nuclear power than Iran, the Soviet Union. There is also a non-homicidal alternative to the death penalty as well: life imprisonment is a harsh punishment that guarantees the criminal cannot harm society again.

Finally, both of these forms of homicide threaten innocent life. Let’s say that Jack attacks Phil, Phil repels him, and Jack runs into a crowd of people. Is Phil justified in spraying the crowd with a machine gun in order

to kill Jack, the aggressor? Is he justified in bombing the general area of the crowd, hoping not to hit anyone but Jack? The answer is no, and that answer should apply to one human being such as Phil or a bunch of human beings such as Phil that happen to call themselves “the state.” If any country ever launched an invasion of the United States and caused the deaths of innocent civilians, even accidentally, we would not accept it as a morally neutral act. It should also be noted that war has also killed the unborn, causing pregnant women to miscarry and causing severe fetal deformities in the aftermath of Hiroshima. The death penalty has also threatened the innocent--since 1973, there have been over 130 exonerations of people on death row--and as long as it is applied by flawed human judges it will continue to threaten the innocent.[4] Again, this doesn’t make all these acts of homicide ethically the same as abortion but it does give the different legal forms of homicide enough similarity to oppose them on the same ethical grounds.

Turning to my last point, Scott is making an idiotic move in expelling consistent lifers from the pro-life movement. By arguing that in order to be pro-life you must not oppose other forms of legalized homicide, he narrows the movement--especially by making support for an unpopular war a requirement for being in the movement. While I disagree with Scott, I have never called for him to be expelled from the pro-life movement. I am even willing to cite Randy Alcorn as an intellectual influence of mine, even though he is not a consistent lifer. Either way, I’ve been concerned for unborn rights nearly all my life and I refused to be excommunicated from my own movement. The same goes for other consistent lifers.

[1] Ertelt, Steven, “Mexico Supreme Court Upholds Second State Abortion Ban Law,” LifeNews.com.

<http://www.lifenews.com/2011/09/30/mexico-supreme-court-upholds-second-state-abortion-ban-law/>

[2] Associated Press, “Vatican Strongly Opposes Iraq War.” <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,80875,00.html>

[3] Pope John Paul II, “*Evangelium Vitae*.” <http://www.ewtn.com/library/encyc/jp2evang.htm>

[4] Death Penalty Information Center, “Facts about the Death Penalty.” <http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/documents/FactSheet.pdf>

PRO-LIFE MEDICINE

HOW ONE PROFESSION COULD CHANGE ABORTION AS HEALTHCARE

by Caroline Pilgrim



Photo by George Ruiz, some rights reserved.

I am in the training grounds of the front lines of the abortion holocaust. Abortions happen in our healthcare system every 23 seconds. I am a Physician Assistant student. In less than two years I will have the legal authority to prescribe emergency contraception, refer to abortionist, and depending on the evolution of our legal system, perform surgical abortions. By the time I become a certified PA, there will be over 100,000 of us, making us the fastest growing healthcare profession in the U.S. PAs in the United States practicing in all areas of medicine so what are we learning about life, about preborns, about ethics?

I am here to report that the future is not bright but it

is not as bleak as perhaps it once was. PAs, in some online polls, are more pro-life than not. Many refuse to perform or refer abortions under any circumstances, some refuse to prescribe certain birth control medications because of the reality that life begins at conception. First, some good news about our education: we learn how to critique research. We are in a time of explosive research about the detriment abortion has psychologically and physiologically. There is a growing body of research that cannot be ignored by students and practitioners trained to critique research. Secondly: *we know* that a fetus is a baby. We are trained to be “non-judgmental” all while learning the pharmacological effects that drugs have on “the baby.” We know

what life is, we see it, and we cannot ignore these that these tiny bodies are people. The humanity of the fetus is undeniable in our education. This is all good news but in the midst of these positive changes, there is apathy. This generation of healthcare providers have grown up with the “silent holocaust” of abortion. We have been trained to ignore it; we have been trained culturally that “it’s not my business.” If it wasn’t our business before we were healthcare providers, it shouldn’t be our business now that we are. We have learned to “trust the experts” who say, for example, that a copper IUD does not in fact cause a “scientific abortion” because the embryo hasn’t implanted. Or, we have learned that “population control” is foundational in the third-world community’s healthcare woes. We trust that abortions are completely safe most of the time like most medical procedures. We have learned that the cure for depression is medication. We want to “respect” all our patients, authorities, and state and national laws.

But this battle isn’t over. Life hasn’t lost and hasn’t been forgotten. There are the exceptions to the apathetic majority. There is a generation of very young and very passionate Pro-life professionals who are choosing to love all their patients—including their preborn patients. There is a growing culture of life, a growing movement of Pro-life OB/GYN practices, and a shrinking number of new surgeons willing to dismember fetuses. And it is my goal that my profession, just as it has led the way in serving the underserved, becomes the profession that protects life from that moment of conception to that moment of natural death.

Caroline Pilgrim is a physician assistant student at Jefferson College of Health Sciences, who will graduate with the class of 2013.



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submitted by Catherine O’Mara



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A frigid rain falls over Washington D.C. and drenches a young teenager clenching a sign in their trembling hands that reads, “I am the pro-life generation.” This is the image of a typical member of Teens for Life, a prolife group at Lutheran High School of St. Charles County. Students in Teens for Life are used to putting themselves in uncomfortable situations in order to support the cause they all fight for: to preserve the sanctity of life. Teens for Life was formed in the mid 90’s by a woman named Renee Gibbs and a Lutheran High student, and is now presided over by Reverend Jonathan Clausing. With each passing year, the group grows in number and works toward informing their school and community about pro-life issues as well as helping other prolife organizations. Members frequently volunteer at maternity shelters such as Our Lady’s Inn and The Sparrow’s Nest Maternity Home. From sorting donations to mowing the lawn, these students do what they can to assist these organizations that support pregnant and parenting women

in crisis situations. In order to raise donations for The Sparrow’s Nest and ThriVe St. Louis Mobile Medical Center, Teens for Life had to come up with some creative ideas. One such idea was to organize a pro-life dance for seventh and eighth graders in the area. Proceeds from ticket sales and other items sold at the dance were donated to a prolife organization. Members have also sold baked goods and conducted other small events to raise to raise money. Blood drives are held at the school and the money is then given to The Sparrow’s Nest Maternity Home.

This group reaches beyond the community, though, to show their pro-life support. Each year, Teens for Life flies to Washington D.C. to stand up and speak out against abortion in the annual March for Life. This is the highlight of the year. Many of the students come back with a better understanding of what they are fighting for and with more knowledge concerning pro-life issues. Though the march is the product of a tragic decision, many of the teens come

“MAKE IT HISTORY” CAMPAIGN - TEENS FOR LIFE AT LHS OF ST. CHARLES COUNTY

back home with a fired up attitude to continue working towards abolishing abortion. They are heartened to know that they are not alone in this endeavor and that they can make a difference.

Teens for Life is the stone that starts the ripples in a still pond. Members of this group understand that in order to spark a change they need to start in their school and reach out from there. So when one of their fellow students became pregnant, they were not about to abandon her. They were there to offer their support and to encourage her to keep her child and not turn to abortion. In preparation for the child's arrival, the group came together and organized a baby shower for the mother. Within the community, this dedicated group of teens does what it can to ease the burden of mothers in crisis pregnancies. Being pro-life is not just about persuading someone to choose life for their child; it is about caring for the life of the mother as well and preserving all life in general. Once the mother has the baby, her worries are not over. She will still need supplies and emotional support. Teens for Life offers all kinds of support to those individuals in need.

Part of the battle to promote pro-life attitudes in the community is to inform them of pro-life issues and alternatives to abortion, and to break through the growing problem of apathy. At Lutheran High School, Teens for Life members are given many opportunities to share their knowledge with the rest of the school and community. Almost every other week, Teens for Life holds meetings in which students can sit in and listen to a student speaker present on a different pro-life topic. Also, the group as a whole is given a few times a year to present a pro-life message in front of the entire school in which they often discuss, among other topics, abortion, suicide, euthanasia, and what can be done to prevent such things. Teens for Life hosts an event once a year called Teens Talk to Teens in which local eighth graders are invited to learn about safe sex, abstinence, and preserving life. This evening is led almost entirely by teens involved in Teens for Life which helps ease a little bit of the unease surrounding these uncomfortable topics. It serves to educate these youth and prepare

them for challenges they may face in the future.

The fight to end abortion starts with groups such as Teens for Life. The pro-life message needs to start at home and bleed out into the community and as far as Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. There is no such thing as being too old or too young to stand up for the rights of the unborn. It is important that the younger generation learns to adopt these principles. The right to life is something that everyone of every walk of life and of any faith can embrace. This is not solely a religious issue, or ethnic issue, this is humanity's issue. For much too long has the womb been a warzone. It is time to save the future generation that is being exterminated, bit by bit, with every abortion. Groups like Teens for Life refuse to stay silent in the face of a nation tainted with apathy. Students around the world inspire hope for the future as they fight to save a generation that has been considered untimely or unwanted. If there is one thing the Teens for Life group wants others to know, it is that there is always another option. Abortion and suicide are not the only choices a person can make. Perhaps most importantly, teens in crisis situations need to know they are not alone. There are groups all across the nation dedicated to helping young people in desperate circumstances. Teens for Life is part of the pro-life generation, and together, groups such as this can truly make a difference in society.

Catherine O'Mara is a member of Teens for Life at Lutheran High School of St. Charles County, and loves working for the pro-life cause.

Want to have **your group featured** in an upcoming issue of Life Matters Journal in the Make it History Campaign?

Write up a *2-5 page report* on a year of your work, or one event, and let us know what's been fruitful on your campus, and what could be improved.

Send to lifemattersjournal@gmail.com!

UNBORN CHILD

by Rose Evans

Rocked in the dark
the inch long man
swims in the warm.

Love watches him,
love once himself
small and unborn.

No sun for him
hard hands invade
his little room.

No breath of air
sharp blades destroy
him in the womb.

But not alone
his brother, lord,
companion, friend,

stays by his side,
and with him faces death,
shares his end.

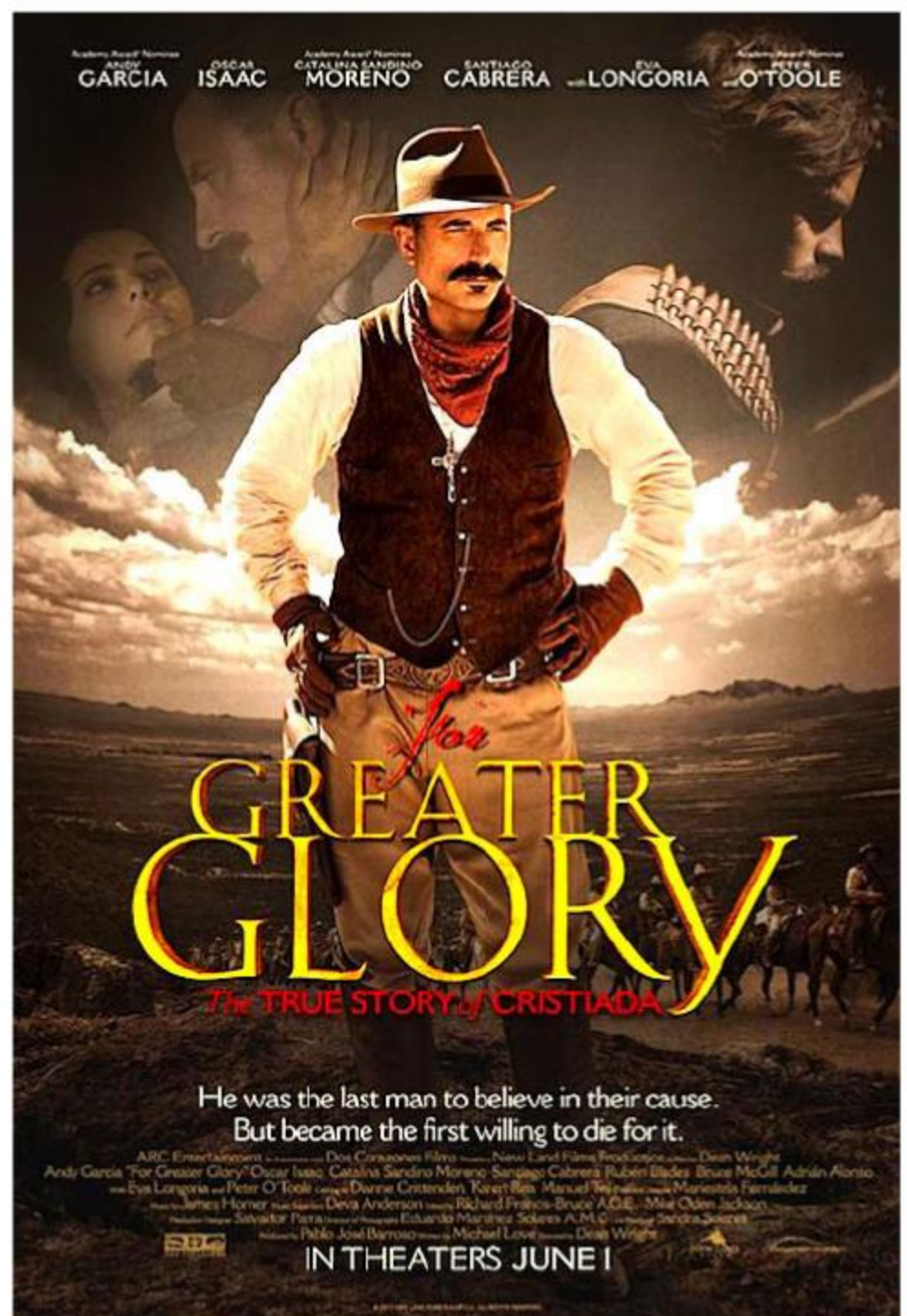
*Rose Evans is a long-time Consistent Life member and the former editor of
Harmony, the magazine of Consistent Life.*

MEDIA REVIEWS AND CONSISTENT LIFE

"FOR GREATER GLORY" CONTRASTS WAR & NON-VIOLENT ACTION *by Kyle & Aimee Murphy*

For Greater Glory, formerly titled *Cristiada*, is a recent film set during the Cristeros War in Mexico. In the 1920s, the Mexican government led by President Elias Calles began to persecute the Catholic Church in Mexico, forbidding public Catholic worship. When the Catholic clergy and faithful continued to practice their faith, government forces destroyed churches and executed many of the faithful.

For Greater Glory is unabashedly pro-Catholic, showing the heroic resistance of Mexican Catholics both militarily and in martyrdom. Unlike most movies termed as Catholic movies, *For Greater Glory* is actually fairly well made. The Mexican locations show well on film, and most scenes are directed well. While many production aspects are high, the dialogue does fall short in some places. In addition, my major critique of the movie is the acting of Andy Garcia, who plays Enrique Gorostieta. His dialogue



dialogue is delivered with very little emotion behind it, and he seems uncomfortable in most scenes he plays. On the other hand, Mauricio Kuri plays the young Jose quite adeptly, and redeems the film and brings it to life.

The question raised during the movie is that of the appropriate resistance to take against the anti-Catholic government. The story mainly follows the Cristeros, those who consider themselves to be soldiers for Christ and the Church and who take up arms against Calles and his soldiers. Despite the fact that much of the film focuses on their rebellion, several other characters do disagree and argue for non-violent resistance through diplomacy, the law, and martyrdom.

While *For Greater Glory* brings up this moral question of whether armed resistance is an appropriate response to government suppression of liberty and faith, it does not delve deeply into the question. The movie does not take an official stance on the question of violent resistance, but the amount of screen time devoted to the war waged by the Cristeros does seem to glorify their armed conflict. The fact that must be noted is that the Catholic Church beatified and canonized only those who were strong in the non-violent conflict, or those who had repented of their action in armed or violent conflicts. At the end of the credits, there are vignettes of the holy martyrs of the Church, and it is evinced through the Church's wisdom that the most moral route to take lay in the non-violent path. As it shows, strength in spirit and faith in God was the most valuable asset in the conflict, as Aimee's great-uncle Saint Cristobal Magallanes Jara said before his death at the hands of the Calles regime, "May my blood serve to unite my Mexican brethren." The martyrdom of the faithful, in junction with a strong armed conflict seemed to work together; but which served unity better? In the end, *For Greater Glory* is worth seeing for gaining knowledge and perspective on a little-known conflict, as well as a beautiful piece on faith, death, and the struggle for liberty.



SOME NIGHTS



FUN'S "SOME NIGHTS" BRINGS MORALITY TO THE TABLE

by Anthony Bedoy

Rarely do I come across a band that shocks me with their ability to stand out. Many artists strive for that recognizable voice or style that will carry them down in stardom. While Fun hasn't created its name in stardom just yet, this New York based alternative rock band has definitely set its sights on an even greater goal than just popularity: that goal is to send a message. The most recent single to rock the radios and Youtube pages lately has been "Some Nights". This song, while catchy and harmonious in sound, is also thought provoking and heart wrenching. Oftentimes I find myself choked up while I sing along like a young pre-teen girl. The music video especially adds to the effect and takes

the viewer/listener for an amazing journey to have them questioning what they stand for.

The introduction to the video seems to show a man contemplating the past; the war he fought in, the woman he fell in love with, and the days and nights he spent questioning his morality. All of this can be interpreted in many different ways, but it seems like the alignment with the opening line of the song portrays a tension inside of the so-called main character of the video. Interestingly enough, the band chooses to sing together in many parts, especially the chorus, showing the common feeling men and women experience regarding morality and choice. "Some nights, I stay up cashing in my bad luck, Some nights, I call it a draw..."

Our video continues showing symbols of hope, pain, destruction, patriotic glory, and most of all, the faces of young men unsure of their own future. As the lead singer makes his final words of the first chorus, he seems to be giving a speech to a ragged bunch of soldiers that appear in laden spirits. Again and again, the beats and the words to the song show soldiers and young boys looking unsure about their lives, hoping for some direction from the speaker (our lead singer). I thoroughly enjoy the structure of the speaker/audience as it shows the willingness of the men to listen, possibly hoping for a leader to give them courage, and the boldness of the speaker (singer) to confess that in reality he is oftentimes not sure of himself.



My favorite part of the song and the video is when the soldier washing his face reminisces upon all the things he left behind to fight for something he is not sure of. It speaks to the wars going on around our world today: "So this is it? I sold my soul for this? Washed my hands of that for this? I miss my mom and dad for this?... Ten years of this, I'm not sure if anybody understands...Who [...] wants to die alone all dried up in the desert sun?" I find this eerily relevant to the present, past, and most importantly the future regarding willingness and morality. How can one morally stand by their action if they feel their will has been forced upon them? I feel Fun is making an amazing statement regarding the current state of war, life, and most importantly self-responsibility for morals. The song then goes on to a bit more of the same imagery as before but then it goes on to a different point, that seems almost a bit disconnected from the rest of the song. The stanza includes the idea of the lead singer's heart as he feels pain for his sister and "the con that she calls love". He then recalls his nephew and as if he was speaking to him directly says, "Man, you wouldn't believe the most amazing things that can come from... Some terrible lies..." I did some research and found an amazing response from the lead singer's sister:

"Nate's heart was breaking for his sister because she went through a terrible divorce. And though she was "conned" into thinking her husband was a wonderful guy. She still got an amazing little boy out of the marriage. Hence why he wrote, "Man you wouldn't believe the most amazing things, can come from some terrible lies." I know this because I am his sister."

-Libbie Ruess

This then brings us to the end of the video, which to me feels less climactic than the reality of the song. We see a woman reading a letter but we don't know the exact contents of it. Then a tear is shed while a final gunshot is fired. To me, this feels a bit cliché and to be honest, my heart is much more connected to the reality of Nate's sister and the responsibility she took of living with the pain and anguish built upon a lie.

Seeing that although she might have been blind sided (much like the men and women forced into wars without consent or just cause), Libbie recognized her own responsibility to care for and love her son, and the goodness that can come from a bad situation.

What do you think of responsibility and morality? Are we responsible for every action we make, even if we are not completely aware of every aspect of a situation? Do men and women engaged as soldiers or civilians in war bear the burden of blame, does it lie with political powers, or is it a mix of both? And finally, do you feel Fun is doing an accurate portrayal of a timeless struggle between responsibility, morality, and the presence of goodness that can come from bad situations?

Fun's video for their song "Some Nights" can be found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQkBeOisNM0>

A JUST DEFENSE OF SELF

by *Aimee Murphy*



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I promised this issue that I would expound a little greater upon the theory of just self-defense and what it means to the consistent life ethic, and the Life Matters Journal. While we've certainly been attacked on all sides, I was a little surprised that pacifists objected to my theory of just defense. That being said, much of this moral problem is exceedingly complex – but I would argue that the principle is simple: do not make aggressive actions of a violent nature towards any human being.

In the Life Matters Journal slogan, it came out something like this: “Making unjust violence a thing of the past through education and discourse.” I would make the firm claim that any and all aggressive violent action is unjust, and only that action used to defend against aggressive violence would be truly just. There are, of course, caveats in all of this to prevent an aggressive action from being regarded as a just defensive action, which is what makes this whole ethical conversation much more complex than simple pacifism or a laissez-faire ethics, and more

involved than the question of just defense would show on the surface.

If we borrow from Catholicism's Just War Theory (expounded upon and adopted by people of many faiths, however), we can see that there are many requirements in considering whether engaging in a war would be just. These prerequisites include proper and just authority of the defending nation, proportionality of action, certainty of grave damage by the aggressor, serious prospects of success, right intention of the defender, and it must be used as a last resort. While I might be tempted to agree with many pacifists who claim that “the only reason violence is ever necessary is when a nonviolent action has not yet been discovered,” I would say that in cases of personal self-defense, there may even be what would objectively be qualified as violent action necessary to repel an aggressor in cases of immediate danger.

Let us say, for example, that I am being attacked by a violent aggressor, who has jumped me and

threatened to rape me or kill me – I would propose that reacting with proper self-defense tactics (biting, hitting, struggling against the aggressor) would not only be just, but perhaps even merciful. For this attacker to act unjustly in aggression towards me would, I say, be to commit a sin against the life and liberty of my own self; and to prevent the ultimate act of sin from occurring would, I believe, be an act of mercy as long as it follows the prerequisites lined out in Just War Theory.

To follow the story further, just authority would be followed if I, as the defender, were to fight off an aggressor, or yell for “Help!” (or for that matter, even look in need of help) and a bystander were to fend off the attacker. Proportionality would be only to fend off an aggressor, not to revert to become the aggressor and intentionally cause harm out of vengeance; this basic rule of thumb implies that if I am free to run away from my aggressor, to do so to the best of my ability. The prerequisite of certainty of grave danger would be followed if I were already being attacked – however, it would not be followed if I assumed my neighbor would attack me and I preemptively used violence against him to prevent what I thought *might* be an attack in the future. The idea of a serious prospect of success I believe might be much more relative to a particular personal situation, and I would not fault a young child for fighting against a much older, much stronger aggressor despite the fact that success might not be certain or even necessarily probable. Right intention must be followed – inasmuch as I must not seek vengeance for being attacked, but must seek peace by fleeing and trying to convert a heart to goodness and righteousness. Finally, and the last prerequisite that probably is the source of the real divide between just war theorists and pacifists, is that of last resort. Many pacifists hold that violence has likely never been used as a last resort, because there are always other nonviolent options available to defenders, whether they be individuals or nations. As an individual under personal attack, it is quite difficult to imagine trying a long list of nonviolent methods when I am

certainly in mortal danger; but if we have the opportunity, when attacked, to try other methods of self-defense that do not involve violent action, I put forth that we should try these methods first so as to justly attempt peace and understanding.

Lastly, I want to say that both camps are welcome here, both pacifists and just war theorists, and I hope that through our journal we can promote a discussion between both ideals to work towards peace worldwide, through justice, diplomacy, and mercy.

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