

## Setting the pro-life record straight

I must take exception to the article recently written in *the Gazette* by Geoff Ineson (March 16, 1995, "Sun Sets for Pro-Life"). I sincerely hope not to offend anyone with my rebuttal, because I think part of the entire problem is poor communication between the two different perspectives on this issue. Instead, I hope to put forward my opinion, and hope that it will be considered by people from all sides as 'food for thought.'

The author's article begins by stating the 'grave' situation that faces us because of an exponentially increasing population. However, implying that abortion will be a solution to this problem is misguided in my opinion.

One reason that many who are Pro-life are so afraid of abortion is that it sets standards as to what comprises Life, and what doesn't. Hence, you will usually find that an individual who is Pro-life is also anti-euthanasia.

If for one am concerned as to where it will end — in the future, if people find out that their child will only have an IQ of 130, can they try and try again until they finally conceive of a child with an IQ of 146?

The author also brings up the situation that exists in China with family-size restrictions, but neglects to mention the resulting implications: male/female ratios are astounding, as society there has determined that the male child is more 'valuable.' Perhaps my previous point about waiting for a genius isn't so unfeasible after all.

The author also mentions that studies project a population of eleven billion by the twenty-second century. This does not surprise me at all, since the population was roughly 2 billion in 1940. So, we can all agree that there has been a three-fold population increase in 50 years.

What? No food shortages yet? Of course not, because technology in

farming has also increased by huge amounts, showing a large exponential growth throughout history. Currently, available fertile land is not nearly the limiting factor in food production. At present, it appears that "demand" for food is that factor.

The author has also pointed out that some feel that "there are too many people on the planet already." I'm not sure I can agree with this point. You see, problems will exist no matter how large or small a population is, and decreasing population size will not improve matters. I assure you that even when the world had a population of 1/2 billion, there were still people who starved to death, murders, bloody wars, and others of today's 'ills'.

*children are becoming an inconvenience*

The problem with today's society is not how many we number, but the mentality that we share: Reeboks, birth-control, cosmetic surgery, Nintendo, and artificial sweeteners. Is that progress? I don't think that decreasing population size will solve our superficiality, self-centeredness, and secular humanism. In fact, I dare say that perhaps only the power of the family unit can help.

The author also implied that Pro-life would soon become a 'vestigial organ' of society, with no purpose and very little presence. I suspect the opposite may be true. Interesting but frightening studies have come out estimating the amounts of ovulation-hindering hormones that are circulating in our waters. Because of this, sperm counts of males have fallen drastically for men living around or

near the Thames in London, and other large cities are realizing the same thing. As well, the number of couples complaining of infertility after several years of 'the pill' are increasing.

At the current time, yes, children are becoming an 'inconvenience' in society's eyes. Partially this is because of the notion propagated by some feminists that women must work full-time in order to be equal to men. It is also because having children means that parents will not be able to fly to Acapulco once a year, upgrade their 486 to a Pentium, or install that sky-light. It has been shown that useage of birth-control is disproportionately high for the upper and middle classes. Usually it is argued that this is because of proper education, but I disagree. In my opinion, it is a difference of priorities.

The author points out that "gradually the high cost of raising children will evidence itself in lower multiple birth rates. Which is a good thing really." Is it? Children to me are a very natural, valuable, and fundamental part of one's life, and the notion that "I'm just not meant to be a parent" is not a factual statement, but a selfish, narrow-minded one in most cases to me. Children provide growth, stability, and responsibility, and add a new dimension to many people's lives. The human heart is capable of huge amounts of love, both giving and receiving, and children are a wonderful source for both.

To me, an excellent point against abortion is the scenario of 'grey-area.' Even amongst Pro-choice individuals, there is no consensus as to when an unborn child can be aborted at the latest. First trimester? Second trimester? Third? Any time up until the umbilical cord is severed? You will be hard pressed to find someone who would agree with the last case.

So, where to draw the line? Many

people that I have discussed this with, both for and against abortion do believe that choosing inside the grey area is unwise — do we look for vigorous brain activity? Grappling and motility of the hands and feet? Response to touch or anger? All of these things happen very early in the stage of birth, so many would not agree with these criteria. The only two possibilities that leave no room for interpretation are at 0 months, and 9 months. For most people, 9 months would be out of the question, leaving

only the other possibility.

Clearly there are differences between the two groups that are going to be difficult to bridge, but perhaps this will only happen when the two groups begin to understand the perspective of the opposing point of view — the other side of the fence, so to speak. Maybe this is what we need more of, and less shouting, picketing, hyperbolic slander, and misrepresentation. Too much to ask?

Not for me.

Steve Franklin

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

threatened me three separate times stating that "action would be taken against me."

Mr. Poirier has admitted to saying those exact words to me on January 20, but he claims that I simply misunderstood him. I reported the incident to the university the same day.

The Employment Equity Office of the Office of the President confirmed that Mr. Poirier's words were indeed a definable threat and that I could pursue action.

I chose the least amount of action possible. All I wanted was the Office of the President to inform Mr. Poirier that his behaviour was inappropriate, and nothing more. On January 23, this was done.

The next incident occurred on March 9. While campaigning, Mr. Poirier gave a speech to my second year World Politics class. The theme of his speech was his respect for different opinions. This upset me because I knew that Mr. Poirier had not respected my opinion on January 20. So I asked him to explain his actions in light of his platform. I felt he was being less than honest with the students of Dalhousie.

I feel that I am being connected with Erin Ahern's campaign and would like to clarify that I was not asked by Erin Ahern to question Mr. Poirier in my class. It was my personal choice and my right as a voting student at Dalhousie.

The ironic thing is that had Mr. Poirier called me the day after the incident and apologized, this could have ended back in January. Unfortunately, Mr. Poirier refuses to recognize his threats as inappropriate behaviour.

Tory Robinson

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