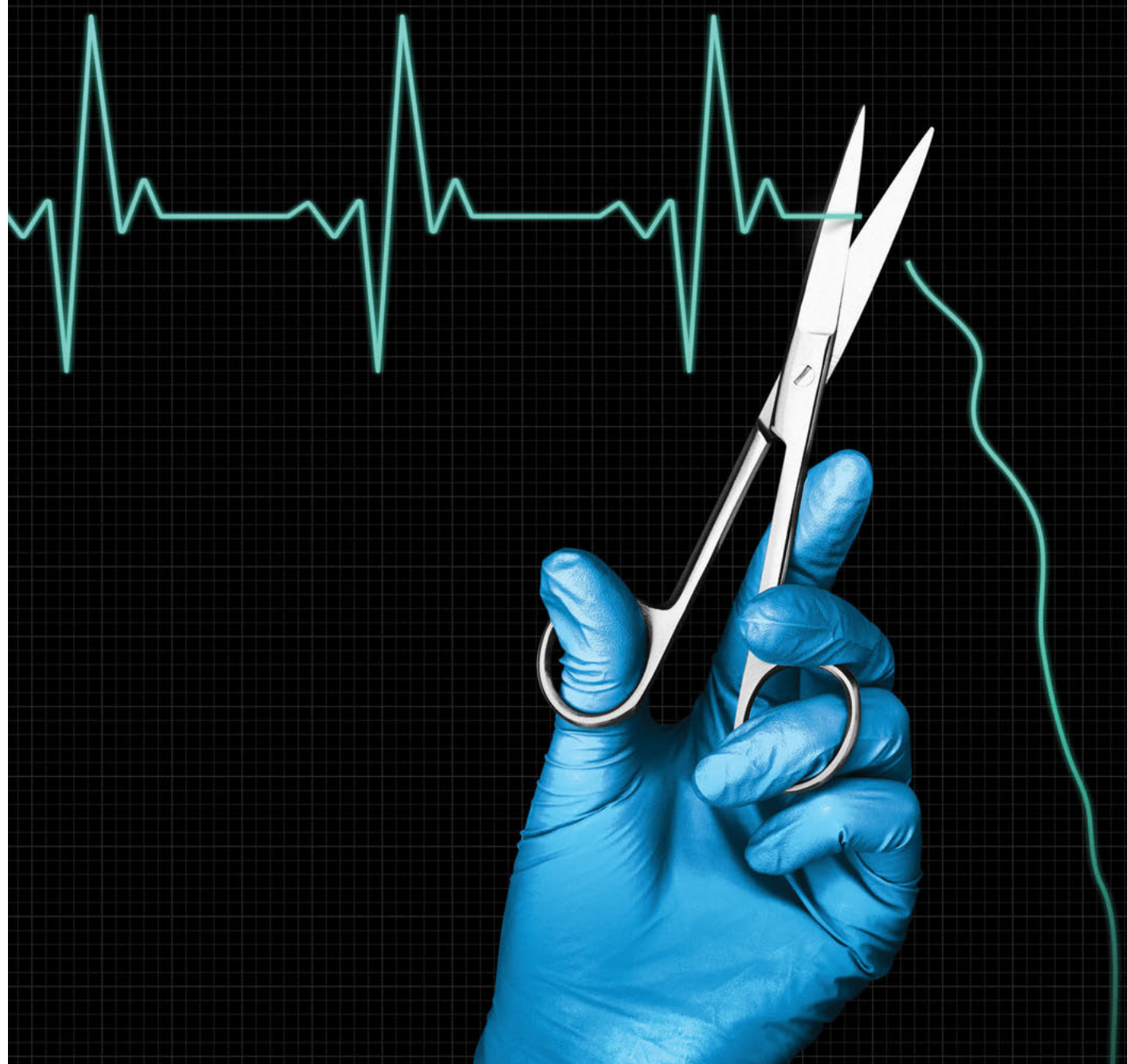
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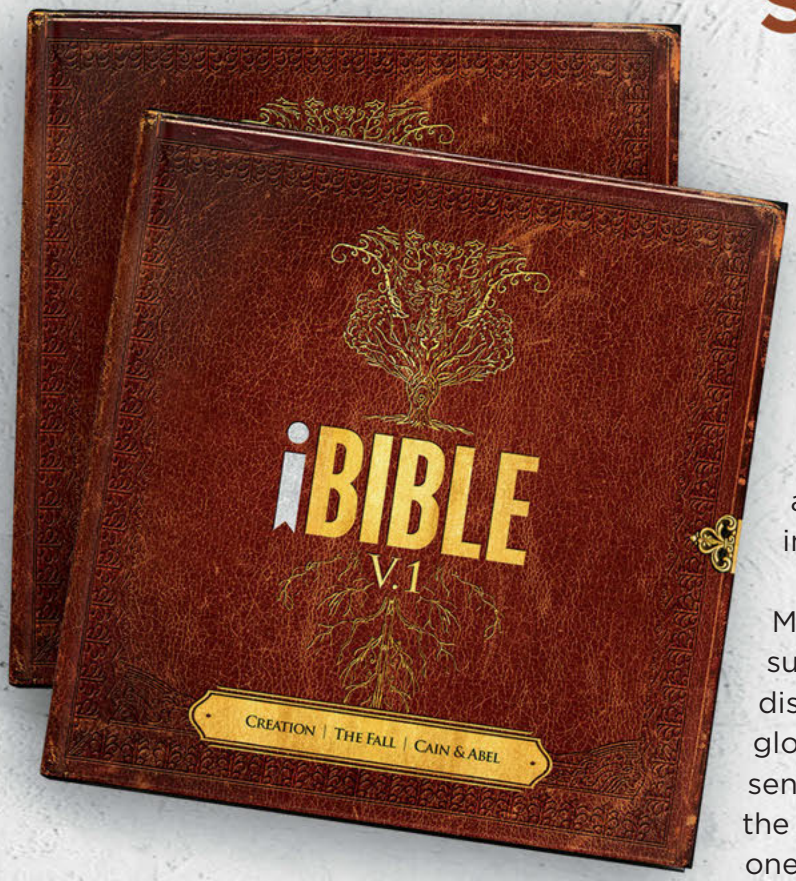
"CARE" THAT KILLS

How the right-to-die movement became mainstream *p.38*



"I CAME HOME WITH BLOOD SPOTS ON MY SHIRT:" —PRO-LIFE ACTIVIST ATTACKED BY PRO-ABORTION DEMONSTRATORS AT THE SUPREME COURT, P. 52

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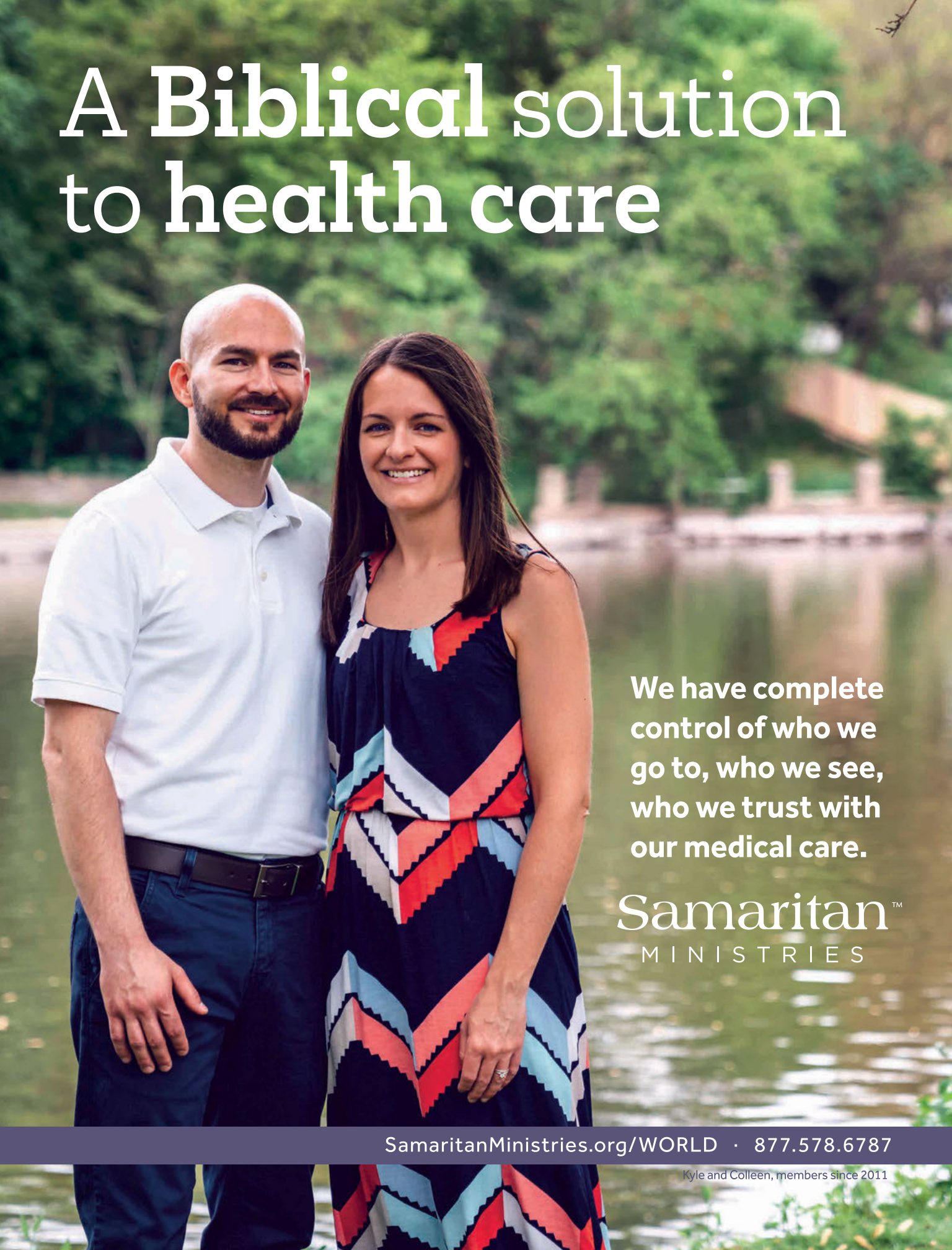
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What was it like covering the leak of the draft opinion in the *Dobbs v. Jackson* Supreme Court case?

"On Monday, I pitched my editors a plan for what I wanted to write about that week. By Tuesday evening, I was scribbling notes with one hand and holding a recorder aloft with the other while crouched on the pavement in front of the Supreme Court between praying Catholic students and screaming pro-abortion protesters."

—Carolina Lumetta, whose story on abortion protests begins on p. 52

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LAURA TO JAKE AND BACK AGAIN

Mary Jackson's wonderful article about Laura Perry was straightforward, honest, and true without being political or biased. Laura is blessed to have good parents and a future. I am proud of her.

Parker Benson/Tallassee, Tenn.

What an excellent story on transgender transition. Its message needs to be heard more and can be used by God to save lives.

Paul Merrill/Littleton, Colo.

"WE NEED VICTORY"

APRIL 23, P. 44: I can't read about Ukraine without great sorrow and frustration with heartfelt prayers. God bless the heroic people of Ukraine.

Neil Slattery/Fort Worth, Texas

Thank you for Sharon Dierberger's coverage of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and "Voices from Russia" by Evgeny Kiz. They brought to readers not only the human dimension of this tragedy but also the inspiring account of Christian ministries in the midst of it all.

Charles Clough/Bel Air, Md.

SHOULD PASTORS PLAY DOCTOR?

APRIL 23, P. 67: A pastor would not be "playing doctor" by pointing out that these vaccines have come to us upon the backs of aborted babies. I was interested in taking one of the vaccines until I learned how they were developed and, in some cases, manufactured.

Cindi Cartwright/Wellson, Okla.

I believe "vaccine" advice from the pulpit is utterly misplaced.

Ruth Baldwin/Birmingham, Ala.

You missed the real story of how churches have landed on COVID vaccine advice. In Washington state, the government and employers continue to persecute those who refuse to violate their religious convictions over a medical procedure, and few are speaking out.

Bill Trueman/Sedro-Woolley, Wash.



LAURA TO JAKE AND BACK AGAIN

APRIL 23, P. 38:

Your article on the transitioning fad conforms to my research and clinical experience. Many regret it, but it is very difficult to admit, even to oneself, the horrible mistake made. This trend may prove to be the worst medical experiment of this century.

Jerry Bergman/Montpelier, Ohio

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

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WALK-AWAY TALK

APRIL 23, P. 10: For Joel Belz to imply that a similar number of voters in 2016 have buyer's remorse for having voted for President Donald Trump as do voters who voted for President Joe Biden in 2020 is, charitably, perplexing and, at worse, laughable.

Robert Heckmann/Canton, S.D.

FREEDOM NOT TO SPEAK

APRIL 23, P. 22: Janie B. Cheaney's column on the hysteria of crowds takes on an air of prophecy in light of the recent Supreme Court leak.

Sue Jones/St. Paul, Minn.

ODE TO SUBURBANS

APRIL 23, P. 36: Kim Henderson's column about her '97 Chevy Suburban brought back memories. Our family is on our third Suburban, and each one has had its own chapter in our lives. Thank you for the reminder of how life is not truly lived when everything stays neat and tidy.

Darla Dykstra/Kansas City, Mo.

THE MADNESS ENDS

APRIL 23, P. 72: Marvin Olasky's column was my dessert at the end of the magazine. I find his replacement, Postscript, trite, even trivial. It does not leave me with the punch I am used to.

Marsha Gartrell/Ocean Shores, Wash.

TOP SOURCE

WORLD has such a talented team of writers. From the biweekly hard copy to all of the online forums, the quality and variety of topics continue to get better and better. For 25 years, WORLD has been my No. 1 source to stay informed.

Cheryl Irish/Bastrop, Texas

CORRECTION

Yellowstone National Park fans can buy a $1,500 inheritance pass to be used by their descendants beginning in 2172. *("Pass it on," May 21, p. 28)*

ENDURE
A book by Bill Newton

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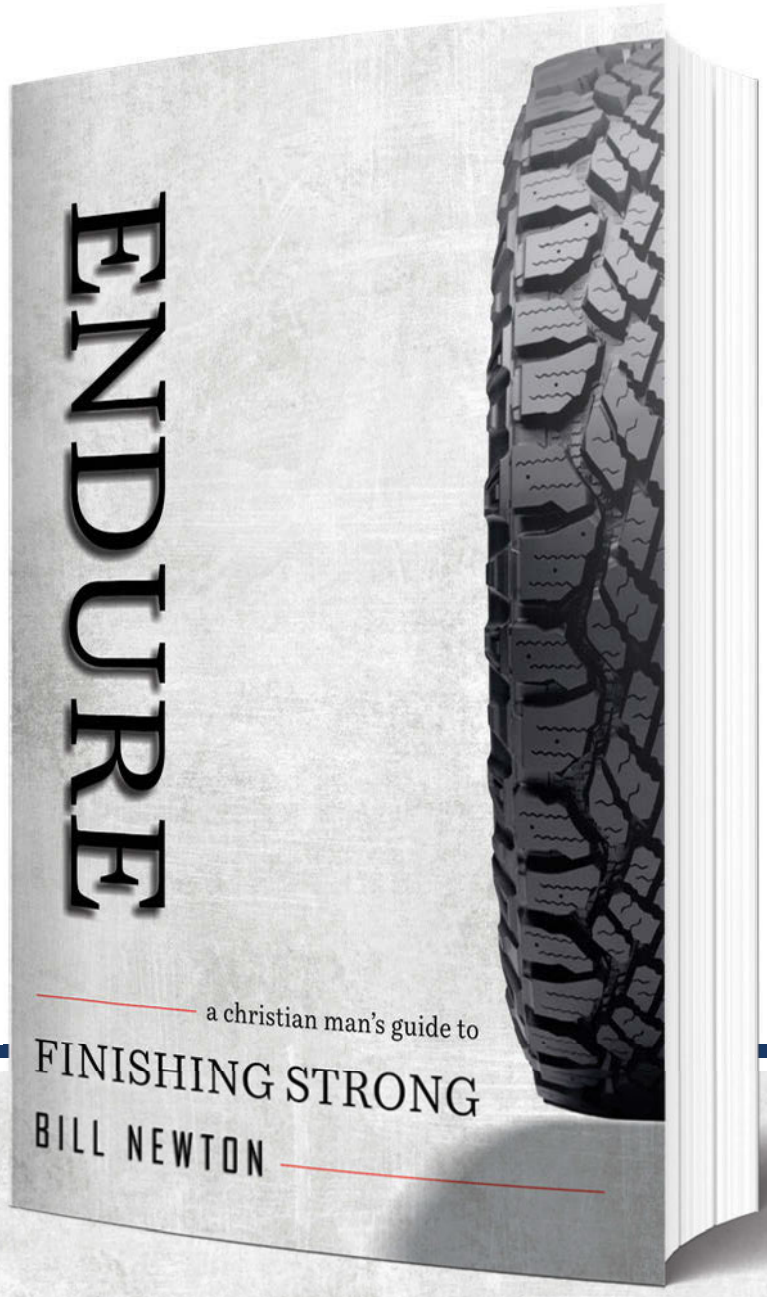
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REJECTING CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

"Proven" media formulas can't match what WORLD has: you

HERE'S SOME CONVENTIONAL ADVICE on how to start a news organization:

Step 1—Consider starting some other sort of business.
Step 2—If you insist on being in the news game, go light on actual reporting. Too expensive.
Step 3—You'll still need newsy content, so jump on a bandwagon. Stick to established, proven narratives.
Step 4—One word: clickbait. You'll need an audience, so make sure the reporting you do generates clicks. You won't believe what happens next.
Step 5—One more word: Twitter. Everyone knows that Twitter is the best way to make snarky points and try to secure the approval of the professional peers you want.
Step 6—Check your progress: If your audience isn't angry/anxious/panicked/gloating after clicking through, you're doing something wrong.
Step 7—Sell lots of ads, and remember: Nothing sells like ads that look a lot like your content.
Step 8—Find a foundation that will underwrite your losses. Otherwise, return to Step 1 and take it more seriously.

Before Joel Belz started WORLD, he solicited a good bit of advice from others in the publishing business. I know that most of it was less cynical than what I've proposed above, but he did hear from many that his proposed model would not work. Joel's vision really did go against business as usual in the world of journalism then, and certainly did not fit with what most news organizations appear to be doing today.

We can be thankful that Joel ignored a lot of advice along the way, but how did WORLD survive what a friendly rival called an "impossible publishing formula"?

Joel had—and WORLD still has—a secret weapon: an audience of readers and listeners and viewers who avoid clickbait like an airborne virus, who actually want deep and honest reporting and analysis that promotes the right ordering of society and human flourishing, who still have reason to trust their news source, and who realize social media is mostly sound and fury, signifying nothing.

We have you. You are the secret of WORLD's success.

We're in the homestretch of our fiscal year, and your charitable contribution to WORLD before June 30 will go a long way in determining how we pursue our mission of Biblically objective journalism in our new fiscal year that starts July 1. Would you consider making a donation at wng.org/donate today? ■



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Secular or spiritual?

In 1986, I decided—or perhaps I de-sided—for WORLD

SURELY YOU CAN FORGIVE an octogenarian some moments of reflection.

My brother Andrew constructed a wonderful wall display in our WORLD offices that shows all the covers of every issue of WORLD Magazine we've ever published. I overheard him tell a group of readers who were visiting, "This took *weeks* of work!"

I thought, "Took *me* decades."

I'm grateful for him and for that display. Looking at it, I found myself drawn to the year 1986, our sputtering start, when we published the first 13 issues before taking a break and relaunching relatively stronger and wiser the next year.

I'm also going back and rereading. My colleagues are reading with me, and we all think some of our old work together deserves a second life. So together, we're choosing some of my old columns we've agreed are worth sharing again here.

For the first in what I hope will be a helpful series, I'd like to go back to that momentous year of 1986 and reintroduce a piece I wrote that sought to explain the worldview that has animated this project we know as WORLD.

AN ATRIUM IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE architectural distinctives.

There's something about getting rid of the ceiling and lifting my eyes that prompts my heart to soar. Some people like wide open spaces. I like wide open entryways and tall hotel lobbies.

To some people, of course, an atrium is a waste. Just think of all the square feet of space that could be used or rented out if it hadn't been squandered on a high ceiling.

FRANCIS SCHAEFFER SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF HIS LIFE AS A ONE-MAN WRECKING CREW.

I am thankful—and I believe all Christians should be thankful—that the late Francis A. Schaeffer didn't think that way. Although I never talked to him about the subject, I have a hunch Francis Schaeffer probably liked atriums.

For, you see, Schaeffer spent a great deal of his life as a one-man wrecking crew, tearing out the ceiling that had existed over the room where most Christians lived when he was young. By tearing out that ceiling, Schaeffer enlarged the room in significant ways. He stretched the vision of thousands of Christians.

Schaeffer's ideas were by no means brand new. But he stated them at a time when a student generation was ready to hear them. And, especially when you consider how complex a man Schaeffer was, he stated the ideas with remarkable simplicity and clarity.

Schaeffer explained that for the Christian there is no "upstairs" and no "downstairs." We don't deal with God in a loft at the top of a ladder, and then come down to deal with the real world. For Schaeffer, it was all one room. And the God Schaeffer served and witnessed to filled that room.

That concept, of course, is central to the mission of WORLD. Some people wonder: Is this magazine secular or spiritual? Can't decide which side it wants to come down on? The best answer is that I have decided—or perhaps I've de-sided. There aren't two sides. Just as there aren't two floors. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."

So what is this awkwardness our readers feel? Let me confess: I feel it too. It's one thing to say that it's all one room. But when we've been taught otherwise by centuries of tradition, habit, and practice, we don't immediately know how to treat world news as if it all belongs to the Lord. We can't, for example, afford to have the philosophers and the theologians upstairs while the scientists and math people gather in a little groups below.

Developing a Christian worldview is hard work and never an all-at-once achievement. We need each other to do it well—a getting-acquainted process that is made easier when we all are in one room. ■

—This column was published in WORLD, April 14, 1986, "Schaeffer: A one-man wrecking crew"

EMAIL jbelz@wng.org

PONDER ANEW, WHAT THE ALMIGHTY CAN DO

When was the last time you thought deeply about the stewardship of your missions' giving? What if each dollar could touch more lives? That can happen when we shift our thinking and shift our finances towards maximizing the efforts of locals training locals. In many cases, in hard-to-reach places, your dollars can make hundreds of new disciples and plant churches at a fraction of the cost through indigenous leadership. Maybe it's time to ponder anew what the Almighty can do?



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NO COMPETITION ALLOWED

A pro-Beijing policeman wins "election" to Hong Kong's top job

by Erica Kwong

JOHN LEE, 64, WON THE ONE-MAN Hong Kong chief executive's "race" on May 8, having secured 1,416 votes from the 1,461 members of a pro-Beijing election committee. The rest of Hong Kong's 7.4 million citizens had no say in that election. Many also see that as Beijing continuing to renege on its promise of universal suffrage for the former British colony, which is enshrined in Hong Kong's mini constitution, the Basic Law. Lee will begin his term on July 1, the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong's handover from Britain to China.

Rather than an election, critics view Lee's win as Beijing's thinly veiled appointment. China imposed an electoral overhaul last year to ensure only "patriots" could hold →

Hong Kong Chief Executive-elect John Lee waves on stage after being elected.

ANTHONY KWAN/GETTY IMAGES

office in Hong Kong. Lee himself, as Hong Kong's then-security chief, supervised that revamp and vetted the election committee members who would be voting in the May 8 election.

Lee, who served in Hong Kong's police force for most of his career, is known for his hard-line tactics in clamping down on the 2019 pro-democracy movement. The monthslong demonstrations began with peaceful rallies that drew up to 2 million participants, but as authorities refused to respond to citizens' demands, the protests turned violent: Demonstrators vandalized property and launched Molotov cocktails, while riot police fired tear gas, shot rubber bullets, and deployed water cannons. As Hong Kong's then-security chief, Lee led the crackdown that many criticized as excessive state violence.

Beijing's "appointment" of Lee shows its unyielding rule by law in Hong Kong, said Nathan Law. This former Hong Kong pro-democracy legislator is now exiled in the United Kingdom. Lee departs from his four pro-Beijing predecessors, as they were from the business sector or were administrators who rose through government ranks.

U.S. State Secretary Antony Blinken released a joint statement with other foreign ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom, together with the European Union's high representative to "underscore our grave concern over the selection process" for Hong Kong's chief executive. It is "part of a continued assault on political pluralism and fundamental freedoms," said the G7 and EU officials. They call on China to uphold its international and legal commitments. They also urge the new chief executive to respect Hong Kong's protected rights and freedoms.

Meanwhile, the Hong Kong government "strongly refutes" the international outcry against the election. The poll was conducted in "an open, fair and honest manner," according to its statement. Moreover, it was consistent with "democracy 'with Hong Kong characteristics.'"





ON ELECTION DAY, thousands of Hong Kong police officers patrolled the city to prevent any social unrest. Despite a draconian national security law that criminalizes dissent, three pro-democracy activists from the League of Social Democrats (LSD) held up a banner that read "Human rights above the regime; the people greater than the country." The trio chanted, "Power to the people, universal suffrage now," as they walked toward the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center, the polling station in Wan Chai. They kept to the social-distancing restriction that limits groups to four and were surrounded by police officers during their demonstration.

While previous chief executive elections had more than one candidate, this time "Beijing didn't even bother to put up a show and pretend that competition was possible for the territory's top job," said Anna Kwok, strategy and campaign director of Hong Kong Democracy Council (HKDC). Members of this Washington, D.C.-based organization include exiled Hong Kong pro-democracy activists.

The May 8 events contrasted starkly with the last chief executive election five years ago. In 2017, there were opposition members in Hong Kong's government as well as the committee that voted for the city's top leader. Crowds of citizens joined

BEIJING DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO PUT UP A SHOW AND PRETEND THAT COMPETITION WAS POSSIBLE FOR THE TERRITORY'S TOP JOB.

TYRONE SIU/REUTERS/ALAMY



FAR LEFT: Lee looks on as officials open ballot boxes. LEFT: Pro-democracy activists, surrounded by police officers, carry a banner protesting the election.

prominent pro-democracy activists, including Joshua Wong, to protest against the government and demanded universal suffrage without fear of arrest. But since Beijing imposed on Hong Kong the national security law—which carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment—in June 2020, many activists, including Wong, are now behind bars. Others have fled the city or quit politics. Many pro-democracy and civil society groups have disbanded.

Political repression continues. On May 11, Hong Kong's national security police arrested four pro-democracy activists, including 90-year-old Cardinal Joseph Zen, for their involvement in a now-defunct humanitarian fund that provided financial aid to citizens prosecuted over the 2019 protests. Zen is the retired Catholic bishop of Hong Kong. Accusing the four of foreign collusion, authorities have released them on bail.

When Lee takes office, even tighter control will come. He has vowed to legislate Hong Kong's own security law in accordance with the Basic Law's Article 23. While the Beijing-imposed national security law already punishes violators for subversion, secession, foreign collusion, and terrorism, the local law will also prohibit treason and sedition against the Chinese government. It will cover the theft of state secrets and the activities of foreign political entities in Hong Kong as well. In 2003, then-chief executive Tung Chee-hwa attempted to pass that local law but shelved it when 500,000 people took to the streets to protest against the legislation they considered a threat to Hong Kong's freedoms.

"Hong Kongers' freedoms of thought, speech and press will be further suppressed" with Lee as chief executive, wrote the LSD in a Facebook post. Without democracy and universal suffrage, "the law will be weaponized by those in power." A government that lacks checks and balances and a society that stifles dissent are "definitely not good for Hong Kong's development."

Lee, along with the incumbent Chief Executive Carrie Lam, is among the 11 Hong Kong and Chinese officials that Washington sanctioned in 2020 over the national security law implementation that has vastly reduced Hong Kong's freedoms. Google suspended Lee's YouTube campaign channel in April to comply with the U.S. sanctions.

A self-described Catholic, Lee praised China's human rights violations against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang as counterterrorism measures. Beijing's abuse of minority groups in China's northwestern region is recognized as genocide by Western nations.

The next five years of Lee's term "will be filled with challenges for those of us who love this city," wrote the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China in its call to prayer. Asking God to give discernment to the Hong Kongers who "still live in trauma and need to adapt to the changes of a new era," the council also prayed that God would "remember the Hong Kongers who have already emigrated to search for a new life." The organization included the city's rulers in its petition, asking the "wise Holy Spirit" to be with them.

HONG KONG'S WORST COVID-19 wave, which peaked in early March, killed over 9,000 people and "contributed to a 4 percent drop in economic output for [this year's] first quarter," according to AFP. Politics—China's encroaching authoritarianism—has also spurred the emigration of recent years. A net of 160,000 people departed Hong Kong in the first three months of this year, AFP reported.

Given Lee's lack of business connections, Law thinks the new cabinet may not have the acumen to pull Hong Kong out of a troubled economy. The exiled former lawmaker also notes in his Facebook post that Lee's inexperience in business is part of Beijing's plan to remake that Hong Kong sector to ensure the Chinese government's control and political stability. It can achieve that through Chinese capital and pro-Beijing tycoons that drive out local and international businesses.

Hong Kongers have long been striving for democracy. The 2014 protests of the Umbrella Movement called for universal suffrage, a demand that citizens reiterated more forcefully in the 2019 protests. During the 2019 movement, Washington banned the export of U.S.-made weapons to Hong Kong's police force. Jeffrey Ngo, HKDC's policy and research fellow, urges Washington to renew the expired prohibition.

That is "the easiest, most direct thing" American policymakers can do to slow Hong Kong's growth into a "full-blown police state under Lee," Ngo said. ■

KIN CHEUNG/AP



Firefighters in New Mexico clear brush and debris away from cabins along Highway 518.

MONSTER BLAZE

Fire biggest in New Mexico history

More than 2,000 workers battle fires

FIREFIGHTERS STRUGGLED TO CONTAIN the Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak fire, which had burned 299,565 acres and 260 homes and was 26 percent contained as of May 17. More than 3,800 homes in northern New Mexico were under mandatory evacuation orders. Two separate fires merged on April 23. Hermits Peak started on April 6 in the Pecos Wilderness after embers from a controlled burn escaped containment and sparked small fires. The cause of the Calf Canyon fire, which started on April 19 north of Las Vegas, N.M., is still under investigation. Thunderstorms on May 16 dropped some rain on the region, allowing the 2,000 firefighters to drop more fire retardant from helicopters. But meteorologists expect the favorable conditions to change as unpredictable winds intensified.

LIBERTY SETTLES

A notice of dismissal was filed in the case of 12 women who alleged that Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., mishandled sexual assault cases. The terms of the settlement have not been disclosed. The former students and employees' allegations span more than two decades. They claimed that Liberty's strict honor code made it difficult or impossible for students to report sexual violence and any investigations were weighted in favor of men and retaliated against women. In a statement, Liberty said it spent over $8.5 million on campus security upgrades, improved mental health services, and is updating its policies.

RACIST GUNMAN

A gunman wearing tactical gear and body armor opened fire in a Tops Friendly Market on May 14, killing 10 black people before surrendering to police. Officials called the mass shooting in a predominantly black neighborhood of Buffalo, N.Y., an act of "racially motivated violent extremism." Police identified the suspect as Payton Gendron, 18, from a town about 200 miles southeast of Buffalo. Eleven of the shooting victims were black, and two were white. Last year, state police took Gendron to a hospital for a mental health evaluation after he made a threat against his school. He was released after a day and a half and not charged with any crimes.

SHARIAH LYNCHING

On May 12 a mob of students murdered Deborah Samuel, a second-year student at a public college in Nigeria's Sokoto state, after accusing her of blaspheming the prophet Muhammad. The school's security officers tried to shelter her, but the mob dragged her out and beat her with planks before dumping tires on her and setting her ablaze. On a WhatsApp group shared with other students, Samuel had sent a voice note criticizing an earlier pro-Islamic message. She asked her schoolmates instead to share posts about their tests and assignments, but members of the group accused her of making derogatory comments. Authorities shut down the school, the Shehu Shagari College of Education, and they detained two suspects and launched an investigation.

JIM WEBER/SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN VIA AP

WESTERN INVESTORS GO BEARISH ON RUSSIA

700,000

The number of subscribers Netflix lost in Russia after the streaming service cut ties with the war-making nation. The dramatic service cancellation led to Netflix reporting fewer subscribers overall for the first time in a decade.

1 RUBLE

The price at which French automaker Renault had to sell its 68 percent stake in Russian automaker Avtovaz in an effort to end business in the country.

10%

The share of Russian tech workers who have left the country, according to *The Washington Post*.

6%

Russia's share of tobacco giant Philip Morris' worldwide sales last year. The cigarette maker is looking to withdraw from the country.



850

THE NUMBER OF MCDONALD'S franchises operating in Russia prior to its Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine. The Golden Arches, a symbol of Western commercialism, first went up in the Soviet Union weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall. But after the breakout of Russian aggression, McDonald's announced it was pulling out of the country. Beyond the human cost, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has caused massive headaches for multinational firms doing business in the country. Oil and gas firms like Exxon and Shell may have the most to lose, but even tobacco-maker Philip Morris says it stands to lose by leaving the Russian market. Meanwhile, highly skilled Russian workers are also plotting their exit.

ILLUSTRATION BY KRIEG BARRIE

"Before I knew it, he said, 'I'm on the ground. How do I turn this thing off?'"

ROBERT MORGAN, a Florida air traffic controller who, in an interview with WPBF-TV, said he relied on online cockpit images to help a passenger with no flying experience land a small airplane after the pilot fell ill.

"There's no telling what we'll find in Lake Mead. It's not a bad place to dump a body."

OSCAR GOODMAN, former Las Vegas mayor and celebrated organized-crime attorney, on the drought-stricken Colorado River reservoir that supplies Las Vegas.

"We don't think that we should accept any more anti-choice Democrats."

NARAL Pro-Choice America president **MINI TIMMARAJU** responding to ABC News reporter Martha Raddatz's question about whether abortion should be a litmus test for Democratic candidates.

"If you'd find it hard to support our content breadth, Netflix may not be the best place for you."

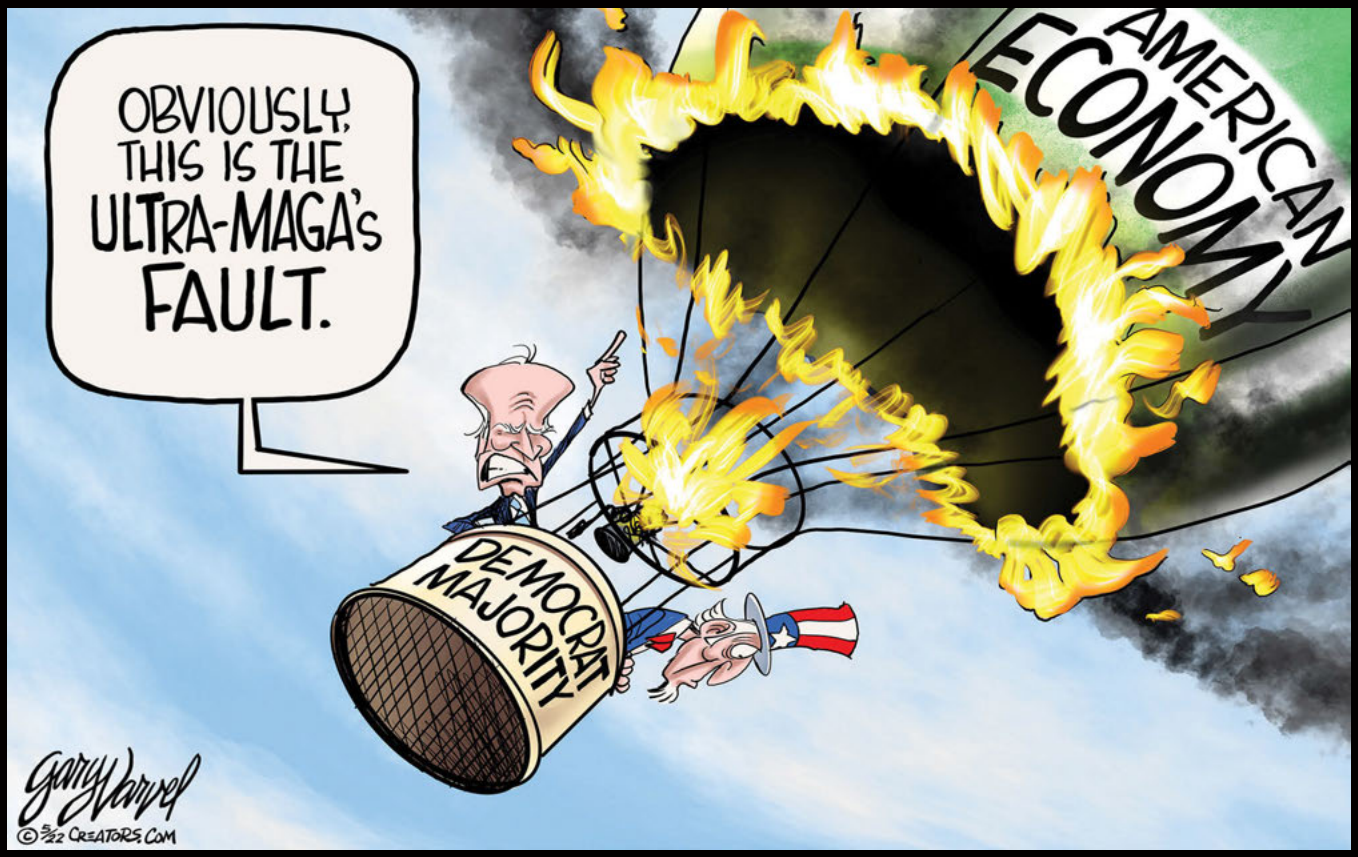
NETFLIX, in a "Culture Memo" to employees. In the past few years, some of the company's employees have protested content they considered anti-LGBT.

"It was a straight-up racially motivated hate crime."

JOHN GARCIA, the Erie County, N.Y., sheriff, about the fatal mass shooting at a Tops Friendly Market in Buffalo on May 14. Police described the gunman as an 18-year-old white man; 11 of the 13 people who were shot were black, as were all 10 of those killed.

"But this new image is special because it's our supermassive black hole."

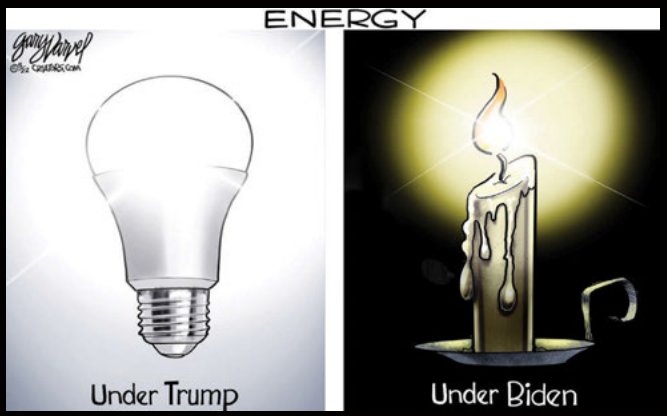
Professor **HEINO FALCKE,** one of the European pioneers behind the Event Horizon Telescope, which produced the image of the monstrous black hole at the center of the Milky Way. Known as Sagittarius A*, the object is 4 million times the mass of our sun.


OBVIOUSLY, THIS IS THE ULTRA-MAGA's FAULT.
AMERICAN ECONOMY
DEMOCRAT MAJORITY
Gary Varvel
©5/22 CREATORS.COM


CLUBS
MAY WE JOIN?
RUSSIA
FINLAND
SWEDEN
NATO


WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT ALL THESE ABORTION ADVOCATES ILLEGALLY PROTESTING AT THE HOMES OF SUPREME COURT JUSTICES?
ROUND UP THE USUAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENTS.
FBI


MY TEACHER TOLD US TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE AND NON-BINARY.
Happy Birthing Person Day


ENERGY
Under Trump
Under Biden



Dogs in wolves' clothing

Colorado sheriff's deputies went hunting for hungry wolves and found St. Bernards

by John Dawson

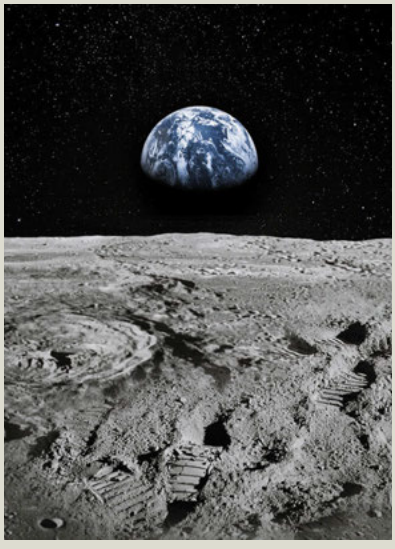
Officials with the Parks County, Colo., Sheriff's Office went out hunting for wolves after a concerned citizen claimed to have spotted the predators April 25 near Fairplay, Colo. A grainy, zoomed-in video sent by the citizen showed large, four-legged beasts loose near an elk herd. After an investigation, sheriff's deputies determined the animals were actually St. Bernard dogs on the lam rather than a pack of wolves. The owner of the five St. Bernards had been cited days earlier for not keeping the animals locked up after another escape.

HOUSING CATCH-22

It's a chicken or egg problem. Builders in Greater Victoria, British Columbia, say they can't build more homes, mostly because they can't find enough homes to house the workers needed for construction. Skyrocketing demand in the Canadian city on the southern tip of Vancouver Island for housing has led construction firms to consider bringing in out-of-town construction crews to build more homes. But they have no place to put them. The CEO of a local construction firm said he considered bringing in outside help to finish a number of home projects but couldn't find lodging. "There's just no availability, whether to rent or buy," CEO Chad Bryden told *Capital Daily*. "Affordability is a factor too, but availability is the biggest factor."

TO THE MOON, CANADA!

The long arm of Canadian law just got a little longer. Lawmakers in Ottawa voted in April to extend the nation's jurisdiction for criminal prosecution to the moon. According to the bill amending Canada's criminal code, Canada now reserves the right to prosecute Canadians who, on the lunar surface or en route to the moon, commit a crime. The first Canadian astronaut slated to travel to the moon will embark in 2024.



ST. BERNARD PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: RACHEL BEATTY



SUBSTITUTE GROOM

An impatient Indian father of the bride changed plans abruptly when the man intending to marry his daughter didn't arrive promptly to the wedding. When the groom showed up four hours late to the April 22 wedding, the bride's father accused the man of being drunk and refused to allow the event to proceed. Instead, the bride's father found a suitable wedding guest and had his daughter marry him.



77-YEAR-OLD CAKE

At long last, an Italian woman will finally be able to enjoy the cake owed to her on her 13th birthday. In 1945, hungry American soldiers confiscated **Meri Mion**'s birthday cake while fighting Germans near her home in Vicenza in Northern Italy during the final days of World War II. But on April 28, officials from the U.S. Army replaced the cake, just days ahead of her 90th birthday. American soldiers, including Italian garrison commander Col. Matthew Gomlak, were on hand to sing happy birthday for Mion in both Italian and English. "We will eat that dessert with all my family, remembering this wonderful day that I will never forget," she told reporters.



DEADLY SOUVENIR

An ill-advised vacation keepsake caused a panic at the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, Israel, on April 28. Airport security officials discovered an unexploded artillery shell in the luggage of an American family traveling home, causing airport staff to dive behind concrete pillars. The family had declared the shell at airport security, saying they picked up the souvenir during a visit to the Golan Heights. What the family did not realize was that they were carrying live ordinance used during the 1967 Six-Day War. One Israeli passenger who fell onto a baggage carousel was injured in the panic, but the passengers were allowed to board their flight. Security officials safely disposed of the live shell.

"WE WILL EAT THAT DESSERT WITH ALL MY FAMILY, REMEMBERING THIS WONDERFUL DAY THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET."

CLEVER LIKE A FOX

An overnight raid by a wild fox left 25 flamingos dead at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., May 2. Zookeepers say the fox got into the enclosure with the zoo's flamingos through a baseball-sized hole in the mesh fence ringing the enclosure. "We're still in shock right now," Zoo director Brandie Smith told *The Washington Post* a day after the attack. A wildlife biologist provided the fox's motive, saying that to a wild fox, flamingos may as well just be tall chickens. Zoo officials conducted a sweep of the enclosure the day before the attack and believe the fox chewed a hole through the mesh overnight in order to kill over one-third of the zoo's 74 flamingos.



MOON, INDIA WEDDING: ISTOCK; SHELL: ISRAELI AIRPORT AUTHORITY/AP; MION: LAURA KRIEDER, U.S. ARMY/AP; FLAMINGOS: ROBYN BECK/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Consuming ideologies

Ideologies of any kind can be destructive

J.K. ROWLING, one of the most successful authors of all time, posted an interesting Twitter thread on April 20. I'll call it the Parable of the Greengrocer.

It began with her noticing a sign placed in the window of the local produce seller: "Workers of the World, Unite!" This venerable slogan, she mused, came with the crates of carrots and onions. Why display it? Was the greengrocer a classic communist? Or is he just posting the sign to keep the local socialists off his back? "If the greengrocer had been instructed to display the slogan, 'I am afraid and therefore unquestioningly obedient,' he would not be nearly as indifferent to its semantics, even though the statement would reflect the truth," she wrote.

Ms. Rowling might have been speculating as to motives, or maybe she knew the man; that's not the point. She sees this (possibly) craven display as ideology: "a specious way of relating to the world. It offers human beings the illusion of an identity, of dignity, and of morality while making it easier for people to deceive their conscience and conceal their true position and their inglorious *modus vivendi*, both from the world and from themselves."

If that seems harsh, it may be because J.K. Rowling is herself a victim of ideology. In June of 2020 she tweeted a puzzled response to an article about "people who menstruate." What do we call such "people"? Women, maybe? A series of follow-up Tweets explained her position: "If sex isn't real, the lived reality of women globally is erased. I know and love trans people, but erasing the concept of sex removes the ability of many to meaningfully discuss their lives."

The wrath of trans ideology rained down on her head. All three young protagonists of the Harry Potter movies called out her insensitivity. A TV special celebrating the publication of the first Harry Potter book took pains to not even mention its author. In response to her greengrocer posts a Twitter follower warned, "Your career has at most two years left, reflect and learn or be forgotten."

"Ah well," Rowling replied, "I've had a good run." She can afford to say whatever she wants with no consequence beyond nasty Tweets. The local greengrocer has no such luxury; if the produce cooperative wishes him to fly Marxist colors, he'll fly them.

What, exactly, is an "ideology"? My print dictionary concurs with Google: "a system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy." Sounds harmless, and even necessary for a coherent society. But every human invention is subject to decay, and thus ideology can become:

› Any slogan that fits on a bumper sticker.

› Any position that can be discussed in soundbites.

› Any view extracted from, but now isolated from, real-life experience.

› Something your political opponents hold, while you are merely proposing common sense, or a club to beat dissenters over the head.

Conservative Christians are finely tuned to spot ideologies on the left: "Love is love," "Transwomen are women," "Keep your laws off my body," "Black lives matter." The right doesn't seem as adept at sloganeering, or at least no catchy bumper stickers come to mind. But capitalist, nationalist, and socially conservative ideologies can be just as destructive when the idea consumes the person, whether true believer, fearful follower, or hapless victim.

Are there such things as Christian ideologies? Judge for yourself: When homeschooling is the only way to educate a child or activism the only way to save the USA, when "Trump voter" is synonymous with "Christian nationalist" or CRT the exclusive lens for examining racism in the church, ideology has overrun the conversation.

Christ didn't preach an ideology; He preached a kingdom and died to establish it. Lifestyles and politics are not the goal of the kingdom, but the One "through whom are all things, and through whom we exist" (1 Corinthians 8:6). When transgenderism or anti-racism obscures the transwoman or the racist, the idea has consumed the person. ■

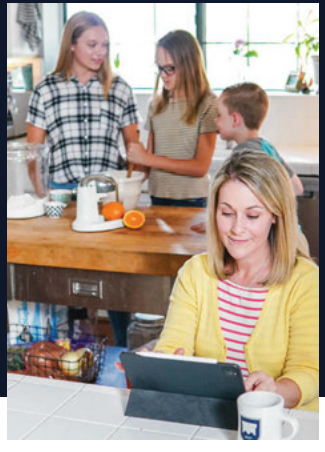
CHRIST DIDN'T PREACH AN IDEOLOGY; HE PREACHED A KINGDOM AND DIED TO ESTABLISH IT.

EMAIL jcheaney@wng.org TWITTER @jbcheaney









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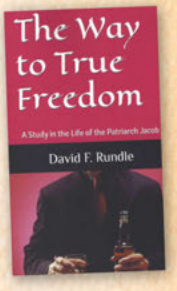
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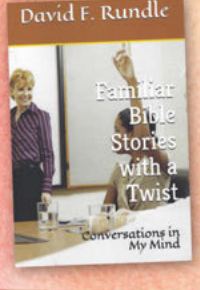
Four books that meet the needs of many churches and Sunday schools



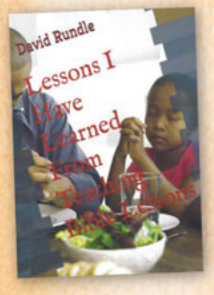
A Reformed Theology Handbook allows each of us to re-evaluate what we believe and why. A handbook to help avoid "sloppy" theology or even heresy.



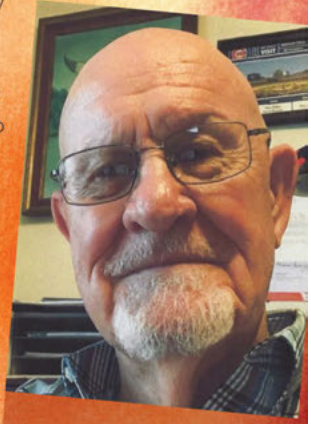
The Way to True Freedom studies the path taken by Jacob to reach a point where he was free from his 'demons.' Many today are caught in Satan's trap of drugs, pornography, alcoholism, and more.



Familiar Bible Stories with a Twist looks at stories with people doing the dialogue. The Stories are taken from the Bible in chapters of 2 Samuel through 2 Kings.



Lessons I have Learned teaching Bible Lessons speaks to issues most teachers need to know when entering the classroom.



Author David F. Rundle

Available at **Amazon** *and* **Barnes & Noble**



A HUMOROUS LOOK AT FAITH AND FAMILY

Family Camp's not perfect but offers a funny take on family life

by Collin Garbarino

FAITH-BASED FILMS SOMETIMES STRUGGLE to offer entertainment value while promoting Christian values, but *Family Camp*, in select theaters, feels like a step in the right direction. This family-friendly comedy, starring Tommy Woodard and Eddie James (known as the Skit Guys), is a funny movie about Christian families for Christian families, and director Brian Cates manages relatively high production values on a relatively small budget.

When the Ackerman family's pastor encourages his congregation to attend family camp, wife Grace (Leigh-Allyn Baker) becomes convinced going to camp could save →

ZACHARY BURNS/FAMILY CAMP MOVIE, LLC

her struggling family. Her husband Tommy (Woodard) has his doubts. Tommy's work consumes him, but he agrees to take the family to make Grace happy. Camp isn't the restful retreat everyone hoped for because the Ackermans bunk with the eccentric Sanders family. Eddie (James), the father, is an overachieving chiropractor given to public exhibits of piety, and his family has won the camp cup two years in a row. Tommy and Eddie compete in a misguided attempt to show their wives what great men they can be.

The film doesn't break new ground in storytelling. Much of the plot is reminiscent of Steve Martin's *Cheaper by the Dozen 2*. We see two out-of-touch dads engage in funny one-upmanship, and the odd couple will need to rely on each other to survive their week at camp. In the end, everyone learns a lesson. Dad humor abounds.

The film's subtext gently critiques two varieties of fathers who aren't getting the job done. On the one hand, we have Tommy, who believes financial provision is a father's only role. He has abdicated other responsibilities to his wife. On the other hand, we have Eddie, who as head of the household sees it as his responsibility to micromanage those under his care.

What makes the film somewhat original is its comedy focuses on its intended Christian audience. Many viewers will find themselves chuckling at the continuous references to the evangelical subculture. The film pokes fun at Christian obsessions with Bible diets, essential oils, and Chick-fil-A. None of the mockery feels mean-spirited—it's a funny acknowledgment of the quirkiness we sometimes see in our churches. Viewers who haven't spent time in these Christian circles won't find the film as amusing.

Combining a Christian message and comedy can be tricky, and *Family Camp* could have been a stronger movie if it offered a clean, funny, positive message about the importance of family and merely situated the story at a church camp. When the script tries to engage too deeply with spiritual questions, the answers get muddy.

How do you put the gospel—a message about Jesus Christ's spiritual redemption of a people accomplished through sacrifice and resurrection—into a farce about an odd couple competing in camp games? The comedy might trivialize the message.

The filmmakers talk around the gospel rather than state it plainly. The movie remains overtly Christian, but it risks allowing viewers to import a soft prosperity gospel. In *Family Camp*, Christianity isn't as much about redeeming the church as it is about having good relationships. Strong marriages and good parenting are important, but they're not the gospel.

The script is at its weakest when it tries to layer Christian spirituality over its family-focused message. In one scene, a wife quotes the first half of Ephesians 5:25 to her husband, explaining he's supposed to love her as Christ loved the church. She doesn't mention the second half of the verse where Paul explains what he means. Instead, she says, "God doesn't control us. He doesn't make all the decisions for us. He doesn't take away our voice."

Regardless of one's position on the issue of free will, this explanation fails to account for Paul's meaning. I'm sure real church camps are full of lay people offering up dubious interpretations of the Bible, but the prominent scene gives the film a man-centered theology.

Family Camp is a fairly entertaining family-friendly comedy. Just don't look to this movie for your Bible teaching. That's what your church is for. ■



THE SKIT GUYS Tommy Woodard and Eddie James have been best friends since high school.

ZACHARY BURNS/FAMILY CAMP MOVIE, LLC



Watchdogs and Whistleblowers

by Marty VanDriel

In 1979, one of two nuclear reactors on Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania began to melt down after just a few months. Operator error, mechanical failure, and a lack of safety protocols exacerbated the crisis. Netflix's new four-part series *Meltdown: Three Mile Island* documents the accident and its fallout for the nuclear industry.

Director Kief Davidson interviewed participants from across the spectrum: housewives who became anti-nuke activists, plant safety personnel who tested radiation levels in the containment buildings, and government officials whose mixed messages led to public mistrust and panic.

Two of the most prominent interviewees offered different perspectives. Lake Barrett, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's director of the cleanup operation, comes across as indifferent to questions about the safety standards put in place by Bechtel, the private company overseeing the site's shutdown.

In contrast, Rick Parks, a former Navy nuclear technician who worked on the site for Bechtel, argues Bechtel and the energy companies were too focused on profits and not concerned enough with public safety. (Parks' occasional rough language earns the TV-14 rating).

NETFLIX



TRUTHFUL FICTION

Ukrainian political comedy is both pithy and prescient

by Juliana Chan Erikson

HILARIOUS AND DEVASTATINGLY ON-POINT, *Servant of the People*—the only Ukrainian show currently on Netflix—may be pure fiction, but a few sensational coincidences have given this 2015 political satire an eerie prescience.

With Volodymyr Zelenskyy playing the fictional president of Ukraine long before he became the real-life president, future historians will be stumped. Improbable as it sounds, the series—Netflix just released the second season—doesn't just predict its country's future leader but also in a way its fate.

"I'm the president of Ukraine!" says Zelenskyy as President Goloborodko during an imaginary encounter with long-dead Russian tsar Ivan the Terrible. Ivan assures him, "Soon we'll free you," to which Goloborodko responds, "No thanks. We don't need freeing."

When Goloborodko argues Ukraine needs to take "a different path, our own path," Ivan knocks him out. Knowing what we know now, we shudder. If only Russian President Putin had watched episode 23! Maybe then he would've noticed Zelenskyy's fighting spirit.

There's little to hate in fictional president Goloborodko—he eschews posh presidential digs to live with his parents, appoints his competent ex-wife and well-meaning friends to cabinet posts, and takes the bus to work. Earlier episodes have him cursing, often in Russian (twice in English), but by the end of the first season, the show is more restrained with foul language, violence, and sex.

TOP NUCLEAR DISASTER MOVIES

9 **The China Syndrome** (1979)
8 **Dr. Strangelove** (1964)
7 **Fail Safe** (1964)
6 **Barefoot Gen** (1983)
5 **The Day After** (1983)
4 **Chernobyl** (2019)
3 **When the Wind Blows** (1986)
2 **Threads** (1984)
1 **Testament** (1983)

SOURCE: REELRUNDOWN.COM

MARVEL LOSES ITS MAGIC

The latest Doctor Strange movie fails to deliver on its promise, signaling Marvel Studios may have lost its way

by Collin Garbarino



THE MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE is in a post–*Infinity War* malaise. Over 10 years, Marvel Studios made more than 20 movies that moved toward a particular climax. But the climax has passed, and now the studio is trying to keep fans interested by launching heroes into its newly created multiverse.

Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness is fans' first big taste of the multiversal concept. The film opens with Doctor Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch) trying to save a girl named America Chavez (Xochitl Gomez) from space demons—America can open doors from one alternate reality to another. But the real villain is Wanda Maximoff (Elizabeth Olsen), who wants America's universe-hopping superpower for herself.

Movies in the Marvel Comics Universe tend to move in and out of different genres, and this Doctor Strange movie is supposed to be MCU's entry into horror. Sam Raimi is a veteran horror director, but this film never finds the right note. It includes tropes from every horror subgenre. Things jump out of the dark. Characters get grabbed from behind. There are gruesome deaths. We see ghosts, demons, and zombies. There's the obligatory scene in which people get chased down a hallway by a slow-moving villain.

Compared to the first Doctor Strange movie, depictions of the occult are much heavier. In this installment, Strange calls upon the spirits of the dead, and various characters use a form of possession that opens them up to evil forces. Despite these moments, the movie still manages a PG-13 rating. It's not family friendly, but it's not really horror either.

Throughout the film Strange keeps saying, "We know frighteningly little about the multiverse," but when he says "we," he must be referring to the scriptwriters. The rules of the multiverse don't make sense, and the movie doesn't deliver on the promised madness. The characters' actions also don't make sense.

Wanda's contrived motivation can't explain her bloodthirsty turn, and this film ruins the heartbreaking character we saw in *WandaVision*. Even worse, in some scenes she's omnipotent, and then a few seconds later she forgets she can create and destroy with a mere thought. A veneer of nuance attempts to turn Doctor Strange into the new Tony Stark, but the arrogant-white-guy-who-needs-to-feel cliché has lost its appeal.

The newly introduced hero doesn't fare better. The audience isn't given a reason to care about America. She's a young girl who hasn't lived long enough to develop a personality. Marvel Studios ticks its intersectionality boxes by introducing this new Latina superhero who, in the comics at least, is an outspoken lesbian. This younger film version doesn't announce her sexuality, but we see flashbacks of America's life with two moms.

Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness is a sad attempt to keep the increasingly unwieldy MCU moving toward another *Infinity War*–like showdown. This cinematic mess isn't so much a film as a lazy two-hour setup without any payoff. Captain America is rolling over in his grave. ■

MARVEL STUDIOS VIA AP

REAL-LIFE SCRIPT Ewen Montagu wrote *The Man Who Never Was* (1953), which sold 2 million and became a 1956 film.

BOX OFFICE TOP 10

WEEKEND OF MAY 13-15, ACCORDING TO BOX OFFICE MOJO. QUANTITY OF SEXUAL (S), VIOLENT (V), AND FOUL-LANGUAGE (L) CONTENT ON A 0-10 SCALE, WITH 10 HIGH, FROM KIDS-IN-MIND.COM

		S	V	L
1	**Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*** PG-13	1	7	4
2	**The Bad Guys*** PG	1	3	1
3	**Sonic the Hedgehog 2*** PG	1	3	3
4	**Firestarter** R	not rated		
5	**Everything Everywhere All at Once** R	not rated		
6	**Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore*** PG-13	1	5	1
7	**The Northman*** R	7	9	3
8	**The Lost City*** PG-13	4	5	5
9	**Family Camp*** PG	not rated		
10	**The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent** R	1	5	10

*REVIEWED BY WORLD



TOP 10 FOCUS

The Northman epitomizes the line from *Hamlet*, "to thine own self be true," and our world continues to embrace this idea. It's a pity neither the Vikings nor our own society seem to have much use for grace. —from Jim Hill's review of *The Northman*



SICILIAN FLIMFLAM

Operation Mincemeat tells the story behind a WWII disinformation campaign

by Bob Brown

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES—unless they're carrying documents detailing phony invasion plans of the European continent.

In *Operation Mincemeat*, the real-life tale of one of history's most successful military disinformation operations, in which a corpse played a vital role, marches onto the big screen in select theaters and on Netflix.

Riveting performances and elaborate sets help *Operation Mincemeat* rank among the best films about World War II, even with little combat action. While much of the derring-do takes place over teacups and typewriters, the dramatization of the plot to outwit the entire German army is nonetheless engrossing.

Expect some war-film casualties: two brief sensual scenes and more than a dozen instances of blasphemies and other foul language. *Operation Mincemeat* is rated PG-13.

The film opens in early 1943, when both Allied and Axis military commanders understood that Sicily was Germany's "soft underbelly," a vulnerable point of attack. If the Allies were to retake Europe, they'd have to invade through Italy's southern shores. But the German war machine would be waiting there, and the slaughter of Allied troops would number in the "tens of thousands," says British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (Simon Russell Beale). How could the Allies lure German troops away from Sicily?

Britain's intelligence service selects Ewen Montagu (Colin Firth) and Charles Cholmondeley (Matthew Macfayden) to head the Twenty Committee, a top-secret group charged with formulating an invasion ruse. The committee settles on a scheme to plant false letters, photos, and other "wallet litter" on the body of a dead man dressed as a British officer, and discreetly float the corpse into the path of Nazi agents on a beach in Spain. Most importantly, "Major William Martin" would be found shackled to a briefcase containing correspondence mentioning an Allied invasion of Greece.

Operation Mincemeat follows the Twenty Committee's painstaking efforts to concoct Maj. Martin's biographical backstory and assemble corroborative personal effects, all of which German intelligence would be sure to scrutinize.

Adm. John Godfrey (Jason Isaacs), who oversees the committee and reports to Churchill, opposes the plan, but his assistant, Lt. Cmdr. Ian Fleming (Johnny Flynn), who would begin writing James Bond novels a decade later, saw merit in the plan.

Suspicions arise that Montagu's brother is a Communist sympathizer—or worse, a spy for Russia. And Cholmondeley, a bachelor, resents the relationship developing between Montagu and Jean Leslie (Kelly Macdonald), a beautiful MI5 clerk serving on the committee. The war's outcome would hinge on the committee members' craftiness and camaraderie.

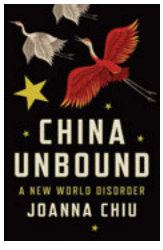
THE NORTHMAN: FOCUS FEATURES; OPERATION MINCEMEAT: GILES KEYTE/COURTESY SEE-SAW FILMS AND NETFLIX

Winning a cold war with China

Authors delve into the CCP's world strategy and brutal history

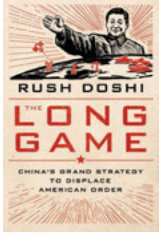
by Emily Whitten

IN A 2020 SPEECH, FBI Director Christopher Wray claimed, "The greatest long-term threat to our nation's information and intellectual property, and to our economic vitality, is ... China." This February, the U.S. intelligence community reaffirmed that view, describing China as a "near-peer competitor" that will challenge America "economically, militarily, and technologically." Yes, Putin's Russia is evil and dangerous, but China is the heavyweight fighter in the ring.



Four books can help Christians rise to the challenge. First, Joanna Chiu's *China Unbound: A New World Disorder* offers a longtime reporter's view of growing Chinese aggression. She's too quick to see colonialism and Trump behind China's actions. Still, she powerfully conveys the brutality of President Xi Jinping's government—both inside and outside the country.

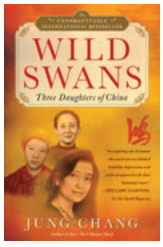
Readers hear stories of Uyghur reeducation camp survivors and persecuted human rights activists. Chiu also details Beijing's espionage and influence campaigns in Western countries like Australia, Canada, and the United States.



Second, Rush Doshi's *The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order* echoes the theme of earlier books. (See Michael Pillsbury's 2015 *The Hundred-Year Marathon*.) But Doshi, who serves as director for China on the National Security Council, offers a unique approach. He uses diaries, letters, speeches, and other writings of CCP officials to outline China's "grand strategy" to replace America as the world's leader.

Doshi's treasure trove of facts and quotes here will be too dry for the casual reader. But it provides policymakers and pundits with many specifics on China's real-world threats (mines, missiles, etc.) and policy objectives.

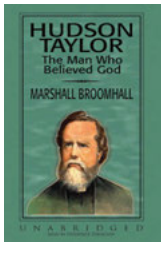
Third, to fully love our enemies—and disarm the spiritual powers behind them—we need more than political resolve. We need moral and spiritual clarity. Jung Chang's 1991 family memoir, *Wild Swans*, offers a riveting picture of moral courage at work.



Chang shows the communist revolution's appeal through the lives of her grandmother (pre-revolution) and her mother (a CCP revolutionary). But we also see Chang herself, a daughter of the revolution, struggle to admit the failure of communism in her generation. After decades of suffering, Chang's father finally asks, "It was for a fair society that I joined the communists. ... But what good has it done for the people?"

Wild Swans has sold over 10 million copies worldwide, despite being banned in China. One caution: Chang includes frank discussion of the cruelty of war as well as a non-Christian view of sexuality and God.

Finally, for spiritual courage, Christians might revisit the classic biography, *Hudson Taylor: The Man Who Believed God*. Marshall Broomhall published the print version of the biography in 1929 on behalf of Taylor's missionary society (now known as Overseas Missionary Fellowship). As a result, some of the book feels like hagiography, and we hear little about the Chinese people whom Taylor loved and served for more than 50 years.



Still, Broomhall offers readers some benefits—and they're especially enjoyable in the 2000 Blackstone Audio version. He draws readers into Taylor's difficulty in learning to follow Christ, especially trusting God for provision.

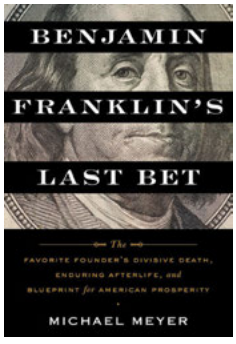
At one point, Broomhall movingly relates how Taylor gave his last coin to a poor woman's family. "The struggle had been keen and crucial, but now joy filled his soul. 'Not only was the poor woman's life saved' he later wrote, 'but my life, as I fully realized, had been saved, too.'"

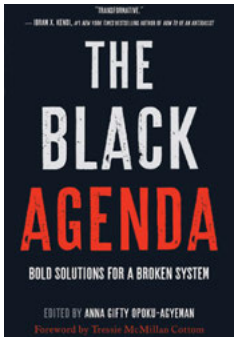
President Xi Jinping's government continues to persecute Chinese Christians and threaten freedom around the world. These four authors provide wise counsel needed to beat back darkness and win the new Cold War—not only "economically, militarily, and technologically," but spiritually as well. ■

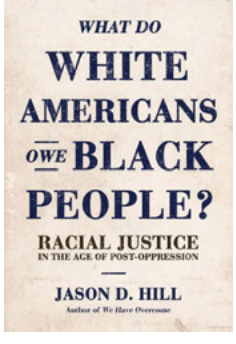
Lifting up or tearing down?

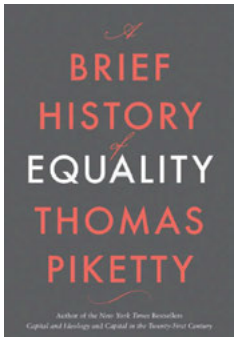
Books that touch on equality in the United States

by Timothy Lamer









BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S LAST BET **Michael Meyer**

In his will, Benjamin Franklin left money to Philadelphia and Boston to loan out to tradesmen for the following 200 years. The idea was both to help the tradesmen build businesses and to create a large fund that could go to the cities in the 1990s for civic improvements. It didn't work out quite that way: Meyer relates how Philadelphia squandered much of the money, while the trust that oversaw the money in Boston didn't invest it in the manner Franklin directed. The outcome should perhaps raise concerns about placing too many resources in the hands of government, although Meyer doesn't seem to share that concern. But he's certainly right that Americans should focus more resources on education at trade schools and fewer on universities with wealthy endowments. Philanthropists should give the money now, though, not over 200 years.

THE BLACK AGENDA **edited by Anna Gifty Opoku-Agyeman**

Several left-wing political ideas get a hearing in *The Black Agenda*. A few may be worth pursuing (such as hiring more black police officers), and some of the chapters tell compelling stories, such as Hedwig "Hedy" Lee's essay on the economic and emotional toll black women pay for the mass incarceration of black men. But if the book had room for a chapter on the role for queer creatives in environment sustainability, then surely it could have had a chapter on the need to restore the two-parent family, or about how mass immigration of low-skilled workers has held back wages among poor Americans (including poor black Americans).

WHAT DO WHITE AMERICANS OWE BLACK PEOPLE? **Jason D. Hill**

The author calls for an end to the "moral laziness" of racial tribalism. We owe it to each other to see one another as individuals, Hill writes, not as part of races. As for reparations, Hill argues they began with LBJ's Great Society welfare programs, and they were a disaster for poor black families. Interestingly for a libertarian, Hill contends that the violation of property rights in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (businesses could no longer turn away customers because of their race) was justified because the state itself had socialized whites into racism and needed to socialize them out of it. The logic he presents is persuasive. Readers don't have to agree with Hill's secular and sometimes surprising premises to agree with his conclusions.

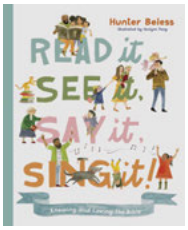
A BRIEF HISTORY OF EQUALITY
Thomas Piketty

The author takes a global look at the modest growth in economic equality over the past few hundred years, a result mainly of the growth of the middle class. The book is at its best (and most readable) when Piketty describes some of the injustices of the past. But Piketty sees the welfare state as an unalloyed positive (and a generator, rather than product, of prosperity) and doesn't take into account negative consequences. When he turns to America, for instance, he doesn't discuss whether the Great Society has had negative effects for the family or whether government spending on higher education has contributed to runaway tuition prices. This doesn't inspire confidence when he then urges the creation of transnational parliaments and the institution of global taxes on the wealthy to fund government spending in poor countries.

Faith-filled focus

Four recent books from Christian publishers

by Kristin Chapman



READ IT, SEE IT, SAY IT, SING IT! **Hunter Beless**
Beless' rhyming text celebrates the blessing of reading, seeing, saying, and singing Scripture: "We read it out loud, so we hear what God says. We see it to crave it and eat it like bread. We say it to hide its truths deep in our hearts. We sing it so others can come and take part." The book's message points families to worship that extends beyond Sunday services and shows children how God's Word can help them day to day. Hsulynn Pang's illustrations incorporate Scripture verses and references and feature diverse families throughout the pages. *(Ages 3-7)*

POLLY AND THE SCREEN TIME OVERLOAD
Betsy Childs Howard

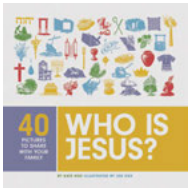


When Polly receives a tablet computer for her birthday, it consumes her attention and prevents her from enjoying the simple pleasures of her grandparents' farm. Instead of riding Mustard the horse, she watches silly horse videos. Rather than building a fort with her cousins, she plays a digital castle game. Gamps offers Polly wise advice: "God has given us many good gifts, but he says we can only truly enjoy them when they don't take over our lives." A note to parents offers ways to avoid screen time overload. *(Ages 3-7)*



GWEN TELLS TALES **Edward T. Welch**
After Gwen spends her evening playing games rather than studying for a test, she thinks her parents will never know. But one deception leads to another until Gwen realizes she can no longer hide the truth. When she confesses, Gwen's parents point her to Jesus: "Following Jesus doesn't mean we won't do wrong things. … But it does mean that when we do, we ask Jesus for help and forgiveness." The afterword gives suggestions for helping children overcome lying and includes a tear-out page of "Back Pocket Bible Verses." *(Ages 4-9)*

WHO IS JESUS? **Kate Hox**



In this 40-day family devotional, Hox helps children learn more about Jesus by exploring the salvation story through the framework of Jesus' many identities. The text also shows children how Old Testament foreshadowing and New Testament imagery point to Jesus. In one example, Hox explains how the flood and Noah's ark could not fix our sin problem, but God "provided a way for us to escape the floodwaters of sin" through Jesus, our perfect ark. Each entry features a corresponding picture, discussion questions, and related Scripture verses. *(Ages 4-11)*

Afterword



Charlie Mackesy's 2019 book *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse* currently reigns as Amazon's bestselling literary graphic novel with an average five-star rating from more than 96,000 reviews. For Mackesy, a successful British artist, the artwork is primary. Sometimes his four characters appear in full color paintings, other times they show up as half-finished sketches. But he holds them together visually with a landscape that feels a bit like E.H. Shepard's illustrations of *Winnie-the-Pooh in the Hundred Acre Wood*.

Mackesy does weave a slight plot as the boy journeys to meet each animal, but his poetry and scenes often stand alone. Themes include kindness, friendship, and encouragement to overcome fears and "follow your dreams." Although our culture often makes an idol of human desires, parents can remind young readers that we don't follow our loves, dreams, and feelings apart from God. With God, though, these good gifts can be a blessing to us and those around us. *—Emily Whitten*

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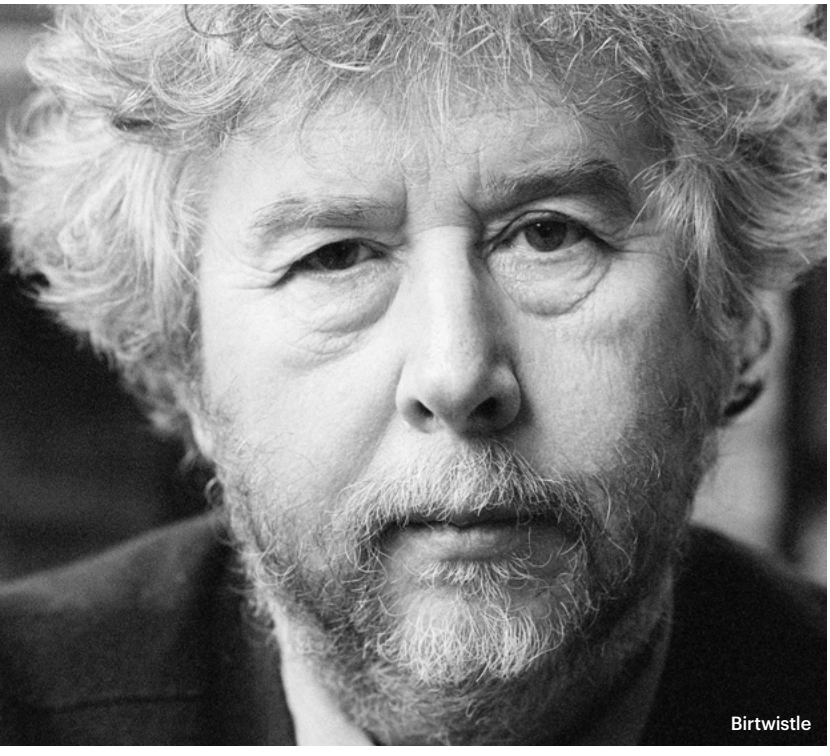
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Classical music lost three greats

Harrison Birtwistle, Nicholas Angelich, and Radu Lupu died within 48 hours

by Arsenio Orteza



Birtwistle

WITHIN 48 HOURS in the middle of April, the classical music world suffered the loss of the British composer Harrison Birtwistle, 87, the American pianist Nicholas Angelich, 51, and the Romanian pianist Radu Lupu, 76.

While they lived, Birtwistle and Lupu enjoyed the greatest acclaim. In terms of posthumous reaction, however, Lupu's death sparked the most effusive commentary.

This disparity should not be taken as a judgment on the lives or the accomplishments of these men. It's as musicians that they entered the public consciousness, and it's as musicians that they should be evaluated.

Birtwistle lived to see (and, one presumes, to hear) the latest recording of his works, ***Harrison Birtwistle: Chamber Works*** by the Nash Ensemble. Released in January, it surrounds the 2018 revision of his captivating 1981 oboe-and-percussion piece *Pulse Sampler* with compositions of more recent vintage.



One of these, the 20-minute 2018 *Duet for Eight Strings*, was, in fact, composed for the Nash Ensemble's Lawrence Power (viola) and Adrian Brendel (cello) and has never been recorded before. Like the rest of the album, it proceeds in jagged lines suggestive more of rugged peaks and the dread that accompanies such terrain than of valleys and luxuriant foliage.

Nicholas Angelich released his final album, ***Prokofiev***, at the tail end of 2020. If at the time of the recording he was suffering any effects associated with the chronic lung disease that took his life, they do not show.

His playing on the 20 short pieces that comprise the *Visions Fugitives* in particular evinces the sensitivity and sureness of touch that made him an in-demand concert pianist. Also, he knew how to structure a program. The five excerpts from *10 Pieces from Romeo and Juliet* would provide a fitting climax to any Prokofiev evening.



Which leaves Radu Lupu. The near opposite of his partial contemporary Glenn Gould, Lupu avoided Bach, gave few interviews, and felt more comfortable on stage than in the studio. While Gould played with a crystalline, harpsichord-like precision, Lupu played with a dreamlike fluidity.

It was sometimes said that for a pianist of his stature, Lupu recorded little, but his now out-of-print 2015 ***Complete Recordings*** box contains 28 discs.



Over a third of those are given over to Schubert. But it's in his performances of Beethoven (six discs) and Mozart (seven) that what made him unique comes most obviously to the fore: a sound so light that it's hard to believe his fingers were touching the keys. ■

THE NASH ENSEMBLE is a London chamber ensemble founded in 1964. It won a Grammy in 2002 for contemporary music.

FRANS SCHELLEKENS/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

CCM has good niches

Contemporary Christian Music still offers some quality albums

by Arsenio Orteza

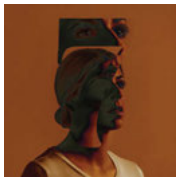
THE AMAZING GRACE John Elefante
This generally hard-rocking progressive-rock project kicks off with a sneeze-and-you'll-miss-it recitation from the Sermon on the Mount, and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. But some of those parts are impressive. Beatle-esque doors open in "Stronger Now" and "Time Machine," allowing magical-mystery winds to waft through and keep the inertia to which this sort of music is prone from setting in, while Elefante's overdubbing himself into a vocal ensemble enlivens the power ballads. Un-overdubbed, his voice remains as strong as it was 40 years ago when he debuted as the lead singer of Kansas. And, yes, you can still detect traces of that band. Only Kansas haters will object.



WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? For KING & COUNTRY
Joel and Luke Smallbone continue to match melodies and words with an algorithmic precision that could move Silicon Valley execs to jealousy. So what's with all the auto-tune? Do they really think that it's necessary to capture the ear of today's youth? Apparently so, since in "Unsung Hero," a beautiful and moving song for their father (whose older-generation ears presumably don't require such techno lubrication), they dispense with the gimmick altogether. Still, it's a tribute to their song craft and their singing that even with the auto-tune they achieve what all serious pop musicians aim for: songs that embed themselves and play in one's head long after they're done playing on one's device of choice.



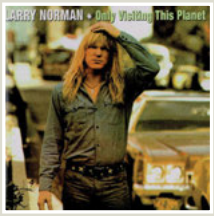
SEVEN Brooke Ligertwood
A major-label pop star in her native New Zealand for the last 20 years, Brooke Ligertwood (née Fraser) knows her way around a catchy hook and an attention-getting lyric. So it's no surprise that the songs that she and her husband Scott have assembled for her first "praise and worship" album are a cut above the norm, borrowed elements (such as the echoey, Joshua Tree–like propulsion of "Ancient Gates") and all. What is surprising is the turn to introspection that the album takes halfway through. Despite being performed onstage before an audience, "Communion (Meditation)" (an instrumental), "Nineveh" (Ligertwood makes an especially convincing Jonah), and "Burn" take on the intimacy of a still, small voice.



BRIGHTER DAYS Blessing Offor
This alumnus of *The Voice* and *Platinum Hit* crafts inspirational pop just generic enough not to alienate fans turned off by explicitly Christian messaging. Yet none of these six songs (plus the "radio version" of the title track) sound calculated. Instead, they sound like the natural expression of a compassionate soul determined to meet troubled people where they are because he has been there too. And he has. Blind since childhood, "he wants," says *The Voice*'s website, "to prove that one can achieve one's dreams despite adversity." His singing is flexible yet firm enough to show the gospel chord changes to which he's partial who's boss. And his 2015 purely pop album *Roots* isn't exactly chopped liver.



Encore



Larry Norman's ***Only Visiting This Planet***, a record long considered the best Christian-rock platter ever recorded, turns 50 this year. As of this writing, neither Norman's Bandcamp page nor larrynorman.com has teased anniversary editions, but the album, deluxe reissues of which already exist, hardly needs one. Artfully conceived and flawlessly executed, it not only reflected the contentiousness of the U.S. circa 1972 but also, in "Why Don't You Look into Jesus?" and "The Outlaw," tendered a solution.

Some details haven't aged well. The three-network roll call in "I Am the Six O'Clock News" could use expanding, the socio-political clichés underlying approximately half of "The Great American Novel" are naïve even for clichés, and "I Wish We'd All Been Ready" can still awaken memories of the 1970's Rapture craze. But because the U.S. remains contentious, and because the solution remains the same, the majority of the album's songs sound as relevant as—and in some ways more relevant than—ever. —*A.O.*



The community room

The high stakes of senior living

DON'T BE FOOLED by the bottle-top tokens. Over at Brook Manor, they play bingo like they mean it.

"O-68." (Long pause.)

"N-32." (Long pause.)

I finger my game card, a sturdy cardboard one with extra-large print, as a litany of letters and numbers rolls over the PA like a Saturday night auction. The seniors take time to shakily make their moves, and I take time to contemplate how serving God may as easily take you to Africa as here, alongside 25 residents in the community room where women players, I notice, outnumber the men 7 to 1.

Contributing to the lesser part of that ratio is popular Mr. Castilaw, hunkered down at a table in the far corner. He never misses the weekly bingo games. Claims they have astounding medicinal properties, he does. "I didn't know what four nickels could do," the retired laborer tells me, referring to the potential (and assured) winnings offered to players. "Someone can be in their room, not stirring, and the word gets around that we're about to play bingo."

Mr. Castilaw leans in closer, and I lean in, too, struggling to hear him.

"Let's just say I've seen it raise the dead," he finishes in a whisper, just before breaking into a gum-baring cackle. I raise my eyebrows, but hey, a little nursing home humor never hurt anybody, right?

"I-29. B-15. N-45."

"Bingo," someone murmured up front.

"Didn't say it loud enough," a player pipes back, and it's true. The majority of their bingos are weak declarations. Some voices are strained. Others are monotone. One reminds me of Froggy from the Little Rascals. But they know the routine, these wizened ones, and they move on before the announcer gets her "clear your cards" out. They keep the pace going, slowed only by some excitement at the table in the right rear. Apparently two players have bingoed at once.

TIME PASSES, AND WE'RE GETTING CLOSE. I'M GETTING CLOSE. FOUR SPACES LEFT.

Meanwhile, a Vietnam vet wearing a tell-tale cap makes wise cracks, which are ignored by an announcer who does not appear to be easily amused. Perhaps it's above her pay grade.

"N-33."

"I bingo!" shouts a little round-faced lady at the center table. Her next-chair neighbor, wearing a necklace and Nikes, doesn't flinch. I wonder what she thinks of the teen volunteer's fingernails, the psychedelic ones on the hand moving her token? The high school junior is here on a mission, the kind that involves doling out Kool-Aid and appropriate amounts of cheese puffs. This bingo stuff is an add-on, but she's smiling.

"O-73."

I decide to introduce myself to the competition, solemn Mary Louise, who has anchored her free space with a piece of red plastic that once belonged atop a gallon of milk. Her board is filling fast. She does not care to talk.

"G-55. B-7. G-58."

"G as in girl?" someone asks. The answer is yes, and with that we losers await a new announcer's command, and it's soon obvious that the coming high-stakes round—something called blackout—is the real draw for this crowd. In blackout the goal is to cover your whole game card with tokens, not just a five-space line. We are warned that the announcer will say the letter/number combos only once. Only once. Got it? "So listen up," she directs from her spot by the piano. Things get quiet, even back in Mr. Castilaw's corner.

"N-37. O-70. G-46. G-57. B-13."

Time passes, and we're getting close. I'm getting close. Four spaces left. But suddenly, it's not "bingo" we hear, but "blackout." The lady to my left with the fuchsia bow in her hair takes the prize—a crisp dollar bill. Moments later wheelchairs and walkers create a traffic jam in the hallway heading home.

Not everyone is so quick to leave, though. Mr. Castilaw pulls me aside and recounts that last round as if it were Super Bowl action. Listening to the play-by-play, I discover he wasn't particularly impressed by the winner's one-dollar prize. "Last week," he says with a frustrated shake of his head, "it was two."

That's okay, I want to tell him. Last week I wouldn't have thought an hour of bingo was much of anything. I stand corrected. ■

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GOD'S WORLD NEWS

A CENTURY AGO, HUMANISM BEGAN ITS DANCE WITH DEATH; NOW IT'S PICKING UP TEMPO

GOOD WITHOUT GOD?

by BONNIE PRITCHETT



Jack Kevorkian unveils his then-prototype assisted-suicide machine in 1990.

STEVEN R. NICKERSON/DETROIT FREE PRESS/ZUMA WIRE/ALAMY

THE RIGHT-TO-DIE MOVEMENT has a theme song. And it's a pretty lively tune. In the video for "This Is Your Show," Carmen Ruby Floyd and eight members of the Harlem Gospel Choir are stacked like the Hollywood Squares, grooving as a ukulele player plinks out the cheery opening melody. By the chorus, the orchestra has joined in:

This is your show!
Before the curtains close,
Before the lights go low,
You're gonna take control!
You're awake right now.
And when you take your bow,
You're gonna sing out loud: "This is my life!"

Composed for the right-to-die advocacy group Compassion & Choices, the song is supposed to inspire "joyful messages" about suicide. It's about "personal empowerment, autonomy, gratitude and planning for an end-of-life experience aligned with your values and priorities," the group's website says.

Proponents of "death with dignity" have championed the right of people suffering from terminal illness to die when—and in whatever way—they choose. From the doctor-sanctioned death of a newborn boy in 1915 to the court-sanctioned deaths of three young women—Karen Ann Quinlan, Nancy Cruzan, and Terri Schiavo—right-to-die activists have fought for more than a century to turn a fringe ideology into mainstream thinking and mainstream medical care.

And they're rapidly gaining ground.

Vermont: On April 27, Gov. Phil Scott signed a bill amending the state's right-to-die law. It ends the required in-person medical consultation when requesting a lethal prescription. Now, a telemed exam will do. The bill also removes the final 48-hour waiting period for obtaining the drugs.

Oregon: In March, state health authorities ditched the law's residency requirement. The change could open the state to suicide tourism. Some jurisdictions are awaiting legal guidance. For example, questions remain about giving lethal prescriptions to nonresidents, who then ingest the drugs back home, in a state where assisted suicide is illegal.

But the new rules mean that, in general, non-Oregonians can plan a final trip to the Beaver State. They must meet the remaining criteria before being able to obtain the deadly drugs, including a 48-hour waiting period between their first and second requests.

California: Beginning in January, the state shortened its waiting period to only 48 hours between requests.

Hawaii: The Aloha State is hashing out details in a bill that would add "advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants" to the list of people who can write lethal prescriptions. The bill also allows telemedicine exams.

Assisted suicide is now legal in the four states above, plus Washington, Colorado, New Jersey, Maine, and Washington, D.C. The state of Montana doesn't have a statute that specifically authorizes doctors to help patients kill themselves. But in a 2009 case, the state Supreme Court found that Montana doesn't have a law making it illegal, either.

The assisted suicide revolution is accelerating. Ever-progressive Oregon blazed the trail, becoming the first state to legalize physician-assisted suicide in 1994. It took 14 years for Washington to follow suit in 2008, followed by Vermont in 2013. But a 2021 *Pepperdine Law Review* analysis notes that it took just five more years for five states and the District of Columbia to legalize physician-assisted suicide.

Since last year, 21 state legislatures have introduced right-to-die legislation.

A NEW RELIGION

"For all of human history there have been two competing philosophies about human life," said James Bopp, an attorney for the National Right to Life Committee.

"One is the Judeo-Christian belief in the sanctity of each individual human life," Bopp said. "That each individual human life should be protected and not taken. The competing view is that the value of life is relative to your functioning level."

The seeds of this view began to take root in mainstream science in 1883. Inspired by his cousin Charles Darwin, the British polymath Sir Francis Galton coined the term *eugenics*. Boiled down, eugenics is the study of how to breed desirable humans. The term knits together the Greek words for "good" and "origins."

Galton came to view human development pragmatically—as a kind of husbandry. He referred to the men and women doing the reproducing as "stock" and believed that controlled breeding could improve successive generations.

In a 1904 article published in *The American Journal of Sociology*, Galton wrote that selecting and cultivating the finer traits in dogs can be equally applied to humans. Qualities are generally either desirable (such as health, energy, ability, and manliness) or undesirable (sickness, frivolity, foolishness). Society should conserve the former and reduce the latter through selective breeding, Galton wrote.

"What nature does blindly, slowly, and ruthlessly, man may do providently, quickly, and kindly," he wrote.



Demonstrators in 1985 hold signs on the steps of the Supreme Court backing Oregon's physician-assisted-suicide law.

But even as Galton ejected soul and spirit, stripping humans down to our material parts, he argued that eugenics must be "introduced into the national conscience, like a new religion."

A NEW FAITH FOR A NEW DAY

In 1929, a former Baptist pastor did just that.

Charles Francis Potter grew up in the late 1800s in Marlboro, Mass., the son of a shoe factory worker. Influenced by his family's Baptist faith, Potter began preaching as a teenager and was ordained at 17.

By 1914, he had abandoned Biblical orthodoxy and become a Unitarian pastor, according to the Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society.

In a series of public debates with Baptist Pastor John Roach Straton of Calvary Baptist Church in Manhattan, Potter questioned the veracity of the virgin birth, the deity of Jesus, and the Bible's creation narrative.

That caught the attention of Clarence Darrow, who represented John Scopes, a public school teacher. In 1925, Scopes went on trial for violating a Tennessee law that prohibited the teaching of evolutionary theory in public schools. Potter served as Darrow's Biblical adviser.

Eventually, even the Unitarian idea of God became untenable for Potter, and he founded a quasi-religious group called the First Humanist Society of New York.

He called it "a new faith for a new day."

Humanism's appeal was already growing in the U.S., drawing adherents mostly from the halls of academia and society elites. By 1941 humanism's cultural creep had spread across the nation, giving birth to the American Humanist Association.

Eschewing the existence of the supernatural, the AHA affirms humanity's "ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good."

At its core, humanism is also about personal autonomy—in life and in death. Harvard University's humanist chaplain Greg Epstein once summed up the ethos this way: "In short, humanism is being good without God."

Guided by those principles, Potter founded another, not-so-unrelated group in 1938—the Euthanasia Society of America, or ESA. Turning the 2,500-year-old Hippocratic Oath on its head, the ESA advocated ending human suffering by ending human life.

JAY MAILLIN/BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY IMAGES

WEEDING THE HUMAN GARDEN

ESA had only been in business for two years when Potter delivered a prescient speech, according to Ian Dowbiggin, a history professor at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. Dowbiggin, who writes on the history of medicine, quoted Potter's address in the *Journal of Policy History* in 2002: "Euthanasia, or merciful release from suffering, is rapidly emerging from the stage when it was considered merely the obsession of a few left-wing social reformers to the period when it is being recognized as an important social measure in the same class with birth control and eugenics."

In fact, eugenics ideology permeated the ESA board of directors. Among them, Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger.

She declared her low regard for some humans in a 1957 interview with reporter Mike Wallace. He asked her if she believed in a God who punishes or rewards people after death. Did she believe in sin?

"Well, I think that the greatest sin is bringing children into the world that have disease from their parents, that have no chance in the world to be a human being, practically. Delinquents, prisoners, all sorts of things just marked when they're born. To me that is the greatest sin that people can commit."

And Potter had another famous female contemporary: Helen Keller, who was blind and deaf—and pro-euthanasia. A bout with scarlet fever as an infant left Keller in a dark and silent world. As a child, she became incorrigible. But after teacher Anne Sullivan taught Keller to use sign language, the child's whole world opened up. Keller graduated from college in 1904 and became an outspoken advocate for women's suffrage, the poor, and the disabled.

But her advocacy for the disabled only went so far.

In 1915, a baby named John Bollinger was born. The child had no external right ear and his right shoulder was attached directly to the right side of his head, which itself was abnormally large. Also, his colon was malformed. Surgery could have remedied the more life-threatening problems. But the mother's doctor, a eugenicist named Harry Haiselden, refused to treat the baby and told his parents their son would be better off dead. The boy died from lack of treatment five days later.

Haiselden defended his actions in a *Chicago Tribune* account. "I would not kill the infant. I would not administer poison or take its life by any active surgical means. I shall merely stand by passively and let it die. I will let nature complete its bungled job."

Keller was among those who defended Haiselden. In a letter to *The New Republic*, she called Baby Bollinger's life "not worthwhile." Allowing him to die was the "weeding of the human garden."

"It is the possibilities of happiness, intelligence and power that give life its sanctity," Keller wrote, "and they are absent in the case of a poor, misshapen, paralyzed, unthinking creature."

RESPONSIBLE DEATH

Public eugenics campaigns fell into disfavor after World War II. But low regard for "defective" humans had already infected the culture—and, following in Potter's footsteps, people who once held Biblical orthodoxy in high regard showed increasingly low regard for their fellow humans.

"It is the possibilities of happiness, intelligence and power that give life its sanctity."

Remember, Potter appointed Margaret Sanger to the board of the Euthanasia Society of America. In the late 1960s, the Rev. Henry Pitney Van Dusen echoed Potter's observation that Planned Parenthood and the euthanasia movement were opposite points along the same spectrum.

"Popular attention centers on the Planned Parenthood movement at the other end of life," said Van Dusen, who led the progressive Union Theological Seminary for 18 years. Euthanasia, he added, "is concerned with the responsible termination of life. The more we can relate these two movements practically the better, because they are both concerned with the responsible care of human life, one at its beginning and the other at its end."

The pastor practiced what he preached. In 1975, Van Dusen completed a suicide pact with his wife, Elizabeth. Neither was dying, but their health was declining. "Who wants to die in a nursing home?" they asked in a suicide note. Their deaths made national headlines.

That same year Karen Ann Quinlan celebrated a friend's birthday, oblivious that her name would soon make headlines and advance the right-to-die movement.

TRAGIC TRIO

Quinlan was 21 years old and at her friend's birthday party when she fell into a coma after reportedly ingesting alcohol and diet pills. Doctors said she was in a persistent vegetative





LEFT: Julia and Joseph Quinlan look through a scrapbook about their daughter, Karen Ann. RIGHT: Nancy Cruzan two years before her accident.

state—a kind of waking coma—and would never recover. Her parents, Joseph and Julia Quinlan, asked doctors to remove her respirator, arguing their daughter would not want to live that way. Her doctors refused. The Quinlans appealed to a judge and lost. But the New Jersey Supreme Court agreed to hear their case and in 1976 ruled in the Quinlans' favor.

The landmark decision established in New Jersey the right to refuse medical treatment—or the "right to die." It also allowed for surrogates to make that decision for an incapacitated person.

Attorney James Bopp said the court's decision set a terrible precedent. At the time he was president of the National Legal Center for the Medically Dependent and Disabled.

"Our argument was that her quality of life should not be judged in order to determine what medical treatment should be provided," Bopp said. His organization filed an amicus brief in the case. "That was discrimination based on disability and … she had an equally valuable life and was entitled to full protection of the law."

Following the court ruling, Quinlan's doctors removed her respirator. But she continued breathing on her own for almost 10 years and received food and hydration through a feeding tube. Her parents did not request its removal.

"They weren't ready to do that," Bopp said.

Quinlan's was the first of a tragic trio of very public cases that took the right-to-die debate from fringe groups to state capitals to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The second was Nancy Cruzan, a 25-year-old Missouri woman. In 1983, a traffic accident left Cruzan in a persistent vegetative state. Like Quinlan, she received food and hydration through a feeding tube. Cruzan's parents, Lester and Joyce, said she would not want to live that way, and, in 1989, took their case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The high court held that the Due Process Clause supports a person's right to refuse medical treatment, even if doing so leads to his or her death. But it also upheld Missouri's law that, in order for a surrogate to make that decision for an incompetent person, they must present "clear and convincing evidence" that the incompetent person wanted to withdraw life-sustaining care.

The Cruzans returned to lower courts with additional testimony from Nancy's friends, who said she told them she would not want to live as she was. The parents prevailed. Doctors removed Cruzan's feeding tube on Dec. 14, 1990. She died 12 days later.

That same year, Terri Schiavo, a 26-year-old Florida woman, suffered an unknown injury that left her in a persistent vegetative state. The Quinlan and Cruzan precedents laid the foundation for the life-or-death battle over Schiavo's life 15 years later.

QUINLANS: BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES; CRUZAN: KEITH PHILPOTT/GETTY IMAGES



Terri Schiavo smiles at her mother, Mary Schindler.

Her husband Michael Schiavo insisted his wife would want the feeding tube removed. He hired right-to-die activist and attorney George Felos to represent him—not his wife—in court.

Terri Schiavo's parents, Mary and Bob Schindler, fought back. And by 2005 Terri was the focal point of an international debate over the right to die—or live—and who got to make that decision when the patient couldn't speak for herself.

By the time the battle began playing out in court, medical ethicist Wesley Smith concluded pro-life advocates had little legal ground to stand on.

"Terri's case was going back to ground that was clearly surrendered," he said.

Terri's feeding tube was removed March 18, 2005. She died of dehydration 14 days later.

A LITTLE HELP

When physicians in the 1970s began affirming a patient's right to refuse treatment for terminal illnesses, they stopped short of expediting a patient's death—especially if, like Terri Schiavo, patients could not speak for themselves.

Their concerns were not unfounded, Wesley Smith told WORLD in 2021.

"You're surrounded by forces that are really powerful, that are seeking to push the most marginal and vulnerable among us out of the lifeboat," Smith said. "The cultural flow, if you will, of these bioethics cases are moving away from a sanctity of life, equality of life approach toward a utilitarian quality of life approach."

As often happens with progressive causes, the right-to-die movement soon began eating its own.

In 1975, Jean Humphry was suffering from cancer. According to her husband, Derek Humphry, the couple agreed that he would lace her coffee with a lethal dose of drugs. He did, and Jean died. The next year, 1976, Humphry married Ann Wickett. Together, the newlyweds wrote a book about Jean's death.

FROM 2003 TO 2005, 26-YEAR-OLD TERRI SCHIAVO BECAME A CAUSE CÉLÈBRE FOR ACTIVISTS PROMOTING THE RIGHT TO DIE—AND THE RIGHT TO LIVE. NOW, WORLD RADIO IS REVEALING THE UNTOLD STORY BEHIND THE SCHIAVO CASE IN A NEW TRUE CRIME PODCAST, *LAWLESS*. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT LAWLESSPODCAST.COM.

MATT MAY/GETTY IMAGES

> "You're surrounded by forces that are really powerful, that are seeking to push the most marginal and vulnerable among us out of the lifeboat."

Then, in 1980, Humphry and Ann co-founded the Hemlock Society, a group that promotes assisted suicide, with University of Southern California professor Gerald Larue.

Larue was yet another ex-pastor who embraced humanism and styled himself a debunker of Bible stories and miracles.

In 1986, Humphry and Ann helped her parents commit suicide. They wrote a book about that too. Five years later, Humphry published *Final Exit: The Practicalities of Self-Deliverance and Assisted Suicide for the Dying*. By then, Ann had been diagnosed with cancer. Humphry left her. A bitter and very public divorce ensued. She took her own life on an Oregon mountainside in October 1991.

In her suicide note, Ann accused Humphry of driving her to do it. She also accused him of having suffocated his first wife, Jean.

DR. DEATH

Not content with taking matters into their own hands like Humphry, or with doctors simply removing life-sustaining care, right-to-die activists began lobbying for doctors to take an active role in facilitating patient suicides.

By the early 1990s they were gaining support. Activists prevailed upon state lawmakers to legalize physician-assisted suicide, now called medical assistance in dying, or MAID. Such protocols allow doctors to prescribe lethal medication to terminally ill patients who then take them on their own.

In Michigan, retired pathologist Jack Kevorkian mocked those advances and called physician-assisted suicide "insufficient medical care." He argued that doctors had a duty to end their patients' suffering.

"I want this to be a medical service that's controlled. It isn't now. It's all hit or miss," Kevorkian told *PBS NewsHour* anchor Robert McNeil in June 1990, two days after he helped 54-year-old Janet Adkins kill herself.

Undaunted by the laws of God or man, Kevorkian had created a simple device that fed lethal doses of drugs through intravenous lines into his "patients," as he referred to them. As Kevorkian watched, the patient pushed a button and released the lethal cocktail of thiopental and potassium chloride.

Adkins, a retired teacher and Hemlock Society member, wasn't terminally ill. She wasn't suffering with intolerable pain. She had early-onset Alzheimer's and didn't want to live with the disease.

On June 4, 1990, at a county park near Holly, Mich., Adkins lay in the back of Kevorkian's white 1968 Volkswagen van. He hooked her up to his suicide machine and showed her the button that would start the lethal injection. Adkins pressed it. Kevorkian watched her die.

That was death with dignity?

After 10 years and about 130 deaths, Kevorkian earned two things: A 10- to 25-year sentence for second-degree murder (he served eight) and the American Humanist Association Hero Award.

WHO DECIDES?

Kevorkian's macabre campaign, along with a steady drumbeat of court cases and ever-nuanced medical terminology, helped to advance the right-to-die cause. But where doctors and legislators fail to protect patients, some faith-based groups and hospitals still do. In October 2019, religious leaders representing Islam, Judaism, and Protestant, Orthodox, and Catholic Christians met at the Vatican to sign a joint statement opposing physician-assisted suicide.

But right-to-die advocates aren't sitting still for that. In a 2021 op-ed published by the Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Kim Callinan, president of Compassion & Choices (the right-to-die group with the catchy theme song) wrote, "It will take continued, persistent efforts to ensure that people are able to make their own end-of-life care decisions based on their conscience—free from interference by religiously-affiliated healthcare entities."

Meanwhile, U.S. right-to-die organizations, such as Death with Dignity, Final Exit Network, and the Hemlock Society of San Diego (HSSD), continue to press their suicide agenda.

The San Diego group issued a statement lauding the state's new, reduced waiting period: In "most progressive nations of Western Europe and Canada, individuals do not need a terminal diagnosis to access medical assistance in dying. … Until California adopts this more enlightened criterion for MAID, HSSD will continue to crusade for California to become a progressive state as so many of its leaders proclaim it to be. We still have work to do." ■


EQUAL JUSTIC
UNDER LAW

A ROE BY MANY OTHER NAMES

Regardless of how the U.S. Supreme Court rules in this summer's big abortion case, pro-life efforts in several states will be stunted by state-level court rulings that declared an implicit right to abortion in the state constitutions

BY LEAH SAVAS IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

ILLUSTRATION BY KRIEG BARRIE

ON A CHILLY and overcast Saturday morning in April, two young men and a blonde woman with a GoPro strapped on over her puffy black coat stood on the sidewalk by a busy five-way intersection in Grand Rapids, Mich. Next to them, a large A-frame sign displayed a picture of a bloody and mangled aborted baby to the surrounding businesses and restaurants. Over the swishing of passing cars and squealing of brakes, a woman shouted from a vehicle, "Shame on you! My body, my choice!"

Kayla Pomper, the blonde with the GoPro, is a 25-year-old wife and mom of two. She has been doing these twice-a-month volunteer "outreaches" with the pro-life group Protect Life Michigan for a little more than a year. The idea is to start conversations about abortion with people on the street in hopes of helping them understand why abortion is wrong.

Compared to downtown Grand Rapids, where that kind of angry opposition is more common, she said people she meets in Eastown tend to be more apathetic about abortion: personally pro-life but not wanting to intrude on a woman's decision. With people like that, she's been trying to bring up a new talking point lately: the pro-abortion efforts to add an "abortion right" to the state constitution. "It does seem to change people's hearts," said Pomper. "And they realize the extremes that our state is starting to go to to make [abortion] legal."

One possible way this could happen is through an amendment: Pro-abortion

groups have until July to collect enough signatures to get an abortion rights amendment on the November ballot. Another common avenue in other states is through a court ruling. Recent lawsuits over a dormant Michigan pro-life law prod the majority pro-abortion state Supreme Court to read that "abortion right" into the existing language of the constitution. Either avenue could open the door to even late-term abortions—currently illegal in Michigan.

Efforts like that have Pomper more concerned than excited about the future of the unborn in her state following the expected release of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the abortion case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. A leaked draft of a majority opinion suggests the court may overturn the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion nationwide. If that ruling stands, it could allow pro-life laws currently unenforceable under *Roe* to take effect. Pro-lifers in Michigan hoped their state's 1931 law banning abortion except to save a mother's life would be one of those. But on May 17 the judge in a case brought by Planned Parenthood temporarily ruled to prevent its future enforcement, bringing the state one step closer to a court-invented right to abortion.

In some states, the possibility pro-lifers face in Michigan has already become a reality. Since *Roe*, a number of state Supreme Courts have issued rulings declaring abortion rights to be implicit in the language of state constitutions—basically state-level versions of *Roe v. Wade*. Even in majority pro-life states, such court opinions have stunted pro-life efforts for years and will continue to shield abortion access against legislative attempts regardless of the ruling in the *Dobbs* case. While pro-life activists work to reverse the effects of those existing rulings, pro-lifers in other states are watching cases unfold that could lead to similar state-level versions of *Roe* and are doing what they can to fight back.



A FEW HUNDRED pro-lifers left a rally in the Montana State Capitol building for the 2022 annual state March for Life on a sunny January day in snow-covered Helena. Instead of marching around the capitol as they would in a normal year, the gathered pro-lifers carrying signs walked to the state Supreme Court building. There, they stood by the front steps as Jeff Laszloffy, president of the Montana Family Foundation, explained why they were deviating from their normal route: The Montana courts have been preventing enforcement of pro-life laws passed by the legislature, and pro-life Montanans want that to stop.

"We know that if we win *Dobbs* and *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, then it kicks the issue back to the states, and that means that Montana is going to have to come up with a mechanism to be able to outlaw abortion in the state that actually sticks," Laszloffy said later. "We went over to the [state] court ... to put the court on notice: We understand that *Dobbs* could go our way."

The same month as the Helena march, the Montana attorney general filed a brief asking the Montana Supreme Court to allow the state to enforce three 2021 pro-life laws held up by court order and to overturn *Armstrong v. State*, a state Supreme Court ruling that in 1999 read a right to abortion into the state constitution.

At issue in *Armstrong* was a law prohibiting physician assistants from performing abortions. The doctors,

KEVIN DIETSCH/GETTY IMAGES



Pro-abortion and anti-abortion activists protest alongside each other during a demonstration outside of the Supreme Court.

physician assistants, and abortion facility that filed the lawsuit claimed the law violated the Montana Constitution's right to privacy, and the state Supreme Court agreed. In the years since, Laszloffy has seen the effects of that 1999 decision on pro-life legislation: "*Armstrong* is always the hinge point that gets our legislation defeated."

John Stemberger, president of the pro-life Florida Family Policy Council, told a similar story of a 1989 case in his state known as *In re T.W.* In the decision, the Florida Supreme Court ruled that a 1988 law requiring minors to get parental consent before obtaining an abortion violated the right to privacy that the people of Florida had voted to add to the state constitution in 1980. "We've been living with that since 1989," Stemberger said.

A similar ruling came to pro-lifers in Iowa almost two decades later. In 2018, a decision from the Iowa Supreme Court in the case of a 72-hour waiting period law took Pulse Life Advocates Executive Director Maggie DeWitte by surprise. She didn't realize until a meeting with pro-life attorneys later that summer what exactly it meant. "[They] basically said, 'What just happened for you is your *Roe v. Wade* here in Iowa,'" remembered DeWitte. The next year, the courts used the precedent to strike down Iowa's 2018 heartbeat bill.

Pro-lifer Brittany Jones had been a lobbyist in Kansas for only four months when the 2019 decision in *Hodes & Nauser v. Schmidt* came down in April. At issue in that case was a 2015 law protecting unborn babies from a common form of second-trimester abortions known as dilation-and-evacuation or dismemberment abortion. The justices ruled that the law was unconstitutional.

According to the court opinion, Section 1 of the Kansas Constitution Bill of Rights, which states "All men are possessed of equal and inalienable natural rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," guarantees women the right to decide whether or not to continue their pregnancies. The ruling invalidated any state effort to regulate abortion, even late-term abortions.

"Quite frankly, it made me cry," said Jones, now the director of policy and engagement for the Kansas Family Voice. "Really, we haven't been able to pass any or even introduce any pro-life legislation because we know that it will be struck down," said Jones. And because of that ruling, she said, the outcome of the *Dobbs* decision won't really affect Kansas, even though the state has a majority pro-life legislature and Jones said she sees pro-life momentum among voters.

According to a count by Americans United for Life, these are only four of the nine or 10 similar rulings from state Supreme Courts, mostly in the 1980s and 1990s, that continue to block pro-life efforts. Pro-lifers in Pennsylvania expect they'll be next in line.

The law in question there is the state's 1989 Abortion Control Act, the legislation behind the U.S. Supreme Court's 1992 *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* decision. The act set up a number of abortion restrictions, including a stipulation that Medicaid funds can only be used for abortions in cases of rape, incest, or threat to the life of the mother.

In *Allegheny Reproductive Health Center v. Pennsylvania Department of Human Services*, the abortion facilities acting as plaintiffs argue that abortion law in Pennsylvania violates the Equal Rights Amendment and equal protection standards because only women can get pregnant and because abortion restrictions unfairly punish low-income women.

"This is their golden goose strategy," said Jeremy Samek, senior counsel for the Pennsylvania Family Institute in Harrisburg, Pa. The group filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the *Allegheny* case. "They're asking not just for the court to invent the right to taxpayer funding of abortion. They're also asking for the court to invent a right to abortion in our state constitution."

Based on the liberal leanings of the court, pro-lifers in Pennsylvania expect the justices will side with the abortion providers in the case. The state Supreme Court has not yet scheduled oral arguments—likely holding out until a decision comes down in *Dobbs*. But Pennsylvania pro-life groups are working on a long-term solution: Senate Bill 956, colloquially known as the Life Amendment, which simply states that there is no right to abortion or to funding of abortions. One of the bill's sponsors, Sen. Judy Ward, emphasized that the amendment wouldn't introduce any new protections for unborn babies: It would only preserve the status quo. That could boost its chances of bipartisan success.

The legislature, currently led by Republicans, has to pass the bill within two consecutive sessions and could be before voters as early as 2023. Using this avenue, the legislature would be able to bypass Democrat Gov. Tom Wolf's likely veto. A House supporter of the amendment, Rep. Paul Schemel, called the amendment "an antidote to vetoes and inventing constitutional rights."

In Florida, the pro-life legislature has been passing laws in hopes of attracting lawsuits that could make it to the now-conservative state Supreme Court, which would then likely uphold the pro-life laws and overturn that 1989 decision. But Stemberger at the Florida Family Policy Council observed that pro-abortion groups have been slow to litigate pro-life laws recently—including a law protecting unborn babies after 15 weeks that Gov. Ron DeSantis signed in April. Abortion groups have threatened to sue over that law but haven't so far. Stemberger is skeptical that they ever will, since they can also count justices and recognize the case could topple the 1989 decision.

In Montana, Laszloffy said pro-lifers there want to put their state courts on the record supporting the abortion agenda, since Montanans elect their judges and justices. Even though he doesn't expect the court to heed the solicitor general's calls to overturn *Armstrong*, whatever they do decide can help pro-life voters know which judges foil pro-life laws.

Iowa is waiting on its remade Supreme Court to rule in the case of a



DeSantis speaks to pro-life supporters before signing Florida's 15-week abortion ban.

PAUL HENNESSY/SOPA IMAGES/AP

24-hour waiting period law from 2020 that has potential to overturn the 2018 precedent in the 72-hour waiting period case. DeWitte said her group expects a ruling in June, the same month as the expected *Dobbs* decision. Although none of the new justices have ruled on abortion-related cases, she and other pro-lifers are hopeful. If that doesn't pan out, pro-life groups are pushing for a constitutional amendment that the pro-life legislature last year approved for the ballot. It needs approval from the next General Assembly, either in 2023 or 2024, before it can come before voters.

Kansas is further along in the process. Its pro-life amendment received approval from the pro-life legislature in 2021 and will appear on an August ballot. "Kansas is ground zero for what the abortion culture will look like in a post-*Dobbs* world," said Jones with the Kansas Family Voice. "We are the first ballot test. ... If we can't stop them in Kansas, it's gonna be really difficult to promote life around the country."

BACK IN MICHIGAN, seven minutes west of where Kayla Pomper stood in Eastown, Grand Rapids, next to the sign of the aborted baby, a four-story, red-brick building in downtown Grand Rapids houses the office of one of the defendants in a court case that could lead to a court-created right to abortion in that state.

Christopher Becker, a tall, middle-aged man with sand-colored hair, is on his second term as the Kent County prosecuting attorney. On an April Wednesday at noon, stacks of papers and overstuffed binders sat on the desk in his office. "That's a double homicide. That's a homicide," he said, looking at the piles of police reports and case files. Homicide and domestic violence cases are the kinds he deals with in a typical month.

But recent months have not been typical. He's handling a police shooting case that has attracted the attention of civil rights groups nationally, and in April Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer sued Becker and 12 other prosecuting attorneys in counties with abortion facilities over the the dormant 1931 abortion law, the same day Planned Parenthood sued pro-abortion Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel over the law.

Becker called the governor's move "a political stunt": "We haven't even enforced this law, never thought about this law, but all of a sudden, here we are getting sued." Unlike Nessel and seven of the county prosecuting attorneys, though, Becker said, "I don't know how I wouldn't," when asked if he would enforce the law if it were allowed to take effect. "The legislature sets the laws," he said, adding that making a blanket decision as a county prosecuting attorney to ignore a law you disagree with is "going down a slippery slope."

Although filed in the Oakland County Circuit Court, Whitmer is trying to use her executive powers to fast-track the case to the Michigan Supreme Court. In the lawsuit, she calls on the courts to declare the 1931 law unconstitutional and to declare that the state constitution, which says nothing about abortion, guarantees a right to abortion under the Due Process Clause. The Planned Parenthood case makes similar arguments, but a May 17 ruling in that case does not address abortion's constitutionality. It only temporarily prevents state officials like Becker from enforcing the law if the U.S. Supreme Court overturns *Roe*.

David Kallman, a white-haired attorney with offices in Lansing, is a part of the Great Lakes Justice Center, the legal team representing Becker and another of the county prosecuting attorneys in the Whitmer case. His legal team argues that the governor and Planned Parenthood have no reason to sue since the U.S. Supreme Court has not overturned *Roe* yet (the leaked Supreme Court opinion is still just a draft) and none of the defendants have attempted to enforce the 1931 law. But he also pointed out the fundamental problem with the approach that Whitmer and Planned Parenthood have taken: "It's the legislature's prerogative to change a law. It's the people's through a petition."

In March, a coalition of pro-abortion groups started collecting signatures on a citizen's petition to put an "abortion rights" constitutional amendment on the ballot in November. The goal: to gather the required 425,059 signatures before the July 11 deadline. The proposed amendment declares abortion a "fundamental right," saying that the state can regulate abortions after fetal viability, usually around 24 weeks, but only if it allows for broad health exceptions, including the mental health of the mother, which in some cases can allow abortion for social and familial reasons. Current Michigan law only allows post-viability abortions if the mother's life is in danger.

The petition effort, Kallman said, is "legal and proper." But this petition and the lawsuits look contradictory in juxtaposition. If the governor and Planned Parenthood are right in arguing that the Michigan Constitution protects the right to abortion, then why have a petition drive to add that right to the constitution? "Those two things don't add up," said Kallman.

Michigan pro-life groups have filed briefs or motions in both lawsuits against the 1931 abortion law. But, other than that, there's not much they can do to counteract these court-level efforts. So, many Michigan pro-lifers are focusing on educating voters about the amendment petition—and about what abortion is.

Back in Grand Rapids, Kayla Pomper and her fellow volunteers are taking it one conversation at a time. On that Saturday morning in April, some of the people they approached with the question, "Can I get your thoughts on abortion?" stopped to talk. Most kept on walking, but even some who kept going by looked at the photo of the aborted baby. Occasionally, someone would say "gross" as they kept walking.

"Our goal is to take it a day at a time and make abortion unthinkable on the level of just having conversations with people," said Pomper. She said a lot of those conversations right now should be about what it actually means to have a right to abortion. In her mind, "that means that we're giving mothers the right to kill their offspring," she said. "Not only is that detrimental to the child but it's harming our mothers ... it's lying to the woman." ■

—with reporting from Carolina Lumetta in Harrisburg, Pa.

BULLHORNS AND ABORTION SLOGANS AT THE SUPREME COURT

Pro-abortion protests turn aggressive following a Supreme Court leak threatening the future of *Roe v. Wade*

BY CAROLINA LUMETTA IN WASHINGTON



TOM BRENNER/GETTY IMAGES

ON THE NIGHT of May 3, a group of 13 students from the Catholic University of America knelt in front of the U.S. Supreme Court and recited the Roman Catholic Hail Mary prayer. It was less than 24 hours since a leaked draft court opinion signaled a possible end to a nationwide legal right to abortion established by *Roe v. Wade*.

Immediately, hundreds of pro-abortion protesters surrounded the students, yelling, "Get out of here!" "We all hate you right now," and "My body, my choice." One woman wielding a picket sign flashed an obscene hand gesture in front of the upheld rosaries and screamed, "[Obscenity] your religion!" until the prayers finished.

The scene was one of many in the weeks that followed that demonstrated the heated emotions, mostly from pro-abortion activists, in protest crowds. Within 15 minutes of the leaked draft's publication in Politico on May 2, pro-abortion and pro-life crowds surged around the Supreme Court steps. Capitol Police hastily installed crowd control fences around the building in downtown Washington.

"Everyone here is motivated by a very strong sense of justice for what they think is right," said Catholic University of America senior John Kish at the May 3 demonstration. "I would like to see a lot of the division solved by dialogue, but I think we saw tonight that doesn't really happen. So we hope and pray."

Pro-abortion lawmakers set their sights on legislation to codify the legality of abortion. The Women's Health Protection Act, proposed in response to the Texas Heartbeat Act, would mandate legal abortion in federal law. It passed the House in September but failed to gain the 60 Senate votes needed to overcome a filibuster.

Meanwhile, demonstrators outside the Supreme Court continued their own debates. At one clash between people in the crowd, a woman yelled to another young man, "You can say it's a baby. I don't care." Behind her, supporters chanted, "No uterus, no opinion!"

One 18-year-old pro-life supporter who gave her name only as Michele D. said she stopped at the protest after seeing the crowd on her way home from the grocery store. "I'm hopefully optimistic and praying hard that this decision carries through to the end," she said of the court's draft opinion. "These people are all bark and no bite. They can scream in my face all day long, it's not going to change the fact that I know that I'm right."

Herb Geraghty, a 25-year-old activist with the secular Progressive Anti-Abortion Uprising (PAAU) and executive director of Rehumanize International, said PAAU group members encountered aggressive opposition on the afternoon of May 4 as they drummed 5-gallon tubs to the slogan, "Pro-choice is a lie, babies never choose to die."

He told WORLD the group saw worse the day before. According to videos posted from the scene and Geraghty, the crowds hit them with megaphones and ripped signs out of their hands.

"I have seen more violence and aggression from the pro-abortion people than I've probably ever seen in my entire life," Geraghty said. "I'm an activist, I'm used to being shoved around. But that's not what I saw here. [On May 3] I saw a person take a megaphone and bang it into the head of one of the pro-life activists. I came home with blood spots on my shirt, but I don't know whose it was."

When they returned the next day, pro-abortion activists again began surrounding the team, but this time Capitol police officers intervened, dividing demonstrators with a line of bikes.

"I refuse to live in a society that benefits from and celebrates killing children in the womb. We're not going to stop coming just because we're threatened," said PAAU organizer Caroline Smith, 23. Saying she was "shocked but also extremely excited" about the draft opinion, Smith held a picture of a baby she said was aborted at a facility 2 miles from the court: "Once *Roe* falls, we have so much more to do. Our work will not be done until every child is protected under the law from being brutally ripped apart."

"PRO-CHOICE IS A LIE, BABIES NEVER CHOOSE TO DIE."

Abortion activists elsewhere across the country also rallied and marched. Roughly 100 pro-abortion activists showed up at the houses of two Supreme Court justices during the weekend after the leak. Outside the Washington-area homes of Justice Brett Kavanaugh and Chief Justice John Roberts, they shouted, "We will not go back!" in reference to the court's anticipated ruling overturning *Roe v. Wade*. In Madison, Wis., on May 8, someone spray-painted a threat and set a fire at the headquarters of Wisconsin Family Action, a pro-life group. No one was hurt.

Back in Washington, workers reinstalled 8-foot, unscalable fences around the Supreme Court—the same used after the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol last year. ■

A pro-life demonstrator holds a cross while surrounded by chanting pro-abortion demonstrators outside the U.S. Supreme Court on May 5.


SECRET
SECRET
SECRET



AN ARMY OF SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

"Ghost Army" soldiers were the master illusionists of World War II, and their secrets are finally being told

by Maryrose Delahunty

A half-track outfitted with playback equipment and a 500-pound speaker with a range of 15 miles, used by the Ghost Army for sonic deception

GHOST ARMY LEGACY PROJECT



George Dramis stands in front of a radio truck.

TWO WEEKS after the D-Day invasion, newsreel cameras filmed a gathering of Allied military titans: George C. Marshall, Dwight D. Eisenhower, George S. Patton, Omar N. Bradley, and Bernard L. Montgomery. Standing behind Patton, even at the age of 18, George Dramis knew he was witnessing history in the making and hoped his picture would make it in the news.

Little did he know he would make his own mark on history as a member of a top-secret, specially selected group of soldiers known today simply as the "Ghost Army."

Known formally as the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, the 1,100-man unit deployed full-scale theatrical illusions. Using inflatable tanks, trucks, and airplanes; sound effects; and scripted radio communications, it had one mission: deceive the Germans by impersonating combat units of 13,000 to 17,000 men and, in one case, 30,000 men. Whether ingenious or insane, the top military brass considered it worth the gamble, and their gamble paid off. Historians say the Ghost Army's efforts saved tens of thousands of lives during World War II. With the men of the 23rd posing as other groups, such as the 70th or the 39th divisions, the real divisions could move stealthily to a different position and surprise the enemy.

Drawing from historical records and in-person interviews, author, filmmaker, and historian Rick Beyer chronicles the work of the 23rd in his 2013 PBS documentary, *The Ghost Army*. Beyer collaborated with Elizabeth Sayles two years later to release the book, *The Ghost Army of World War II: How One Top-Secret Unit Deceived the Enemy With Inflatable Tanks, Sound Effects, and Other Audacious Fakery*.

Four different groups comprised the 23rd: the 603rd Engineer Camouflage Battalion, the 3132 Signal Service Company, the Signal Company Special, and the 406th Combat Engineer Company —each tasked with a specific role in the Army's traveling roadshow.

The 603rd, the largest unit with 379 men known as "camoufleurs," executed the visual trickery. They had thousands of inflatable tanks, trucks, artillery, jeeps, and even aircraft used to fool German troops surveilling from the air or on the ground. Made of rubber, these inflatable decoys were manufactured by American companies such as U.S. Rubber and Cooper Tire & Rubber. Beyer spoke with one woman, Theresa Blais (née Ricard), who made 49 cents an hour as a teenager manufacturing rubber tanks. To maintain the confidentiality of the mission, she was told the inflatables were for the Army's target practice.

Along with imitating the arsenal of the real troops, members also impersonated their personnel. The 603rd duplicated the patches or insignia of other divisions for the entire Ghost Army to wear.

Because of the top-secret nature of their work, the men of the 23rd never had their own patches or insignia. They would go into the villages of France with the goal of deceiving enemy spies into thinking a specific infantry or some other unit had come to town, while the real combat troops deployed elsewhere. Majors posed as generals, talking up fake

HANDOUT

plans and movements for the benefit of lurking enemy spies or German sympathizers.

The 3132 Signal Service Company worked on the sound effects. With massive 500-pound speakers that could project 15 miles, they simulated the sounds of vehicles moving and operating at night. Beyer's book describes how Bell Laboratories experts worked with Army technicians to record the sounds of tanks, trucks, bulldozers, and "even the assembly of pontoon bridges"—right down to noises of hammering and men swearing. Factoring in the effects of weather, distance, and terrain when broadcasting the sounds, no detail was spared.

The Signal Company Special carried out the radio deception. In Beyer's documentary former Sgt. Spike Berry, a radio unit veteran, describes the radio guys as providing the stage on which the camouflage and sounds groups performed. WORLD spoke with Dramis, also a member of the Signal Company. He recounted his role in the "fakery." After enlisting in 1942, he took a test that required him to distinguish the difference between hearing a dot versus a dash. Passing the test handily, he was eventually sent to train in Morse code. Dramis explains that each operator has a certain "fist"—an inherent and unique way one sends messages. Some fists are naturally choppy, others are smooth and rhythmic.

To successfully carry out the deception, every aspect of imitating other Army divisions had to be complete, even down to the frequency of messages sent between the American units and signature styles of specific Army radio operators whom German intelligence monitored and supposedly recognized. Dramis studied the idiosyncrasies of the fists he had to imitate and worked to send his messages the same way.

He and other radio men were provided scripted messages to transmit back and forth with the expectation the enemy would intercept them. Similar to the Ghost Army's replacement of tanks on the battlefield, the Signal Service Company took over the airwaves, mimicking the combat troops' communications.

The final group rounding out the 23rd consisted of the 168 combat-trained soldiers of the 406th Combat Engineer Company. According to Beyer, they acted as security for the other companies and performed construction and demolition work. They also contributed to the deception work by using bulldozers to create tank tracks.

Unconventional warfare required unconventional soldiers. Alongside combat personnel, the Army selected radio and electronics experts, meteorologists, writers, actors, and camouflage designers—purposely recruiting art school students. In their downtime, these military con men returned to their artistic roots, stealing moments to record the

A soldier of the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops is pictured before an inflatable M7 Priest self-propelled gun on Sept. 14, 1944, in France.







war through sketches, drawings, and illustrations. Seventy-seven years later, their oeuvres d'art now form part of a traveling World War II exhibit. Some members of the Ghost Army achieved fame after the war: fashion designer Bill Blass, photographer Art Kane, artist Ellsworth Kelly, watercolorists Arthur Singer and Arthur Shilstone.

Seymour Nussenbaum, who served in the 603rd Camouflage unit, is 98 but can easily recall his World War II service today. He was attending the famed Pratt Institute, studying art and taking a course in camouflage. During the course, the instructor provided the students with information about whom to contact when and if they went into the service.

Unbeknown to Nussenbaum, the contact information was for the camouflage unit of the Ghost Army. He had intended to enlist after completing his coursework, but Uncle Sam's call interrupted his studies, and he was drafted initially into a different unit. Using the address given by his instructor, he requested a transfer to the 603rd Camouflage Battalion. Camouflage training and units existed throughout the Army, but only the 603rd participated in the deception unit.

Nussenbaum arrived in France in the summer of 1944, a few weeks after D-Day. Assigned to "the factory" section, he worked in a group manufacturing fake badges and insignias of the units they received orders to impersonate. While the real badges were embroidered on canvas, "the factory" used paint, assuming no one would get close enough to tell the difference. Since Army trucks also carried identifying marks such as specific numbers or slogans, camoufleurs replicated those as well on other vehicles to fake out the enemy.

"IF THE GERMANS EVER FOUND OUT WE WERE JUST A SMALL GROUP, THEY COULD HAVE OVERRUN US IN SECONDS."

"We were practically on the front lines many times." Nussenbaum said. When Army headquarters wanted to relocate a unit stationed on the front line, under the cover of night, the men of the 23rd would place "dummy" tanks exactly where the real tanks had been. By daybreak, German reconnaissance planes or ground spies would assume the unit had not moved.

Under the cover of the 23rd's mimicry, U.S. fighting divisions executed surprise attacks on an unsuspecting enemy miles away from the division's prior location. Dramis saw it work time and time again. However, he mused, "if the Germans ever found out we were just a small group, they could have overrun us in seconds." Ghost Army veteran Gilbert Seltzer told Beyer, "We came to the conclusion that this was a suicide outfit." Before he died in 2021, Seltzer was the oldest surviving member at 106.

Ghost Army theatrics even fooled other American troops not privy to the existence of the unit due to its top-secret work. One unfortunate

GHOST ARMY LEGACY PROJECT







FROM LEFT: Seymour Nussenbaum; inflatable Shermans in Operation Viersen; Bernie Bluestein; radio trucks; Rick Beyer

example of miscommunication led to dire consequences in August 1944. Gen. Troy Middleton had ordered an attack on the Germans. A company of light tanks moved in assuming they would be supported by the 6th Armored Division when it was in fact the 23rd's illusionists. In Beyer's book, Cpl. John Jarvie recalls the American tanks never "reached the line of departure. … They just got decimated."

Despite that disastrous outcome, the group conducted its mission in more than 21 separate operations. The Ghost Army's curtain-closing and most critical performance came in March 1945—on the eve of the Rhine crossing. By breaching the German line at the Rhine River, the western border of Germany's industrial complex, the Allies could gain a pivotal foothold in the Western Front.

With its full complement of men, the 23rd successfully duped the Germans into believing its 1,100-man troop represented 30,000 men from the U.S. 9th Army. Bringing all its resources to bear, it successfully imitated the sights, sounds, and communications of the 9th Army's divisions 10 miles from their actual location. It set up a fake vehicle depot and airstrip, brought in real tanks and artillery alongside their inflatables, and broadcast phony plans and locations over radio traffic.

When the Allied troops finally did cross, they met light resistance. This final mission, tagged Operation Viersen, garnered the Ghost Army a letter of commendation from the commander of the 9th Army, Gen. William Simpson. "The careful planning, minute attention to detail, and diligent execution of the tasks to be accomplished by the personnel of the organization reflect great credit to this unit," Simpson wrote.

The men of the 23rd would wait 77 years before receiving any other formal expression of appreciation from the government for their service.

While a handful of articles have appeared over the years chronicling some firsthand accounts of the Ghost Army, it took the Army's declassification of records in 1996 for history to fully recognize the 23rd's contribution to victory in the war. Recognition for the men has come largely through the efforts of Beyer and the descendants of Ghost Army veterans. After learning of the Ghost Army through Martha Gavin, John Jarvie's niece, Beyer set out on a path to educate and inform others of the escapades of this unicorn unit. In addition to producing a documentary and writing a book, he founded the Ghost Army Legacy Project. Under his leadership, the Legacy Project lobbied for seven years for the Ghost Army to receive a Congressional Gold Medal. On Feb. 1, 2022, President Biden signed the act awarding a Congressional Gold Medal to all the members of the Ghost Army.

WORLD asked Beyer what common thread he saw among the 23rd's veterans. He shared the pleasure they expressed in the story finally coming out and finding out their war efforts had meaning. They regularly asked him, "Rick, do you think we really did something, did we really accomplish something?"

Dramis and Nussenbaum echoed the same thoughts.

"You had no idea at the time whether or not what you were doing was successful," Dramis said. "You would just take orders." Nussenbaum added: "They didn't make a big fuss about it then. We were just discharged."

He was instructed not to discuss his mission even with his wife. The Army labeled it "top secret" for the next 50 years, hoping to potentially use similar tactics should future conflicts arise.

Of the 1,100 men who served in the 23rd, only nine surviving members remain: Dramis, Nussenbaum, Bill Anderson, Bernie Bluestein, John Christman, Manny Frockt, Nick Leo, Mark Mallardi, and Bill Nall. ■



PRO-LIFE MEANS PRO-BABIES AND PRO-MOMS

The Supremes may overturn *Roe v. Wade*, but the work of Students for Life will go on

LEAH SAVAS INTERVIEWS KRISTAN HAWKINS

KRISTAN HAWKINS IS THE PRESIDENT of Students for Life, an activist group that mobilizes pro-life college students and high schoolers in their schools and communities. Hawkins is one of many pro-lifers who expect the U.S. Supreme Court will use *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, a case involving a Mississippi law that protects babies from abortion after 15 weeks' gestation, to overturn the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that created a constitutional right to abortion.

ILLUSTRATION BY CARNE GRIFFITHS

What is your earliest pro-life memory? And how did you first get started with pro-life work? My mother was involved in a local Right to Life group, and they had a float in the Fourth of July parade. The theme of our float was to "be a lifesaver," so I remember going up and down the street and finding a bunch of Life Savers candies. My next memory is of being in high school, looking for volunteer work, and meeting a woman at my church who offered me the opportunity to intern with her at a pregnancy center. I didn't fully understand what that would involve until I started working there.

How did that experience affect you? When I entered the pregnancy center, I would love to say that I knew exactly what I was getting myself into. But I did not. I was completely overwhelmed by the reality and violence of abortion. That summer I reorganized the supply room—did all the things a normal intern would do—and counseled women. When I went back to my high school, I knew I had to do more.

I started a pro-life group at school, got involved with local politics, and stayed involved in college. In 2004, I worked on President Bush's reelection campaign and met people who were heavily involved in the pro-life movement. That's how I met the people seeking to launch Students for Life.

Students for Life had already been around for a while. How did you get involved? Three students at Georgetown started Students for Life, then called American Legions for Life, in the late 1980s. The activity of the organization ebbed and flowed depending on the leadership or what was happening in Washington, D.C., in a given year. Its main function was organizing an annual conference for leaders of university pro-life groups after the March for Life.

Around 2005, the student board wrote a business plan to start going directly to college campuses and finding conservative students to get involved. The idea was to go where the abortion industry directly targeted these young people and encourage pro-life activism on campus. That's when the name became Students for Life of America. With new funding from an investor, the group launched full time and conducted a search for a full-time executive director. That's where I came in.

STUDENTS FOR LIFE IS NOT MY ORGANIZATION: IT IS VERY MUCH OUR PRO-LIFE GENERATION'S ORGANIZATION.

I often see you in pictures holding a bullhorn at a Students for Life protest. There are a lot of pictures of me on the bullhorn from five years ago. But the past few years, I haven't actually gotten on the bullhorn that much. It used to be me on the bullhorn with a few folks standing beside me and people being unsure about making so much noise. I love seeing these young people today who show up and are like, "I have my own bullhorn. I brought my own batteries. I'm ready to lead the pro-life generation chants." It shows that Students for Life is not my organization: It is very much our pro-life generation's organization.

Do you have a favorite chant? There's a chant from 1971 that goes, "Hey hey, ho ho, *Roe v. Wade* has got to go." A couple years ago, I changed it to "going to go," and it always throws our staff for a loop. But I think if you asked our student leaders, their favorite chant would be "Pro-woman, pro-life." Because that is why a lot of young people serve in this movement: They care about the babies and their moms. They see this very much as a two-front war that we're fighting and a battle that they're waging on their campuses for two victims of the abortion industry.

What's your go-to remedy after a day of chanting? I often leave events with a hoarse voice, so I usually get a medicine ball tea with honey at Starbucks on my way out. I'm not a big tea drinker, but it has just enough sugar to disguise the tea. It has mint and honey and lemon—all the things that help with your hoarse voice.

If the Supreme Court overturns *Roe v. Wade*, how will that change Students for Life's mission? When we launched 15 years ago, our vision was to create a post-*Roe* organization. A lot of my mentors at the time told me, "You have to stop talking about abortion-free America or abolishing abortion or reversing *Roe*, because it makes you sound naïve." So it's been personally gratifying the last year to →

hear a lot of folks using the language of a "post-*Roe*" America.

The work Students for Life does day to day will largely remain unchanged because we will continue working to change minds on campuses: making sure communities across America know about nonviolent alternatives to abortion, informing people about the dangers of chemical abortion.

Tell me about the group's legislative work. In 2019, Students for Life started a 501(c)(4) called Students for Life Action. The goal was to help young people get involved in their state capitals: testifying on abortion-related legislation, lobbying elected officials, going door-knocking in districts where elected officials need to be held accountable. We saw the handwriting on the wall for *Roe*. Phase two of the pro-life movement is this 50-state battle to make abortion illegal and unthinkable.

In 2019, then-Gov. Andrew Cuomo of New York signed into law the Reproductive Health Act that made abortion legal for all nine months and even reversed the state's homicide laws so that people charged with killing a pregnant woman wouldn't be charged with two deaths. He celebrated this law by lighting up the One World Trade Center in pink.

That for me solidified that we were going to have to get our young people to the state houses to show the state legislators who vote for such extremist bills that they are vastly out of touch with the majority of this generation. That's what we've been doing since then. Last year, spring 2021, our student leaders in more than 30 states testified on behalf of pro-life legislation or against pro-abortion legislation.

Where should the pro-life movement focus its attention if states receive more power to legislate on abortion? The places that we need to be focusing on, in my view, are the so-called "red" states, where we can reasonably predict that there will be very aggressive bans on the violence of abortion. Those are the states that normally haven't seen the influx of the abortion lobby into their state elections. But we know in the post-*Roe* America, when there's going to be this 50-state battle, Planned Parenthood and their PACs and their 501(c)(4)s will be flooding into the states. We're going to need a trained army to make sure we shore up these states before moving on to the "purple" and "blue" states.

How optimistic are you that this 50-state battle will start this summer? I was pretty pessimistic going into the oral arguments in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* case on Dec. 1. I was outside of the court with Students for Life the day of the arguments. When I left the court, I headed straight to the airport to return home and listened to the oral arguments while sitting in the airport. And I was blown away by the willingness of the Mississippi Solicitor General to come out and just say it: We're here to reverse *Roe v. Wade* because it was a grievously wrong decision.

The Supreme Court justices were asking questions like, Isn't the Constitution neutral on this issue? Why should the court take a stance on something that the Constitution is so plainly neutral about? Meanwhile, the abortion lobby's basic argument for why they were against this Mississippi law was the court can't go back on a decision it's already made. That was pretty much it. That made me optimistic.

How did the leaked draft opinion from the Supreme Court affect your attitude? I continue to be very optimistic. We know from legal experts that the mere fact that the court took up this case meant there was an overwhelming willingness on the court to possibly revisit *Roe*. The leaked draft showed us that—at least in February—the justices recognized *Roe v. Wade* as a constitutional wreckage.

Seeing that draft and the strong language upholding our Constitution renewed my hope that everything we have been working toward is coming to fruition. But our focus right now is the same as it has always been: mobilizing the grassroots to make the voices of the pro-life generation heard on behalf of the voiceless preborn child. ■

THE LEAKED DRAFT SHOWED US THAT—AT LEAST IN FEBRUARY—THE JUSTICES RECOGNIZED *ROE V. WADE* AS A CONSTITUTIONAL WRECKAGE.

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INSIDE A NIGERIAN ART VILLAGE

One woodcarver pursues a lifelong passion and career

by Onize Ohikere

PHOTOS BY EBUN MEDESSOU

CHRISTOPHER DAKUT hunched over a stump of ironwood, chipping away with his mallet and chisel, inside an open shed. The wood chunks flew to the ground covered by brown wood shavings.

Dakut's shed is one of several workshops set up in rows in Abuja's makeshift Jabi art village, tucked into a corner along a major roadway. The craft village has provided opportunities for artisans like Dakut while serving as a tourist attraction for visitors seeking unique pieces.

A small selling station in front of his workshed boasts his varied creations: dark brown and polished animals and a woman in a headscarf. Other shops display jewelry, woven bags and baskets, and tie-dyed clothes, among other items. One craftsman resting on a tree trunk wove a raft around a metal frame. He said it would serve as a lampshade.

Dakut said he always had a knack for art from his early school days. He began learning and practicing sculpting under the tutelage of his brother, who completed an art degree at a Nigerian university.

IT GIVES ME JOY WHEN I'M WORKING, EVEN WHEN I CAN'T AFFORD TO EAT.

His business has grown since then. Dakut moved to the arts and crafts village about 15 years ago and has continued to sell pieces there in addition to taking custom orders.

The community has also provided support for the artists. Dakut said it helps them to promote their works. Other artists sometimes direct potential clients to his shop, he added.

Dakut said the village receives more foreign customers, while Nigerians are more likely to bring foreign visitors or request custom furniture. One Saturday morning, a few foreigners wove in and out of different stalls looking at items and asking for prices.

"They want me to make furniture for them, something to put in the house like a table or a chair," he said of the majority of his Nigerian clients.

That lack of support is also visible in the absence of a permanent site for the art village. Dakut said repeated efforts to get the authorities to sign off on a permanent tourist location have failed. "There will be a day they will tell us to leave," he said.

When the pandemic hit, Dakut said, it mostly brought the market to a halt. They had fewer local walk-ins, and COVID-19 eliminated the tourist trade.

"It slowed the business; nobody was coming for the whole of that year," he said.

Dakut said he still came into his workshop daily to work on his stockpile of custom orders, which kept his family of six going throughout the year.

Dakut has also opened up his business to apprentices like Christian Clement, who was sandpapering a carved animal in the shed. He ran me through the process: from sketching on the piece of wood to carving, scraping, sandpapering, and finishing with polish.

Clement said he hopes to learn enough to set up his own business and train others. "God brought me to somebody who would help me get to where I'm supposed to be," he said.

Dakut still has big dreams for his work. He plans to move to another country to continue creating art pieces but vowed to wait until he can make the journey legally.

In the meantime, he continues to enjoy the process of randomly getting ideas and waking up to sketch them out quickly before spending hours carving them into something substantial.

"It gives me joy when I'm working, even when I can't afford to eat because I'm getting exactly what I'm doing," he said. "Every day I make sure I produce something and that none of the other craftsmen has the same thing as me." ■

Dakut carves in his work shop (previous page); Clement stands in Dakut's selling station at Jabi art village.





CITY AND CHURCH CLASH OVER RV MINISTRY

Federal lawsuit claims city violated federal law in zoning out ministry

by Steve West

THE REV. PAUL ELDER has hosted traveling evangelists at the Christian Growth Center in Pueblo, Colo., for over 30 years. Since 2011, the church, located across from an auto parts store and motel along Interstate 25, has provided RV hookup sites for traveling ministers. But that practice came to a halt after the city in May 2021 filed a criminal complaint against the church for violating a zoning ordinance.

Criminal proceedings were put on hold after Elder and the church filed a lawsuit in state court in January. Elder argues the city violated federal law by restricting the RV ministry.

The case, moved to federal court in February, centers on the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Person Act (RLUIPA). Enacted in 2000, RLUIPA blocks local governments from substantially burdening religious exercise unless they have a compelling interest and use the least restrictive option available.

The Christian Growth Center's legal complaint cites two Bible passages: the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20 and Hebrews 13:2, "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers."

It argues the city's zoning code is burdensome and discriminatory. "The church has offered the ministry for 30 years without incident or notice of violation from the city," it says, noting the city has not always enforced the rule in similar situations.

A 2021 Supreme Court ruling also provides the church with an argument. In *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*, the →

ILLUSTRATION BY KRIEG BARRIE

court ruled that the city's refusal to contract with Catholic Social Services unless it agreed to approve same-sex couples as foster parents violated the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment. Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that because the city could exempt individual agencies from nondiscrimination requirements, Philadelphia's law was not "generally applicable" and was subject to strict scrutiny.

Just as Philadelphia officials could exempt foster care agencies from nondiscrimination rules, the church contends, Pueblo officials could exempt individuals from zoning rules.

Church attorney Andrew Nussbaum said in a recent drive with Elder around the church's working-class neighborhood they noted approximately 30 noncompliant RVs: "It's definitely an example of uneven enforcement."

According to Nussbaum, the town has never articulated a compelling reason for restricting RVs at the church. And at a hearing before the city's five-member Zoning Board of Appeals in November, he said the city declined to introduce or cross-examine witnesses. But four of the five members voted against the church in a ruling issued Dec. 28, finding that nothing it heard indicated that banning the RV ministry would substantially affect religious exercise at the church.

Elder said city officials were wrong to find the rules didn't burden their religious exercise in supporting evangelists, many of whom have limited funds or have trouble finding a spot. "We just let them pull in and park there free of charge," he said. "It's our ministry."

San Diego–based evangelist Brian Makeever, who was a part-time traveling evangelist for 20 years, said finding host churches was crucial to his ministry. He said evangelists often depend on modest funds from churches.

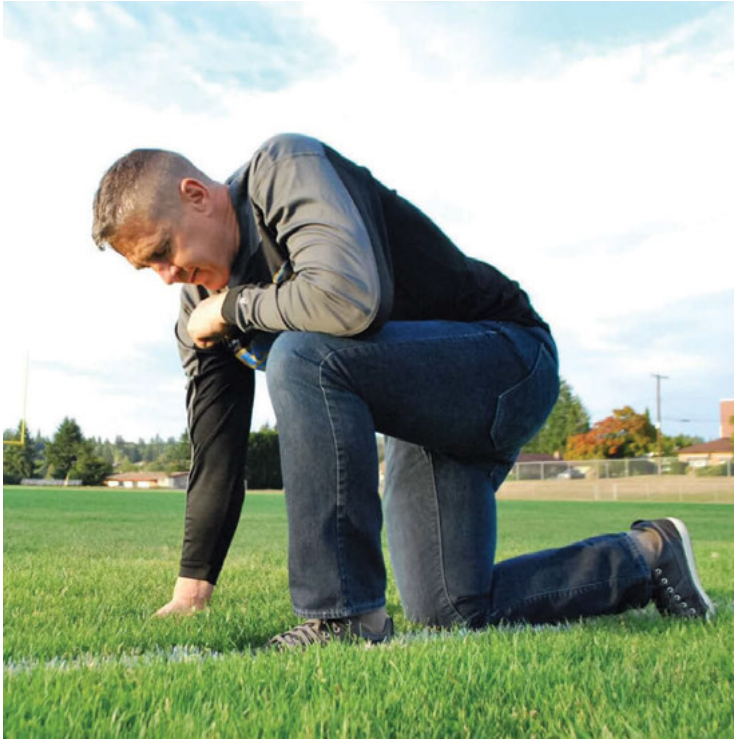
"You're trying to maximize everything on a limited budget," Makeever said. "I'm trusting God, but I'm also maximizing my finances."

Elder hopes for a prompt resolution of the lawsuit so the ministry can continue. "This is not an uncommon ministry," he said. "This is still a very vibrant part of Christianity in America today." ■

FRIDAY NIGHT RIGHTS

Prayer at high school football games comes under fire in court

by Ray Hacke



IN SOME CORNERS OF THE COUNTRY, faith and high school football go together "like peas and carrots," as Forrest Gump would say.

However, as two recent court cases indicate, government-controlled entities want to keep them separated.

The more high-profile of those cases, *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*, came before the Supreme Court in late April. Observers of the high court anticipate a decision in June.

In that case, Joe Kennedy, a former assistant coach at Bremerton High in Washington state, lost his job for praying on the 50-yard line after games. For seven seasons, inspired by the 2006 Christian film *Facing the Giants*, Kennedy faced the scoreboard, knelt briefly, quietly thanked God—win or lose—then left the field.

FIRST LIBERTY INSTITUTE

Players and coaches on his own team and others eventually took notice. When some asked to join him, Kennedy let them.

That is, until 2015, when Bremerton High's athletic director caught wind of Kennedy's prayers and expressed his disapproval. The local school district followed up with a letter instructing Kennedy to stop, which he did—temporarily.

Kennedy says his conscience ultimately compelled him to resume praying, and he notified the district of his intent to do so. After he followed through, the district placed him on administrative leave—legally, a de facto suspension—and declined to renew his contract after the 2015 season.

The district asserted that its actions were justified due to concerns about appearing to endorse a religious message—something the U.S. Constitution's Establishment Clause prohibits public schools from doing. The district's concerns were understandable: In 2000, the Supreme Court invalidated a Texas school district's policy allowing student-led prayers before football games because such prayers appeared to have the school district's stamp of approval.

Still, Kennedy's case is distinguishable from the Texas case: The latter involved public prayers spoken over the school's public address system on behalf of an audience including students who didn't share the speaker's religious views and whose attendance at games wasn't necessarily voluntary. Kennedy, by contrast, prayed at a time when players, fans, and others in attendance were free to leave and typically were dispersing.

Even granting that Kennedy wore Bremerton High's colors and insignia and was in a highly visible place when he prayed, his act of quiet post-game prayer was originally meant to be a personal one. Moreover, while the Establishment Clause prohibits endorsement of religion, it also prohibits hostility toward acts of faith—a big reason why supporters of religious liberty are rooting hard for the Supreme Court to side with Kennedy.

"If students see a teacher engaging in a demonstrative religious activity (as things stand now), that teacher could lose his job," said Jeremy Dys, an attorney with the religious-rights law firm First Liberty, which represents Kennedy. "That's not what the First Amendment means."

Unlike Kennedy's case, the other recent school prayer case does involve pregame prayer to a wider audience: Cambridge Christian School of Tampa sued the Florida High School Athletic Association in 2015 after the FHSAA refused to let CCS pray over the stadium's loudspeaker before a state championship game against another Christian school.

"It hurt both schools' communities pretty dramatically," Dys said. "A prayer spoken without amplification from the 50-yard line at the Citrus Bowl in Orlando is not something you can hear from the stands. That place is big enough that a mom and dad can't pray with their kid any other way but over the stadium's loudspeaker.

"The FHSAA prevented moms and dads at the biggest game of their children's career from sharing a moment of solidarity with their kids before the contest had begun."

A federal district court in Florida sided with the FHSAA—not a government entity per se, but one whose operations so depend on the involvement of public school officials that constitutional principles apply—in early April: The court held that as long as the association, the speaker for purposes of the contest, controlled the PA system, it had no obligation to let Cambridge Christian use it. First Liberty is appealing the ruling to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, which previously reversed the district court's earlier dismissal of the case.

Dys said the FHSAA's decision to deny Cambridge Christian access to the loudspeaker for a pregame prayer makes little sense—and not just because, pursuant to sponsorship deals, the association used the PA system to broadcast promotions for "breastaurant" chain Hooters and alcoholic beverage producer Anheuser-Busch to a largely Christian audience.

The attorney pointed out that in 2018, the FHSAA invited crowds at its spring sports championships to participate in a moment of silence honoring victims of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High shooting, which occurred earlier that year.

"The FHSAA invited the entire crowd to engage in what amounts to a religious act," Dys said. "But two Christian schools praying before a football game? They won't allow that." ■



Joe Kennedy (facing page); Cambridge Christian School students pray at a high school football game.

CAMBRIDGE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL: BETH DARE PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY OF FIRST LIBERTY



Heading to Oceania

2022 is starting to look a bit like *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

I SWUNG BY O'NEILL'S for two containers of sour cream and a bottom round roast, which rang up to exactly $19.84. The freckle-faced cashier seemed of high school age, so I asked if she had read *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. She had not, which isn't her fault.

But it might make no difference anyway. Orwell himself knew his warning to the future was probably doomed, hinting his pessimism through protagonist Winston's secret alcove jottings:

"How could you communicate with the future? It was of its nature impossible. Either the future would resemble the present, in which case it would not listen to him; or it would be different from it, and his predicament would be meaningless."

It is the first scenario that materialized: The future turned out to "resemble the present" (that is, a brainwashed citizenry) so that Winston's warning has no power to appall. America, once the home of free speech, now has a new federal bureau of speech censorship—and it will produce a big yawn.

O'Neill's freckle-faced cashier, even if she were to read *Nineteen Eighty-Four* at this point, would think it a nothingburger. She has been well marinated in cancel culture, the forbidding of "offensive" opinions in class, the forbidding of nonmainstream medical views, and the commonplace specter of social network suspensions for "violating community standards." Cancellable speech is now how she thinks.

My first thought when Biden announced the "Disinformation Governance Board" was: Has the man no self-awareness? No sense of irony? Wouldn't you want to conceal this dead ringer for the "Ministry of Truth" in Orwell's dystopian 1949 novel? I myself can hardly pronounce "Disinformation Governance Board" without an exaggerated Russian accent. And administered under the DHS? You mean the federal department that, only second to the military, is armed to the teeth?

THE FUTURE TURNED OUT TO "RESEMBLE THE PRESENT," SO THAT WINSTON'S WARNING HAS NO POWER TO APPALL.

Who, pray tell, will decide what is "disinformation"? The people who suppressed discussion of Biden's foreign business dealings, berated those who suggested Chinese origins of the pandemic, claimed that all is well at our southern border, and called inflation temporary?

The freckle-faced cashier was driven to work today past yard signs with slogans: "Love is love," "Science is real," and "Hate has no home here." She has no idea of the dark meanings assigned them, or historical or literary context to make a connection with fictional Oceania's "War is Peace," "Freedom is Slavery," and "Ignorance is Strength."

For those who do see what's happening in our land, how should we live? A good thing is that the worse things get, the more simplified, brass tacks, and less academically pretty our communications may become. Russian novelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Siberian Gulag prisoner, offers this advice to the individual who feels helpless, in words hurriedly penned the day of his arrest on Feb. 12, 1974:

"The simplest and most accessible key to our self-neglected liberation lies right here: Personal non-participation in lies. … It is the easiest thing to do for us, but the most devastating for the lies. Because when people renounce lies it simply cuts short their existence. … Let us refuse to say that which we do not think."

What follows is a partial list of things Solzhenitsyn suggests for the honest man:

"Will not henceforth write, sign, or print in any way a single phrase which in his opinion distorts the truth."

"Will utter such a phrase neither in private conversation nor in the presence of many people, neither on his own behalf nor at the prompting of someone else, either in the role of agitator, teacher, educator, nor in a theatrical role."

"Will not allow himself to be dragged to a meeting where there can be expected a forced or distorted discussion of a question. Will immediately walk out of a meeting, session, lecture, performance, or film if he hears a speaker tell lies or purvey ideological nonsense or shameless propaganda" ("Live Not by Lies").

Sounds like something we already heard two thousand years ago: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). ■

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BURYING THE FALLEN

A Ukrainian retreat amid a diplomatic quake

UKRAINIAN SOLDIERS PREPARED TO BURY Volodymyr Losev, a fellow soldier who was killed when his military vehicle hit a mine in the Odesa region in early May (above). Farther south, Ukrainian soldiers in mid-May began a retreat from Mariupol, a city in the Donbas region that has been a focus of worldwide attention during a three-month siege by the Russian army. "83 days of Mariupol defense will go down in history as the Thermopylae of the XXI century," tweeted Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak. Ukrainian sources say Russian airstrikes killed more than 20,000 civilians in Mariupol during the siege, including almost 600 who had taken shelter in a theater. Meanwhile, Russian aggression in Ukraine was having momentous diplomatic effects in the region, as Sweden and Finland announced plans to apply for NATO membership due to concerns about Russia. The two countries had chosen to remain separate from NATO for more than 70 years. Sweden has not been part of any military alliance for more than 200 years.

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