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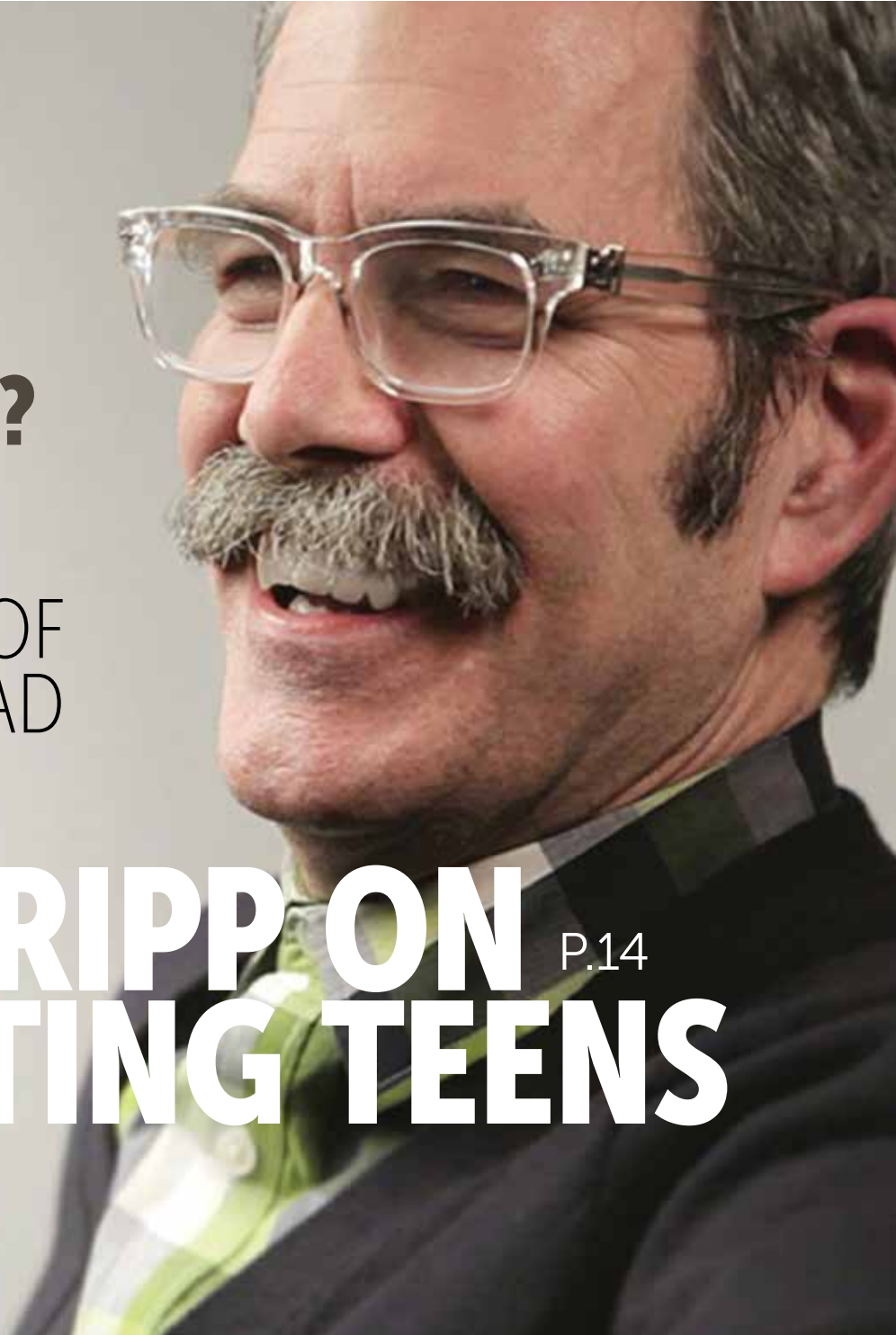
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FROM THE EDITOR

What Truth sounds like

In the abortion debate, calm just isn't clear

In mid June pro-life Liberal Member of Parliament (MP) Lawrence MacAulay indicated, via a series of tweets, that he would follow party leader Justin Trudeau's new pro-abortion requirement for his MPs. MacAulay wrote:

I'd like to clarify my comments to the Guardian the other day. I am personally pro-life, and have long held these beliefs; however, I accept and understand the party position regarding a woman's right to choose. Despite my personal beliefs, I understand that I will have to vote the party position should this issue ever come up in the House of Commons.

Broadly speaking there are two sides of the abortion debate: on the one side, those who know it is a baby and recognize that this is a life-and-death situation, on the other, those who don't understand that abortion ends the life of a precious human beings.

But there is a third group. This group is made up of those who know it is a child, know it is a life-and-death situation, and knowingly advocate for death.

This is the group Lawrence MacAulay has just joined. He calls himself "personally pro-life," so he understands a life is involved. And yet, knowing what he knows, MacAulay has pledged support for the murder of 100,000 Canadian children each year.

So we need to write this MP. And when we do, we need to be civil... but we must not be calm!

Calm isn't appropriate

How could we possibly be calm about what this man has done? The confusion he's creating will cost children their

lives – any young woman considering abortion who heard this professedly pro-life MP agree to support abortion has just been told that abortion can't really be a life-or-death matter. That's the message he's spreading! That's the damage he's doing.

Hard to be calm, isn't it? It's not only hard, it isn't appropriate! We communicate things in *how* we say them, just as much as by *what* we say. That's why when we sing to God, it should be with gusto – mouthing the words, even if they are wonderful words, send a mixed message, or simply doesn't praise Him at all.

In the same way, a calm, quiet response to Lawrence MacAulay's betrayal doesn't match up with what he has done. If we really think he is promoting the slaughter of the unborn then we can't talk to him in the same way we might if he proposed raising the GST a per cent or two. (Sadly, if he did that, he'd probably get more heated responses than he'll ever get for these tweets.) This is no minor disagreement – this isn't about money, but about lives. So if our response doesn't have some heat in it, we're not doing it right.

Does that mean we just go off on him? SHOULD WE TYPE OUR E-MAIL IN ALL CAPS? Should we call him every name in the book? Of course not.

But we should use powerful words. We should use clear words even though we know they will offend. There is no getting around offending MP Lawrence MacAulay - people get offended when you confront them about the blood on their hands. But we should not offend him with spurious insults, or with demeaning talk.

Here is the letter I wrote this MP:

Dear MP Lawrence MacAulay,

As a pro-life citizen I don't appreciate your party leader's stance. But your recent tweets left me more disappointed in you than him. Justin Trudeau, at least, can pretend he doesn't know better. But why are you personally pro-life?

Of course the answer to that is simple - you know it is a baby. So let's look back at what you tweeted and insert your own pro-life perspective. Here then, is what you really said:

I'd like to clarify my comments to the Guardian the other day. I am personally against the killing of unborn babies and have long held these beliefs; however, I accept and understand the party position regarding a woman's right to choose to kill her unborn baby. Despite my personal belief against killing babies, I understand that I will have to vote to kill unborn babies – my party's position – should this issue ever come up in the House of Commons.

Being personally pro-life and yet politically pro-choice is the most damnable of all positions in the abortion debate. It means you know what is going on, but don't have the courage to act. Please reconsider.

If I were to have a second go at it, I would have started differently. "Don't appreciate" and "disappointed" aren't the sort of terms you use to tell someone to stop promoting mass murder – far too calm.

So, clearly then, I'm not sharing this as an example of some perfect letter.



There is no such thing, so that shouldn't be our goal. The truth is, if we were going to send our politicians and the newspapers only perfect letters, then we would end up sending them none at all. We have to proceed doing as Martin Luther urged – we should “sin boldly.” He meant we should serve God with our best efforts, fully aware that even this will fall far short of His standard of perfection. Even our best efforts will be tainted by sin... and we shouldn't let that stop us from action.

While my beginning could have been better, I did better in the second half. No euphemisms, nothing to minimize what he is doing. My tone matches my message – the words I use clarify his brutality: this is killing children – this is damnable.

Conclusion

Christians are too calm in the abortion debate – our tone and the word choices we use simply don't match the overall claim that we are making. Can we talk of being

“disappointed” or not “appreciating” the actions of a man like Lawrence MacAulay and really expect to convince our fellow Canadians that 300 children a day are being slaughtered in our country? That's not the right vocabulary. When three Mounties were murdered in Moncton, N.B., in June, the newspapers were filled with words like “heartbreaking” “horror” and “grief-stricken.” Those are the kinds of words we use in the face of a travesty.

How we sound does matter. If we're going to convincingly communicate the truth of what's been done to the unborn, we need to talk like we mean it. Instead of being “disappointed” we need to be “devastated.” Instead of being “regretful” we should be “shocked.”

A deeper problem might lie not in our vocabulary and how we talk, but in our hearts and how we feel. It is hard to speak about being outraged when we aren't actually outraged. Apathy is understandable in the face of an evil that is decades old. But apathy in the face of evil is also sinful. If we speak of

being disappointed because that's all the passion we can muster, then we need more than a change of vocabulary – we need a change of heart.

Please forgive us our apathy, Lord. Please turn Lawrence MacAulay from his wicked path. And please, Lord, save these children!



Jon Dykstra can be reached at editor@reformedperspective.ca. He has not heard back from Lawrence MacAulay.

DEAR EDITOR,

In the February issue on education the editorial suggested that we not be shy about discussing touchy topics. All right, here we go!

It may be touchy but I found all the articles rather inwardly focused. Who should rule education was the fundamental issue. The answer suggested in all the articles was that the state should not rule, but that in effect the church should rule via the parents. The scary part for me in this is that church was not defined. I am left with the impression that our schools' role is to develop and protect the Canadian Reformed Churches.

It really struck a chord with me because last year I wrote a short article for our school community in response to the following foundational question raised by the broader community about Christian schooling.

As Christians don't we have a responsibility to the public system and people working there, students as well as staff?

We live in a post-modern, post-Christian society in which a multitude of students are being sent off to godless schools each and every day. How are we, as Christian school supporters being a help to those children? The question for me is not whether we have a responsibility because we surely do! The question is how are we to exercise our responsibility to our young neighbors?

Well, within the public school system we are not allowed to openly express the truth. So, joining in with the public school is not an option available to us. So, are there any other options open to us?

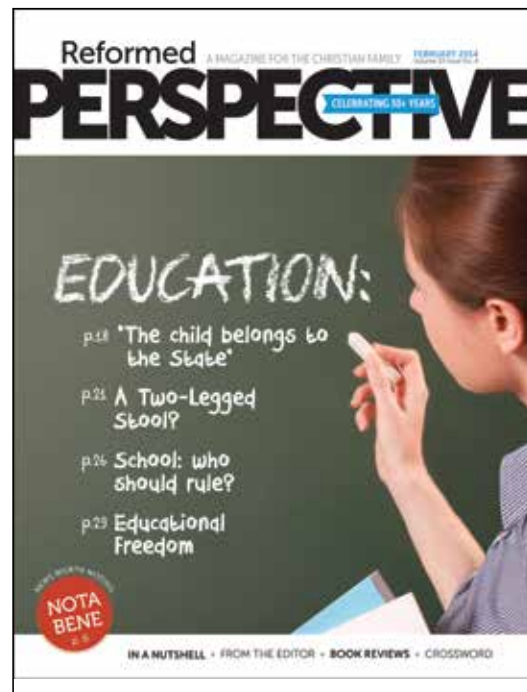
Well, one option, it would seem to me, is to invite the public to join us. Could it be that we need to invite them to enrol their children in our schools?

Have we made enough room for others to join us or have we created a closed system built to protect us and our children from the godless teachings

found all around us in the culture of the day? There is strength in numbers, and so do we use our school system to protect our children from anyone who does not fit our mold? We need to be careful that we do not become some kind of elitist school system claiming exclusive rights to things which we have no right to. If it is true that we have a better way, surely it is incumbent on us to share it with others.

In a time of strategic planning this is so very important. Is now the time to plan where to build, what to build, how large to build, in order to accommodate the children of friends and neighbors? Would now be a good time to make that conscious decision to invite the outside in? Are there people sending their children to public schools because they have not been welcomed by us? If that is so, we are guilty of not giving their children the opportunity to learn about the wonderful good news of the gospel. And if that is the case we are guilty of claiming exclusive rights to something we have no right to. Instead we have given our neighbors' children over to a system that does not acknowledge God and is indeed anti-Christian.

Just this past Sunday I received the "Church News" for Canadian Reformed Churches of the Fraser Valley. I noticed that the Escola Biblica Crista in Brazil educates "children of believers and unbelievers with a worldview of submission and praise to the Creator" (Church News March 16, 2014). It seems the Brazilians for some reason have an enrolment policy which is much more outwardly focused than ours. I have to wonder why. What is it we fear? Do we not have the faith and the courage to boldly invite friends and neighbors to join us in praising the one and only God of the universe?



Do we have a responsibility to the public school system? No! Do we have a responsibility to the people (teachers and students) in the public school system? Absolutely! Let's invite them to join us and to proclaim the good news to all instead of just those under our bushel.

The question of who should rule is, of course, very closely aligned with the purpose for having schools. Let's not have schools designed to propagate the relativism of our culture as the state would have it. But let's be careful not to have schools that propagate the exclusivity of the gospel, as if the gospel is ours and only ours. Then, indeed, we would be claiming rights to something we have no right to keep to ourselves.

It seems to me that we have fallen into the trap of educational egotism. It saddens me that the articles in your February issue did little to move us out of that mode of thinking.

Jerry Scholtens

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

Should we invite the public to enrol their children in our schools? It is certainly a touchy topic but a good question to discuss. It gets to the very heart of why we built our schools.

There are several reasons why it would not be a good idea to open up our enrolment.

1) Our schools were created to educate, not evangelize

The primary purpose of our schools is to help parents fulfill their educational responsibilities. We created our school to teach rather than preach.

Many Christians send their children to public schools with the intent that they be missionaries to those who have never heard the Gospel. It is a noble sounding idea, but misguided. While the world desperately needs to hear God's good news, nowhere in the Bible do we read of children being sent out as missionaries. It isn't hard, however, to find examples of grown men being sent. Instead of shrugging off this task to our children by using our schools to evangelize, *adults* should take up this task. We should step up, and be men (and women). If our churches aren't all that bright a light to their surrounding communities, that's not something we can lay at the feet of our children. Our schools should stick to education, our children should focus on learning, and we parents should start spreading the Gospel. That's the biblical model of labor distribution.

2) Brazil is an apple to our orange

In Brazil some Reformed schools serve an evangelistic role and allow non-Christian students to attend. Why the different approach? It is, in large part, because they can't replicate our system.

1. A parent-run school needs spiritually mature parents, which are not available in the same numbers there, among the many new converts, as here, where many of us were born and raised in the Church.

2. Congregations there can be very small: in one situation there are only five school-age children. It would be very difficult to run a school for just five students.
3. Brazilian rules about how schools must be staffed add to the expense, and Brazilian laws against homeschooling leave few options in that direction.
4. Brazilian congregations are not as wealthy as we are.

They've allowed non-Christians in to make Christian schooling for their own children possible and affordable. But Brazilian educational leaders would likely look on our system with considerable envy.

3) "Bad company spoils good morals" (1 Cor. 15:33)

The Bible has a lot to say about the influence of peers - for good or ill they will have their impact. That's why we are warned to stay away from fools (Proverbs 13:20, 14:7). In Psalm 1:1-4 the psalmist explains that he steers clear of the wicked and sinners, and that thought is echoed in Psalm 26:5: "I hate the assembly of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked."

We could have the best teachers in the world, but if the classroom is split down the middle between covenant children and children who want nothing to do with God, what lessons are our children going to learn? How do we teach Science from a Christian perspective if half the children think it is crazy not to believe in evolution? Would we still want to encourage our children to make friends with their fellow students when half those students are not Christian (2 Cor. 6:14)? How deeply could we dig into the Bible when half the students come in knowing nothing about the Bible?

Our schools were created to prepare our children to go out into the world. But until they are prepared we *do* want to protect them from the godless influences of the world. Those influences may still leak into our classrooms (for example, I know

of children who were first exposed to pornography in Grade 4, on the playground at their Christian school), but what is a trickle in our schools is a torrent in the world. Sin happens in our schools, but there is also there the clarion call to repent and believe.

Teachers will most often lead this call to repentance, but in our covenantal schools we should also be teaching our children their covenantal responsibility to admonish one another (1 Thess. 5:14). This is difficult to teach covenant children, but would it even be possible to teach it if half their classmates aren't members of the covenant?

4) There are many other ways to love our neighbor

There are many ways we can help parents with children in the public schools to improve the educational options for their children. God tells us that education is a parental responsibility so we can encourage parents to take a more active role in their children's education. This could mean pushing for a voucher system, which gives parents more say by allowing them to take their dollars away from public schools that are not meeting their needs. Or it might mean telling them about home schooling. And for our Christian neighbors, it could mean talking about the importance of Christian schooling. We can help children still in the public system by fighting attempts to hijack the public school curriculum for nefarious ends (as was done by homosexual advocates in BC). We can also run for public school boards and try to make them more parent-driven. And we can volunteer, letting our light shine from within (as much as we are allowed to do).

But the greatest expression of our love will come, not through any small improvements we can make to their godless schools, but through telling them about God. They need to hear about Him, not from our children, but from our own lips. It is the most important thing they could ever learn, and anything else we could do for them pales in comparison.

NOTA BENE

News
worth
noting

IRONY ALERT

BY JON DYKSTRA

More than 20,000 folk marched for life on the streets of Ottawa on May 8 to highlight the plight of the unborn, explaining that these little ones' choices shouldn't be snuffed out by abortion.

Two topless protesters tried to disrupt speeches but after shouting, "My body, my rules," the pair were hauled off for violating Canadian rules about what they can, and can't do, with their bodies.

The fact is, we are not free to do with our bodies whatever we choose, and these two ladies' actions highlighted how reasonable it is to have some restrictions. Restrictions are even more understandable when, as is the case in abortion, a second body is involved.

CHRISTIANS HAVE MISSED THE POINT WITH MOZILLA

BY JON DYKSTRA



Brendan Eich was briefly appointed the CEO of the company Mozilla Firefox – creators of an Internet browser used by half a billion worldwide – earlier this year. But he was forced into resigning only ten days later. He was pressured into quitting after some employees and homosexual activists protested a 2008 donation Eich made to the campaign for California Proposition 8, a state constitutional amendment that clarified that marriage was only "between a man and a woman." While the amendment was passed by a majority of voters – more than 7 million people – gay activists found Eich's donation so controversial

that they demanded his ouster. They labeled his support of real marriage as being "anti-gay."

There is a certain irony in homosexuals, who demand tolerance of their lifestyle, being intolerant of anyone who thinks differently than they do. Most conservative and Christian news outlets have focused on this irony angle, as well as objecting to Eich's treatment as an infringement on freedom of speech.

Since even some homosexual activists see the irony, and everyone values free speech, these seem the best sorts of arguments to make. They are certainly the safest. But neither really gets to the heart of the matter.

Christians don't believe in tolerance or free speech without limits. All this exposes is that, despite what they sometimes say, homosexuals don't believe in unlimited tolerance or limitless free speech either. The battle lines being drawn here are not between those who are tolerant and those who are not. Instead the fight is about what will we tolerate, and what won't we? We both want to draw lines, but in different places.

Brendan Eich shouldn't have been forced to resign but not, primarily, because he has a right to free speech, or because homosexuals should tolerate him – it is because his view that marriage is between a man and a woman is right. *It is true!* There is no better reason to tolerate a man's belief than that his belief is, in fact, fact.

And yet Christians have gotten so shy about defending God's truth that this is the one argument no one seems to be making. We defend Brendan Eich's right to speak, *without defending the truth of his position*. We demand tolerance for his views, *without defending the truth of his views*. We have fallen into a trap of political correctness, advancing only the arguments that will be most palatable to our secular listeners.

But the attack is not on free speech, or even on tolerance – this attack is on the very words of God and what He has said marriage is. That's what our opponents want to silence. And after seeing the Christian response to the Mozilla debacle, it seems they may well be succeeding.

DOGS BARK, FISH SWIM, AND ABORTIONISTS LIE

BY ELISSA DYKSTRA

Earlier this year the *Washington Post* reported that the abortion rights group NARAL (National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws) had succeeded in getting Google to take down “deceptive” online crisis pregnancy center ads. NARAL claimed that when they

googled “abortion clinic,” ads funded by anti-choice crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) appeared 79 percent of the time. CPCs don’t provide or refer for abortion care, and they shouldn’t trick women into thinking that they do.

For a pro-life group ad to appear when someone searches for “abortion” is not deceptive – it is simply reaching out to an obvious target audience. But NARAL accused these pro-life centers of intentionally using false and misleading language. And they claimed that Google was, indeed, taking down ads for being deceptive

A statement from Google, though vague, seemed to confirm NARAL’s

assertions, explaining that if they found violations of their policies they would remove them as quickly as possible.

Soon, however, it became clear that NARAL’s statements were, at the very least, vastly exaggerated. Multiple crisis pregnancy centers and pro-life groups – including OnlineForLife, HeartbeatInternational, and CompassCare Pregnancy Services – quickly made it clear that they had not had ads removed by Google. Only one week after the story originally broke, pro-life journalists received confirmation from all major national pregnancy care center organizations that not a single one of their ads had been removed – a clear contradiction to NARAL’s claim of over two-thirds of the ads they complained about being taken down.

Where, then, did NARAL’s claims come from? At this point, the answer appears to be that they were fabricated, designed to stir up negative press against crisis pregnancy centers, and similar to tactics that NARAL has used in the past.

Dr. Bernard Nathanson, a co-founder of NARAL who later became a pro-life

activist, explains that one of the ways that NARAL “captured” the media in its fight to legalize abortion was by simply making up the numbers that would be helpful to their cause. He states that they fabricated polls – for example, declaring that 60% of people were in favor of abortion despite knowing that only a minority did. Nathanson also describes garnering sympathy by dramatically increasing the number of illegal abortions done annually from 100,000 to 1 million, and the number of women who had died due to these abortions from about 200-250 to 10,000.

For NARAL to lie about ads on Google was really only a part of their long-standing practices of creating facts that promoted their perspectives. As Christians in the fight against abortion, it is important to recognize the lengths to which our opponents will go, and to be ready to counteract their lies with the truth.

SOURCES: www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-switch/wp/2014/04/28/naral-successfully-lobbies-google-to-take-down-deceptive-pregnancy-center-ads/; www.lifesitenews.com/news/google-hype-crisis-pregnancy-centers-say-they-see-no-effect-from-naral-repo; www.lifesitenews.com/blog/naral-lied-there-were-no-deceptive-pregnancy-ads-on-google; www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/abortion/articles-and-addresses/an-ex-abortionist-speaks/; <http://www.prochoiceamerica.org/get-involved/issue-campaigns/google-cpc.html>

IS IT TIME FOR A VEGAN PIG ROAST AT YOUR UNIVERSITY?

BY ELISSA DYKSTRA



Recently US schools like Bowdoin College, Vanderbilt University, and Cal State have required student groups to be absolutely non-discriminatory. For Christian student groups this has meant that they not only must allow non-Christians to join, but must also allow them to be elected to the group’s leadership – if an atheist wants to run

for the group’s presidency, they have to let him.

Christian groups who have refused this condition have been stripped of official status, losing them funding, and in some cases, the right to meet on campus.

As one recently graduated student pointed out, the decision is an absurd one: “It would compromise our ability to be who we are as Christians if we can’t hold our leaders to some sort of doctrinal standard.” Rev. Robert Ives, the director of spiritual life at Bowdoin College, disagrees: “I want [Christian groups] on campus...but every position of leadership has to be open to every individual, without discrimination.”

Perhaps the best way for Christians to demonstrate the problem with this statement is to apply it to other

cases. Should the campus vegan clubs be open to a meat-eating president who wants to run monthly pig roasts? Should book studies be forced to accept a leader who always thinks the movie version is better? Maybe the environmental action group should be led by someone who thinks clear-cutting forests and dumping oil into oceans are fun weekend activities. Of course these ideas are ridiculous, but that’s exactly the point. When this rule is applied to more than just the Christian student groups it becomes clear how silly a rule it is.

When “anti-discrimination” is pushed to these extremes it becomes laughable instead of laudable.

SOURCE: Michael Paulson’s “Colleges and Evangelicals Collide on Bias Policy” from the June 9, 2014, edition of the *New York Times* online (www.nytimes.com).

MANY DEVICES

In my vain life I have seen everything; there is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs his life in his evil-doing.... Behold, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many devices. – Ecclesiastes 7:15,29

by: Christine Farenhorst

There are vagabonds and there are villains, there are crooks and there are victims, and sin and temptation are present in the hearts of all.

Listen to the story of a man who stood behind an old woman just ahead of him at the checkout counter at his local supermarket. The woman was crying. She was well-dressed, although a bit on the shabby side. He tried not to pay attention but could not help but notice that she was in distress. Eventually compassion overcame him and he spoke to her, tapping her on the shoulder: "What is the matter? Can I help you?"

She turned to face him, looking surprised, tears visible on her wrinkled face. "Oh, I'm sorry to have disturbed you," her voice, soft and genteel, awoke more pity in his heart, "I've recently lost my son. He died last month."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," the man murmured.

"The truth is," the woman continued softly, "that he worked here." She stopped to blow her nose, and the man thought of his own mother. "He worked here," the shaking voice went on, "and I would see him every time I bought my groceries."

"It must be quite painful for you," the man replied, overcome with sympathy.

"The most difficult thing," the bereft woman added, "is remembering that he would always wave to me after my groceries were packed and when I reached the door with my cart he'd say,

'Bye, Mom. See you soon.'"

She bent her head and two tears rolled down her cheeks before she looked up at him again. "I don't suppose," she said tremulously, "that you would say, 'Bye, Mom,' and wave to me after my groceries are packed and I reach the door, just to help me this first time?"

"Of course, I will," the man agreed instantly.

The woman's turn at the checkout

...his devious mind conned many in the States out of huge sums of cash (including the gangster Al Capone).

arrived. The bagger packed her things and wheeled her cart to the door. At the door she turned and looked the man in the eye. He waved to her with his right hand and called out loudly, "Bye Mom. See you soon."

This single act made him feel good inside and a bit emotional. He began unpacking his own items, placing them on the counter, and thought about how he should call up his own mother that very evening to ask how she was doing. Lost in thought, he was startled when the checkout girl told him the bill was more than \$300 dollars.

"You must be wrong," he said, "I didn't buy that much."

"Oh, but your mother did," she responded with a smile, and instantly he knew he'd been had.

Yes, there are crooks and there are victims, and evil resides in the hearts of all of us. When we hear questions like, "How do you keep from getting parking tickets?" and laugh at the answer "By removing your wipers," that is because there is something within us which resonates with getting the better of someone.

A MASTER OF DECEIT

One of the most infamous masters of deceit and trickery was a man by the name of Victor Lustig. Born in 1890 in Bohemia, now known as the Czech Republic, Victor was gifted with a brilliant mind. Part of an upper-middle class family, his father was the mayor of a small town, which meant small Viktor's future was, humanly speaking, rather secure. In school he studied languages, easily becoming fluent in Czech, German, English, French and Italian. Victor could have used these talents to become a wonderful teacher or diplomat. Instead, he opted for gambling, turning his abilities to billiards, poker and bridge. In his early twenties he went on pleasure cruises and cheated many gullible, wealthy people out of their money. However, when World War I put

a stop to these cruises, he headed for the US. Giving himself the title of “Count,” his devious mind conned many in the States out of huge sums of cash (including the gangster Al Capone).

The story that really put the native-born Czechoslovakian in the news occurred in 1925, when he was 35 years old. Lustig was in Paris at this time and he read in the newspaper that the Eiffel Tower was in great need of repair. The cost of fixing the monumental fixture seemed rather prohibitive. There was even a brief footnote in the article which mentioned that the French government was considering scrapping the tower as it might be cheaper for them to tear it down than to repair it.

Upon finishing the article, Lustig’s fertile and calculating mind saw huge sums of money floating by. His connections with other nefarious characters enabled him to acquire official French government letterhead. Giving himself the title of “Deputy Director-General of the Ministry of Mail and Telegraphs,” he typed up letters in which he said that he had the authority to sell the 7,000 ton steel structure to the highest bidder. He then sent this letter to five leading scrap metal dealers in the city. He instructed the recipients of the letter to keep the matter secret as the public would most likely be upset about the demolition of such a landmark. All five scrap metal dealers showed up and Lustig carefully picked the one most apt to be his patsy: a man by the name of Monsieur Poisson. Poisson gladly paid a handsome amount of money for the privilege of obtaining the contract, and upon receiving it Lustig quickly retreated to Austria. Hearing no news of the swindle, he concluded that Poisson had been too embarrassed to have told anyone. Boldly, Lustig returned to Paris and tried to sell the Eiffel Tower a second time. This time, however, the police were made aware of the swindle. The conman barely eluded authorities and was forced to flee to America.

Ten years later, in 1935, after having

flooded the US with counterfeit bills, and having cheated many more people, the Secret Service finally caught up with Lustig. They reacted to an anonymous phone call made by his mistress who was jealous because Victor was cheating on her. He was arrested and sentenced to twenty years in Alcatraz. Although he initially escaped from jail, he was re-apprehended and spent the next twelve years behind bars.

A set of tips, known as the “Ten Commandments for Conmen,” are attributed to Lustig. They are:

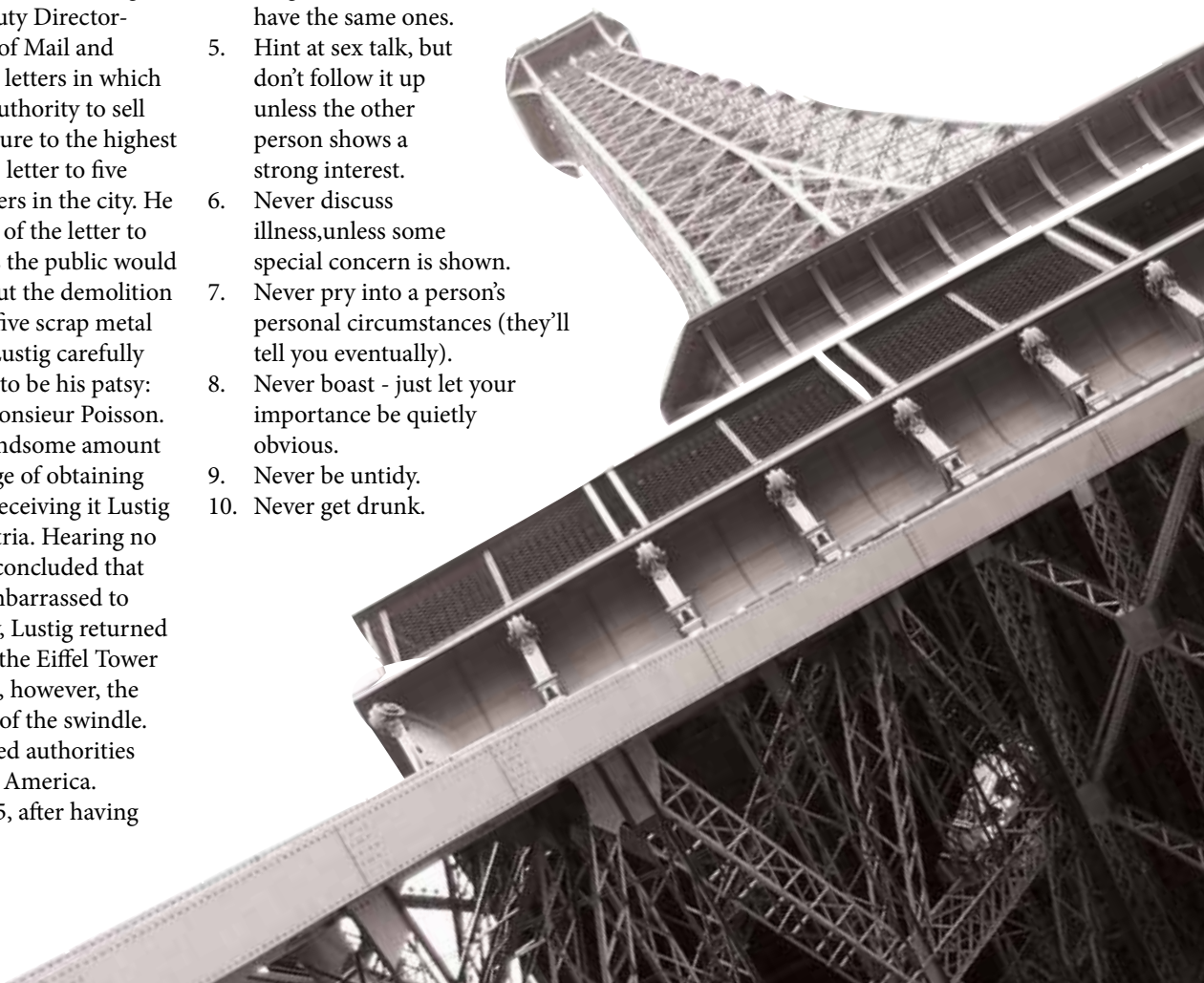
1. Be a patient listener (it is this, not fast talking, that gets a conman his coups).
2. Never look bored.
3. Wait for the other person to reveal any political opinions; then agree with him.
4. Let the other person reveal religious views; then have the same ones.
5. Hint at sex talk, but don’t follow it up unless the other person shows a strong interest.
6. Never discuss illness, unless some special concern is shown.
7. Never pry into a person’s personal circumstances (they’ll tell you eventually).
8. Never boast - just let your importance be quietly obvious.
9. Never be untidy.
10. Never get drunk.

THERE IS AN ACCOUNTING

In 1947 Victor Lustig contracted pneumonia and died after a two-day illness. His last enemy, death, was not to be conned out of its prey. Having shunned God’s commandments, and the One Who kept them perfectly, he had no place to hide. Although proficient in languages, he was forced to clap his hand over his mouth.

Perhaps our lives do not compare with Viktor Lustig’s life; perhaps our deeds shine when we hold them up next to his obvious deceitfulness; but we do well to remember that we ought to

...fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.
– Ecclesiastes 12:13-14



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IN A NUTSHELL

TIDBITS RELEVANT,
AND NOT SO,
TO CHRISTIAN LIFE.

BY JON DYKSTRA

Been Born? As Kennedy noted, Christ's influence has been such that the whole world counts times as Before Christ (B.C.) and *Anno Domini* (A.D.) which is Latin for "in the year of the Lord." It is an irony, Kennedy writes, "that the most vitriolic atheist writing a propagandistic letter to a friend must acknowledge Christ when he dates that letter."

But the irony doesn't stop there. The very same people who shake their fist at God benefit from Christ's influence. The following is a short list of some of the very best features of our culture and civilization that can be attributed, as Kennedy does, to Jesus' lasting impact:

- hospitals were started back in the Middle Ages by Christians
- slavery was abolished by Christians
- most universities were begun by Christians
- literacy for the masses was begun so that even peasants could read the Bible
- modern science was developed by Christians to investigate the wonders God has wrought
- we owe the separation of powers in government to the Christian understanding of man's corrupt nature - if we can't be ruled by angels, then let us at least ensure no one devil gets his hands on all the power
- capitalism and free enterprise are based on property rights found in the Bible
- the common man was elevated, and we began to have a higher regard for human life, based on the understanding all of mankind is made in God's image

TWO DECADES OF GLOBAL WARMING FEAR

"...if you're graduating from high school in the next few days, there's been no global warming since you were in your bassinet. But it doesn't feel like that, does it? Because you've had climate change shoved down your throat your entire life."

- Mark Steyn, in "Polar Bear-Faced Lie" posted to www.SteynOnline June 2, 2014

HOST AS YOU ARE

Have you ever said, "We're going to start asking more people over once _____"? That blank space can be filled by any number of things, such as:

- we tidy up the house
- our kids are older
- our kids are better behaved
- we move into a larger place
- we get a proper dining room table
- we have time to shop for/cook a special meal

But blogger Jack King encourages us to do away with the excuses and consider offering our guests "Scruffy hospitality." He explains:

Scruffy hospitality means you're not waiting for everything in your house to be in order before you host and serve friends in your home. Scruffy hospitality means you hunger more for good conversation and serving a simple meal of what you have, not what you don't have. Scruffy hospitality means you're more interested in quality conversation than the impression your home or lawn makes. If we share meals with friends only when we're excellent, we aren't truly sharing life together. Don't allow a to-do list to disqualify you from an evening with people you're called to

love in friendship.... We tell our guests "come as you are;" perhaps we should tell ourselves "host as you are."*what does it look like to welcome people into my humility rather than my standard of excellence?* The playroom may not be tidy. Our kids, who are lovely and enjoyable, may become noisy and cranky around 7 pm. Dinners may be sponsored entirely by Trader Joe's frozen section.... But why would I withhold an invitation simply because I can't make dinner from scratch?

SOURCE: Jack King's "Why Scruffy Hospitality Creates Space for Friendship" posted to KnoxPriest.com, May 21, 2014

C.S. LEWIS ON READING DRAMATIC WORKS TO CHILDREN

"Since it is so likely that children will meet cruel enemies, let them at least have heard of brave knights and heroic courage."

SOURCE: "On Stories: And Other Essays on Literature" (1966)

JESUS' IMPACT ON OUR CULTURE TODAY

Twenty years ago Presbyterian pastor D. James Kennedy wrote a book exploring the question *What If Jesus Had Never*

CINDERELLA

by Conrad van Dyk

Every Cinderella
Wants a fella;
But who has the virtue
To be home for curfew?

SOURCE: www.saintclerihewscalendar.com

PARENTING THROUGH THE TEENAGE YEARS

– survival is not the goal

By: Peter Hastie

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. PAUL TRIPP ON WHAT “SUCCESS” IS IN PARENTING TEENS.

Q *What sort of goals should a parent have as their children reach the teenage years?*

A: Unfortunately, western culture has had a terribly cynical view of the teen years. It’s a view that is largely biologically based. People tend to see teenagers as a collection of raging, rebel hormones encased in skin. Of course, the idea is that you can’t talk to a hormone. I read someone who put it very well. He said that if you add the word “teenage” to any other word, it becomes a negative. Take “teenage driver.” That’s a simple instance of how this particular age group attracts cynicism.

The problem with this way of looking at teens is that it’s a subtle denial of the Gospel. Actually, what we’re really saying is that there’s a class of people for whom the Gospel won’t work. That’s a

devastating theology. My experience is that when parents buy into that view of the Gospel for their teenagers, it begins to bleed over into other relationships. They begin to have doubts about whether Christ can reach all sorts of people.

That means that simply surviving your teens is not enough of a goal. In a sense, having survival as a goal is selfish because it’s focused simply on getting yourself through a difficult time. The other problem with having survival as a goal is that, as parents, we tend to settle for external, behaviorist sorts of goals.

We try to deal with our kids according to the Nike way: “Just do it!” Children who have had parents who only want to regulate and control their behavior don’t have much when they leave the home.

In America, for example, we have had a huge number of kids from Christian homes who go off to college and forsake

the faith. Actually, I suspect that they never had it in the first place. In fact, what they had was the faith of their parents. It’s just that they never internalized it for themselves. All that the college situation does is reveal the true heart of the teenager that had been masked by parental control and regulations.

Naturally, all parents need to have regulations that control the behavior of their children, but it’s not enough of a goal. The sort of rule-keeping that we describe as behaviorism, which is disconnected from the heart, is repudiated throughout the Bible and was the peculiar sin of the Pharisees. Christ roundly condemned it. And yet Christian parents can be very successful at creating a new generation of young Pharisees who live with no sense of need for the Gospel at all, because they’re quite good at keeping external rules. That’s pretty scary to me.

We need to see that the final years of a child’s life at home are a time of unprecedented opportunity. As a child’s world unfolds before him and he



Photo Credit: www.paultripp.com

feel, think, purpose, desire, believe with our heart. We also receive or reject God's new covenant with it, too. This means that if the heart is the steering wheel of the human being, if it's the thing that causes us to do what we do, then it's quite obvious that the focus of parenting has to be the heart.

Christ, as you know, uses the example of the tree to explain the function of the heart. You look at the tree and its fruit, and you say: "That's an apple tree, because it has apples." Now we know that the reason it has apples is because it is apple-istic right down to its roots. If it wasn't an apple tree by nature, it wouldn't produce apples. In Christ's example, the tree equals the heart, and the fruit equals behavior and its consequences.

I often use this example. Imagine that you have an apple tree in the backyard. Now this particular tree produces horrible apples year after year. So I say to my wife, "I think I can fix our apple tree." So I go out with a big ladder and cut off all the old apples. Then I nail delicious red apples all over the tree. I stand back, and from 50 feet it now looks like a good apple tree. But we all know what's going to happen, don't we? Those apples are going to rot, too, because if the tree is consistently producing bad apples, then there's something wrong with the system, right down to its roots. We all realize that we won't solve the problem by nailing apples onto the tree. But this is the problem with much of modern child-rearing, even in Christian circles. A lot of what we call biblical parenting is nothing more than apple-nailing. And what happens is that six weeks later, or perhaps six months or six years, the child or youth is right back to where they were before.

Q *So you're saying that many Christian parents are behaviorists?*

A: Yes, that's right. But the problem is that they don't realize they are. And much of the time it's because they're untaught.

If you go to the average Christian bookstore, unless it carries *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Ted Tripp or my book,

experiences greater freedom, his heart gets revealed. This means that we have to take every opportunity to be part of the final stage of preparation. Being involved with our teenagers at a deep level is something we mustn't avoid.

Q *What's the real problem that teenagers face? Is it their hormones or is it their hearts?*

A: The world says it's their hormones, but the Bible says, in literally hundreds of ways, that human beings live out of their hearts. We like to think that it's other people and circumstances that cause us to do what we do. However, this little bit of blame-shifting comes straight out of the garden of Eden. The Bible says that our situations and relationships are merely the occasions in which our hearts express themselves. I really live out of my heart. The heart is the directional system for each one of us.

Q *What do you mean when you use the word "heart"?*

A: The Bible has a very simple anthropology. It says that people consist of two parts: the outer man – which is your earth suit, and the inner man – which is your spiritual self. The Bible uses a number of words – mind, emotion, will, spirit – to describe the heart. In a sense, "the heart" is one, big basket term; it's really biblical shorthand for the inner man and all its functions.

The Bible attributes many important functions to the heart. It tells us that we

... often I wasn't angry because they had sinned, but because their sin had gotten in the way of something that I wanted.



"Nice try, Bobby. Now just tunnel your way back and do your homework."

Age of Opportunity, you won't even hear the word "heart" mentioned in books on parenting. They are all about techniques and strategies for controlling behavior. They are behaviorist, even though they appear in Christian guise.

The scary thing about these books is that they often have a temporary effectiveness. It's true – I can control a child's behavior through a variety of means. If I lay enough guilt on my child, it will move him. Or if I manipulate him with something he wants – a new car or a new bike – that will be temporarily effective. Or I can threaten him. That may be of limited effectiveness, too. However, the problem is that none of these things last. The minute the threat's gone, the inner man hasn't changed. And the child goes right back to where he was. And that's what's happening all over the place, not just in the culture, but in the church as well.

Q *Why do parents usually find the teenage years of their children the most demanding and threatening of all?*

A: I would like to be able to say, as the father of four children, all of them now grown up (although one is still a teen), that the only time I got angry was when one of them broke God's law. However, what is, in fact, true, and I think it's true of all of us, is that often I wasn't angry because they had sinned, but because their sin had gotten in the way of something that I wanted. And what often gets in the way of parenting teenagers is

the idolatry of their mother and father.

As a father, I, too, live for comfort, appreciation, success, respect and control. Now none of those things, in and of themselves, is wrong. But they must not rule my heart. If they do rule my heart, then in a moment of teen trouble, I will be likely to personalize what is not personal and be adversarial in my approach to you. I'll turn a moment of God-given ministry opportunity into a moment of anger, rather than going after your heart. I'll settle for quick situational solutions because I just want to get in and out of the room and get it over with. At that moment, I will be enraged with you because you have stopped me from realizing what is really important to me.

That's why the key to being used by God with your children is to start with your own heart. Try this as an experiment. Imagine someone shooting a video of every waking moment of your life over the last six weeks. What would it reveal about the things you are serving? What would you say is really important to you?

You hear parents confess their idolatry in roundabout ways all the time: "I do all this for you and this is the thanks I get?" Or a father says, "How dare you do this to me!" as if the child has plotted against him. I guess it feels personal to a parent because the child has prevented him from serving the idol that's ruling his life. It can be a huge struggle for the parents at times. But the teenage years are a time of unprecedented opportunity. I've found that the most important thing

I can do to help parents is to get them to begin the search for idolatry in their lives. Then, when they find it, to confess it and forsake it.

If parents do not deal with their personal idolatry first, then all the strategies I give you are not going to help. In fact, goal setting won't help either. Why? Because, you always end up serving what rules your heart. It's like the law of gravity: it's always operating. That's why I love Reformed theology because it gets to the heart of the problem through its radical view of human nature. Reformed theology declares that worship isn't first an activity for human beings; worship is first an identity. We are worshippers; you can't *not* worship. We are always in the service of something. And if I'm not serving God in the life of my teenager, then I'm serving other things. It's just an inescapable principle.

Q *What are the most important opportunities in which parents play a strategic role in their teenage children's lives?*

A: Let me begin by saying that I am always struck by how transcultural and transgenerational the Bible really is. We tend to divide human beings into all these subcultures, believing that we are very different from one another. In some ways we might be, but I should add that the Bible is able to cast its net in a way that catches everyone.

This means that the Bible speaks to the typical struggles of young people in every culture. It works in a situation when a son says to his dad, "Father, I need to bed down the camel," and it works when a son says, "Dad, I forgot to put gas in the car." It spans those generations. So it's not hard to look at Scripture and realize that the Bible is right when it defines the typical struggles of a young person. Those struggles are the opportunity for discerning parents.

For instance, the book of Proverbs is very clear in reminding us that teenagers don't usually hunger for wisdom and correction. I've never had one of my kids

say to me, “As I was riding the bus home from school I was thinking, ‘Dad, you’re a really wise man. I’d just love to sit at your feet and drink in some more of your wisdom,’” or, “Dad, I realize that when you correct me you are showing me your love. Would you like to correct me some more?” So what should be my goal here? As a parent I realize that wisdom is crucial to pleasing God, and yet it’s not the thing for which my teenager tends to hunger.

So now I’ve got my job description. It’s to sell my teenager something that he is not seeking. And so I decide that I’ll model being a wise man. I want to show him that wisdom is a beautiful and wonderful thing. And I want to sell wisdom to him so that he becomes a really keen consumer. The point I’m making is that in each area of teenage struggle there’s wonderful parental opportunity.

Another characteristic of teenagers is that they tend to be very legalistic. They don’t particularly love God’s law, they frequently debate the boundaries and they’re very boundary oriented. I tell people that if God’s law is like a fence, then my kids grew up with fence marks on their faces. As teens they were always pressing against the fence. Now you don’t solve the problem of teenage legalism by debating where the boundary is. Why? Because a child who is pressing his face against the fence is believing a very significant lie. The lie is that the good stuff is out there and God is keeping him from it.

What I need to do is turn his body to the inside of the yard and show him the glory of what God has called us to. Can you imagine living in a town where everybody was gentle and kind, no one ever stole, there were no such things as envy, murder or adultery, no one coveted, everyone was always patient? That’s God’s world! So in each one of those areas of teen struggle there are wonderful opportunities for parents.

Q *You’ve said that if parents don’t regard the teen years as a time of unprecedented opportunity, it’s because they’ve got*

something wrong with their own hearts. What’s the problem with adult hearts when they begin to resent their teenage children?

A: What happens in the teen years is that a dynamic relational change takes place. When my child is young, he is pretty much a slave to whatever my agenda is. I am totally in control. He goes wherever I tell him; the only friends he has in the house are the ones that I approve. However, the more my teenager’s world widens, the less that’s true. And what happens is that this adolescent sinner has a remarkable ability to mess up my world.

Another characteristic of teenagers is that they tend to be very legalistic. They don’t particularly love God’s law, they frequently debate the boundaries, and they’re very boundary oriented.

He can’t help himself. Every one of his choices collides with mine. I tell parents it’s like this: you can’t stand next to a puddle for too long without being splashed by its mud. The fact is that every parent of a teen is dealing with a person who is struggling to come to terms with life. We also must realize that every teenager is a sinner and is trying to learn how to live in God’s world, learning what it means to be godly and learning the dangers of sin. There’s no possible way that that won’t have a huge impact on my life. And that’s why people don’t like their teenagers.

Teenagers are completely different from the babies that we held in our arms. We loved to hear them coo, and they smelled so fresh. It seems so ironic that the tiny person who brought us so much joy is the same young man I now resent. In fact, I’m so mad with him, I don’t even want to sit down and have a meal with him. Why? Because he’s made my world uncomfortable. That’s it. And I don’t like

my world being turned upside down. I like a world that’s predictable and controlled. And I deeply resent the fact that I have lost that level of comfort and control that I previously had.

Actually, what my teenager reveals in me when I get angry and frustrated with him is a depth and consistency of self-love that is one of the horrible effects of sin. Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians 5:15 that Jesus came that those “who live, should no longer live unto themselves but for him who for their sakes died and was raised.” Jesus is saying that selfishness is the endemic result of sin. It makes you totally self-absorbed.

And so what do I want? I want pre-sanctified, self-parenting children. I

want children that I can always take to a restaurant without being embarrassed. I want kids who will do their homework without me being on their backs. I want an easy life for myself. And frankly, I never expected that becoming a parent meant that I would have to lay my life down for my kids. But that’s exactly what God calls me to do. My redemption cost Christ not only His glory, it also cost Him His life. That’s the model.

Q *What sort of attitudes and approach should parents have with the family if they are to be in the right frame of mind to deal with their teens?*

A: First, we need to understand how the modern workplace has devalued the importance of family relationships. This trend began with the modern industrial revolution. Two hundred years ago, when industry was cottage-based, if the family was in crisis the shop shut down to settle



the problem because the family ran the business. But if you remove men from the home and relocate the place of work, all of a sudden industry begins to dictate lifestyle. What man today would call his boss and say, “I’m going to be two hours late because I’m sorting out a difficult problem in our home, and it needs to be dealt with now.” What you do is say to your wife, “I can’t talk about that now because I have to be at work.”

As work and family life became separate, men began increasingly to define success in terms of their performance on the job rather than on their success in the home. Then along came the further problem of women leaving the home to travel to their work. Now women are also defining their personal success in terms of job performance. Today we are generations down the road from our Christian forbears on thinking about the family. Sadly, we don’t think nearly as much of the place of family relationships when we think of the definition of a successful life. But we need to. We must come to a position where we say: “There is nothing that I will ever be that will rival the importance of God’s work in the formation of my children’s souls.” There is nothing more important than that. And that demands some hard choices.

When I go out to speak, I’ll make that challenge to men in the congregation. I’ll point my finger and say: “There are some of you who are so busy in your careers that you’re seldom home, and when you are, you are so physically exhausted that you have nothing to offer your children. There are men here who actually don’t even know their own kids. And I want to offer a radical challenge to you. Go to your boss and ask for a demotion. Take less pay. Move out of that dream house and into a smaller one. Sell your brand

new car and be willing to drive an older one. And be willing to do what God has called you to do in the life of your children.

Q *What are the most helpful ways to understand teenagers if we are to play a vital role in their spiritual development?*

A: I think the most helpful thing to remember is that your teenager is more like you than unlike you. Unfortunately, we have this view that teenagers are in a separate class as though they’re aliens who’ve dropped from the sky.

One humbling thing that I’ve realized is that there are few struggles in the life of my teenager that I don’t recognize in my own heart as well. For instance, imagine my child has gotten into trouble because he’s procrastinated on a school assignment until the night before, and he can’t possibly get it done. But haven’t I done the same? Of course I have. And when I realize that, I don’t come to him and say, “How dare you! How could you? In my day I would have never thought of doing this!” Instead, I come as a fellow sinner.

It’s at this point that my dealings with him are based on the Gospel rather than law. Here’s my opportunity to point him to Christ. So I say: “Son, there’s a rescue provided for us in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. There’s hope for both of us. I need it every bit as much as you do. And I stand with you. However, don’t expect me to write a note to the teacher to get you out of the assignment.”

So you see, it’s a whole different approach. I actually think that the self-righteous – “I’m more righteous than you” – approach closes down teenagers; it doesn’t open them up at all. That’s why Christian parents shouldn’t use it.

Q *Is the wisdom literature of the Bible, especially the Proverbs, helpful in preparing us to meet the challenge of the teenage years? How does it help parents get ready for their responsibilities?*

A: Yes, it’s vital for dealing with teens. As I have read the first few chapters of Proverbs it’s often hit me that what we have here is a father giving advice to his son. “Son, pay attention to my wisdom.” “Son, give heed to my instruction.” So I decided that I would keep reading the first eight chapters over and over again. I literally read them hundreds of times. Interestingly, what happened was that a number of themes started rising to the surface – a theme being something that’s repeated over and over again.

Now, I know enough as a parent that if I have to repeat something several times to my children, it means I’ve identified a struggle within them. So the themes in Proverbs give us a wonderful picture of what are the typical temptations or struggles of a young person. And they give me a nice template for thinking about the kinds of things I am going to encounter as I go through the teen years with my children.

What should be the basic spiritual goals for parents in dealing with their teens? Should I simply be trying to regulate their behavior? Is that a worthy aim, or should I be trying to achieve a lot more? My problem with a lot of parenting is that it is reactive; it’s not goal-driven. Something comes up, and I react to it. However, Scripture expects us to move well beyond reactive parenting. It sets us heart goals. And so when I am helping my teens deal with issues of dating, or use of the car, or behavior at school, their individual situation gives

me a God-given opportunity to help them advance in one of these areas of heart goals. So, for each of my children, I have tried to look through the individual situation to the goal for their hearts that I'm seeking to achieve.

One of these goals is to teach my child to understand and participate in the spiritual struggle. The Bible tells us that

wisdom of my parenting strategies, then Jesus would never have needed to come. So, as a parent, I've hit something that I can't do by myself. And it makes me angry. It frustrates me. It discourages me. You see, what I want is some "instant fix." Give me the three steps to producing godliness in kids. The Bible doesn't do that. It doesn't give us a system of

...I want to offer a radical challenge to you. Go to your boss and ask for a demotion. Take less pay. Move out of that dream house and into a smaller one. Sell your brand new car and be willing to drive an older one. And be willing to do what God has called you to do in the life of your children.

the most important things to happen in life are unseen. It also tells us that there's a real enemy who wants control of my heart. And that war goes on in every situation of life. I want my teenager to get beyond clothes and sports and see the significance of sin and temptation which is there in every situation of life.

The issue of what rules the heart involves the issue of idolatry. Teenagers need to be challenged about what is governing them. Here are three idols of the teen years: appearance, possessions and acceptance. And so I want to take them to the level of the heart so that they can understand what is really going on in their lives.

Q *Why is it that Christian parents are often frustrated in their efforts to cultivate a heart for God in their teenagers?*

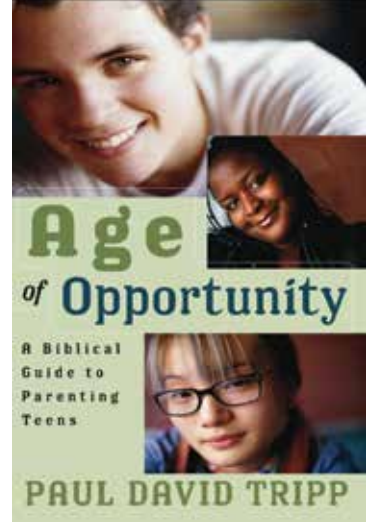
A: Because it's the hardest work a human being could ever do. We have to get to the point where we realize that there is no hope apart from Christ. If I could turn the human heart by the force of my voice, or the strength of my personality, or the logic of my argument, or the

redemption; it gives us a Redeemer. And here's the really scary news. No matter how righteously I act with my teenager, *he* must deal with God, or there won't be any hope for him. And I can't do that. So what I do, in my frustration, is try to do God's job on my kids.

Q *Many teens leave home because their relationship with their parents is so bad. What can parents do that will ensure that when they leave home they'll be grateful for the life preparation that they've received?*

A: Parents should remember that the best climate for a relationship is a climate of honesty and humility. I have watched restoration take place when parents are willing to begin to be honest about their own struggle. One of the things that drives teenagers crazy is parents who are all talk but no action. They hold up standards but never keep them themselves. I mean, how can you talk about grace but be bitter and angry? After a while, the child just can't wait for that first moment to make his exit.

One of the ways I preach the Gospel is



declaring my own need for it. And that can be done casually. I was talking to my 17-year-old son recently. I felt I'd been impatient with him. And I said: "It's not going to be any surprise to you that I'm going to say I'm a sinner." Well, he laughed at that, because I also said: "You have a robust experience of the same." Then I said, "You know there are times when I think of myself more than you, and last night was one of those times." And he said, "I do the same thing with you, Dad, and I forgive you." After that exchange there was a warmth between us. However, there would have been a very different outcome if I had said: "You know, you really ought to be glad that you have a dad like me. I'm always going out of my way for you. Why do you mess up all the time after all I've done for you?" You see, it would've been a whole different ball game.

The point is this: if I'm willing to admit my need of Christ, then I come before my child with the evidence of what he also should do. He has not only seen his need, but he has also seen the changes Christ is able to do in me. I'm preaching the gospel just by living my life. I think that's a very powerful thing. And I think it's an opportunity that we miss, because we believe that if we admit sin, then we compromise our authority. My authority is representative anyway; it's not based on my righteousness, it's based on Christ. And I think that's the way that I can be an instrument in Christ's hands. **RP**

Dr. Paul David Tripp has authored 14 books including *Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens*. This interview is reprinted with permission from July 2003 issue of *Australian Presbyterian* where it was titled "Teen terrorists? Parents often see their children as junior al-Qaeda. It's wrong – and unnecessary." It is available online at ap.org.au.



WINNING AT ALL COSTS


— BY: CARL NIENHUIS —

DOES SPORT BUILD CHARACTER? AND WHAT DOES THE WAY YOU PLAY SPORTS REVEAL ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER?

I recently had the opportunity to substitute teach a high school physical education class. Not knowing a single one of the students, I divided the co-ed class into two random teams for a game of soccer. Within seconds of team creation, I heard moans and groans regarding how the players were divvied up: “This isn’t fair, we’re going to lose!” “Sir, I think you should change these teams because they have Jim AND John on their team!” “*We may as well not even play.*”

Of all the statements I overheard, that last one really

struck me. Participation in the activity was only viewed as worthwhile should losing be avoided. The victimized attitudes of these youth were tangible for the duration of the class, with many of the players from the “losing side” displaying anger and resentment following the game. Garbage cans were kicked, pinnies spiked, locker doors slammed, walls slapped, curse words mumbled. I felt hated; after all, I was the dumb substitute teacher who made unbalanced teams that resulted in a *lopsided 4-2 soccer “blowout”*...



Sports can teach our youth about who's number one, or who is actually Number One; they can teach children to bend rules, or obey them; and they can teach children that opponents exist to be victimized, or to be loved and respected.

WHAT SPORTS CAN FOSTER

There is a widespread assumption that participating in sport is automatically beneficial for kids. After all, they can learn teamwork, cooperation, self-discipline, and perseverance, among many other great positive values. Among Christians, too, sports are promoted as a means of building virtuous character.

However, minimal research evidence exists to validate this belief. On the contrary, sport participation has a proven tendency to promote and develop less desirable character traits: selfishness, hostility, greed, jealousy, hatred, violence and alienation.

The truth is, in a sport setting, people often act out in ways that would be completely unacceptable in any other setting. Sporting arenas function as special spheres where the rules of life often do not apply. We can see this in the normalcy of violence in Canadian ice hockey participation and fandom.

Whether as active participants or merely spectators of sport, we need to consider whether we shine as a light for the Lord. As a fan, do we thrive on the hockey fights and scraps? Does that get us jumping up and down in our seats? As a participant, is it possible for us to bear the mind and love of Christ while donning a killer instinct? Do we really believe that this aggression towards our opponents reflects Christ-like love?

Cross-checking and chirping at another person would seem like a strange way to express your love towards them. Lacing up to love your enemy seems less frequent than lacing up to squash your enemy. I'm not bashing our own hockey leagues; I know very little about what goes on there – I just know that I saw a 13-year-old boy drag his opponent to the ground in a headlock in order to score a goal on the pitch during a high-school PE class. I know this infiltrates our own turf and our own rinks.

PERFORMANCE BASED WORTH

In the world of modern sport, personal identity – personal worth – is grounded in performance. In this glorification of the self, losing is equated with insecurity, powerlessness and a sense of “non-being,” which threatens the very purpose of an individual's life. As the saying goes, *you are only as good as your last game.*

This value has affected our own sport circles, *despite Christians readily preaching that God loves them no matter the result of their play.* We claim our identity is grounded in Christ, yet, for the sake of upping our game-time performance, we prefer to keep compassion and other-centeredness on the periphery of our competitive lives. Many Christian athletes have a tendency to compartmentalize their faith and exclude it from competitive sport, and are more willing to compromise their faith than withdraw from activity. There is a valid concern that our children are more interested in becoming like Crosby than like Christ. Though modeling the behaviors of others can serve as a valuable educational tool, sport, like money, has become an idol for many, leaving me to wonder if we could cast it out of our lives completely, or if our identity, too, has become participation and performance-based, rather than grace-based.

CAN CHRISTIANS COMPETE?

So are sports beyond redemption? Should we just avoid playing in them and watching them?

To answer these questions we need to examine the idea of competition.

Competition is closely tied to participation in sport. Competition is commonly understood as an effort to gain or win something by defeating or establishing superiority over others who are trying to do the same; you

are striving to outdo someone, to better someone. *Competition is based on comparisons: Who is fastest? Who is strongest? Who is best?* Of course, competition goes far beyond sport: we see it in the classroom, in the office, in our homes. We are constantly striving to outdo others. Such comparisons can dangerously lead to a loss of perspective, bitterness, jealousy and putting yourself before others.

The problem with this typical view of competition is that pursuing superiority over others (thereby making others inferior) directly collides with the Christian ethic of servanthood, as Paul instructs us in Philippians 2: 3-4:

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”

It doesn't read that we can do some things out of selfish ambition. Jesus Christ modeled humility for us so that we would embrace it in all facets of our lives. We are called to deny ourselves, humble ourselves and boast in our weaknesses and shortcomings. How is this possible in competitive sport?

A DIFFERENT SORT OF COMPETITION

Competition, by its nature, has been suggested to be inherently immoral because it is selfish and egoistic, and means treating others as obstacles to be defeated. But is that what competition has to be?

When we revisit the historical origins of the word, we learn competition means *to strive together, to come together, to agree, to coincide.* Note that historically competition echoes cooperation, as it doesn't mean “to strive *against*,” but rather “to strive *with*.”

The emphasis in sport, therefore, ought not to be winning, but a mutually acceptable quest for excellence through challenge. This is important, so let me repeat it: competition need not be about winning. Instead it can be about a mutual quest for excellence through the challenge your opponents present you.

Competition is defensible in sport given this social contract, mutual quest and voluntary engagement. So, *a Reformed perspective on competition would be to understand it as a collaborative, mutual striving together towards something excellent, where opponents honor their opposition and cooperate to bring out the very best in one another, as when iron sharpens iron* (Philippians 2:3-4; Proverbs 27:17).

Some Christians have tried to recast competition and eliminate some of the negatives by talking of it as being primarily about competing with oneself. But this ignores the relational essence of competition, and by removing the interpersonal dimension, it is no longer competition at all. We are relational beings, and the Christian competitor is striving not only for personal excellence and realizing individual potential, but also for the potential of their opponent. *The hindrances we face in competition, the opposition, are not objects and barriers to be overcome – they are people.* The experience is indeed a celebrative experience, and we should be able to experience that shared joy with others. Opponents are made in God's image, too. In loving our opponents while we compete, we are putting them before ourselves.

Do you rejoice with your opponents' accomplishments? If Jesus was your teammate, how would you cooperate with him? More, if Jesus was your opponent, how would you act towards Him?

If triumphing over opponents was the sole purpose of contests, competition would be incomplete, and a "winning-at-all-costs" mentality, including cheating, would be both justified and necessary. On the contrary, joyful experiences, the desire and striving for excellence, the concern for achieving competitive balance, fun and enjoyment all function

as goals which transcend the zero-sum experience of beating opponents. The pursuit of fun is improved with the avoidance of alienation and violence.

Many of the problems seen in our sport and play are not necessarily intrinsic to sport itself, but rather find roots in our own sinful human nature and an unhealthy obsession with winning. As emotions, enthusiasm and passions are invested so as to create more competitive fun, circumstances all too often and easily dissolve into undesired outcomes. Sport alienates people because it too easily disintegrates into self-serving and self-seeking actions. It is this possibility that players risk when they participate in competitive sport and play, and need to be on guard against.

SPORT VS. PLAY

When you strip away the rules and organized structure of sport, you are left with an inherently playful activity. When people are engaged in sport, they are described as "playing." Play doesn't serve a utilitarian end – children engage in play not because it will get them something; they play simply to play. In sport, the joy of play has been replaced by a need to win, and an over-emphasis on winning costs us the playful and joyful elements of sporting activities. Currently, sport is not being played – it is being consumed. The current model of sport is business oriented, and the inherent playfulness within sport has been lost, which is why many Christian scholars are calling for a rejuvenation and recovering of that play-ethic. A win-at-all-costs philosophy is a glaring distortion of God's desired purpose for our play.

There is irony in sport organizations that claim, "It is not about winning or losing, but about having fun." The irony is that we actually have to state this as a mandate! If we have to deliberately instruct participants to express something other than the natural impulses stirred in the game, it is a pretty sure sign that something is wrong with both the game and the people participating. Of course this is no surprise, given our flawed human nature;

WHEN WE UNDERSTAND OUR OPPONENT ISN'T OUR ENEMY....

In Dean Register's *Minister's Manual* he tells a story about a pastor, Leith Anderson, who grew up as an avid fan of the Brooklyn Dodgers. One year his father took him to a World Series game where his beloved Dodgers were playing their hated cross-town rivals, the New York Yankees. Anderson was sure his Dodgers were going to win, but he was bitterly disappointed when they never even got on base and lost the game 2-0.

Years later Anderson had an opportunity to share his World Series experience with another avid baseball fan. "It was such a disappointment," he told the man, "the Dodgers never even got to base."

"You mean you were actually there?" the man asked in amazement. "You were there when the Yankees' Don Larsen pitched the only perfect game in World Series' history? That must have been amazing!"

Because Anderson had been so wrapped up in the rivalry, he missed out on appreciating the most dominating pressure-packed pitching performance ever displayed in the baseball finals. Sportsmanship at its core is about remembering that the guys on the other team are our opponents, not our enemies – they're fellow human beings, made in God's image. If we recognize that, it isn't going to cut into our intensity, but should cut down on our crosschecks. And while we're always going to cheer on our hometown boys, if we eliminate the hate we'll also be able to appreciate a brilliant performance by the other team's guy.

by Jon Dykstra



yet this all the more emphasizes how we structure our games and what we teach our youth.

Such mandates are noble intentions, but are often poorly executed; change doesn't happen with a declaration. If this is indeed the primary purpose of your sport organization, would it make sense, then, to actually keep score? What purpose does it serve? You'll say, "but kids will keep score anyway." Absolutely – our me-culture is teaching them that this is important and is the "goal of sport," and therefore it highlights why it is extremely important that you reorient that purpose. Children will lie. And cheat. And disrespect. Participating in sport, regardless of a certain mandate, will not teach them that winning isn't as important as having fun or being active. You must teach them that.

The odd anomaly in the sport system gets this. The Canadian Soccer Association has recommended eliminating league standings for youth under the age of 12. As of May 2013, B.C. Soccer stopped posting scores and standings from U12 tournaments. Likewise, in a recent U12 tournament hosted by a Surrey soccer club, scores were not kept, no winners and losers announced, no trophies or medals handed out. These approaches encourage broader youth development instead of a "win-at-all-costs" model. Coaches will then equalize playing time, experiment with different positions, and encourage "free play," and children will be free to make mistakes without feeling pressure from teammates, coaches and parents for their shortcomings.

So, too, especially in Reformed circles, I would expect to see an appropriate reward system. What do we teach our youth when we reward them with an ice cream or a doughnut after they scored the game winner? What would happen if instead they took that \$2 and dropped it in a charity jar? Emphasis ought to be on cooperative play and displaying love and respect to your teammates and opposition. Since the emphasis is on this, winning is not discussed and merely functions as a by-product. So, which

Lacing up to love your enemy seems less frequent than lacing up to squash your enemy.

do you typically applaud: your child's respect for and inclusion of others, or your child scoring a goal? What would happen if we counted passes made instead of goals scored? By applauding and celebrating certain behaviors, we teach our kids about what we believe matters most. So, the next time your child walks off the pitch, I urge you to say one of these things: "I love watching you play!" "Let's go thank your coach!" "Can I get you something to eat?" "That looked like a lot of fun!"

WINNING ISN'T THE PROBLEM

To keep things clear: winning isn't the problem. The issue is why a person wants to win. If you or your child desire first place in order to demonstrate your superiority, or claim supremacy, or to protect your ego, competition will often deteriorate into ethical and moral lapses. Instead, foster a desire to win that translates into great effort, support for others, testing and developing one's limits and exhibiting the core values of your community. Sports can teach our youth about who's number one, or who is actually Number One; they can teach children to bend rules, or obey them; and they can teach children that opponents exist to be victimized, or to be loved and respected. On their own, sport and competition will not teach these things naturally. *Sports do not educate youth – people do.*

True Christian joy can be expressed aesthetically and playfully in thankful celebration to God. Just like "listening" is important in music, and "looking" is important in art, "feeling" is important in sport. As Christian athletes sharpen their skills, the beauty of their artwork (their expressions of creativity and imagination) may be a blessing to

themselves and to others. Our bodies are temples of the living God, so we ought to treat them as such - not idolizing them to superior heights, but taking care that we are using them to glorify God. The real challenge will be in whether or not that joy persists even when losing...even when "failing" or performing poorly.

We must set aside personal egos (deny ourselves), accept and acknowledge failure as normal (humble ourselves), and play as if love and respect were verbs.

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?"
- Matthew 16:24–26

Legendary basketball Coach John Wooden challenges us all with his words: "I don't want to tell, based on your actions, whether you outscored your opponent or whether your opponent outscored you."

CONCLUSION

After reflecting on how those students reacted towards me after I selected those teams on that glorious sunny afternoon, I realize that I wasn't hurt by the bitterness expressed towards my decisions, nor was I disappointed that they began to hate me. Mainly, I just felt discouraged. I've seen a lot of different behaviors in various sport systems through my young career. I've participated in sport since I could hurl a toy across the playroom; I've coached sport at pre-school, elementary, high-school, university and national levels; I counsel athletes and performers regularly as part of my job. Sport pays my rent and feeds my family. What discouraged me about this incident was that this was not a public school or a secular sport club; it was our own Reformed Christian School. These were Christians at play. In that moment I recalled Coach Wooden's sentiment: "Sports do not build character; they reveal it." So, what are they revealing in you, and those you influence? **RP**

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BOYS + SPORTS

By: Nancy Wilson

WHY MOMS SHOULD WANT THEIR SONS BREAKING TACKLES AND SNAGGING REBOUNDS

Yes, you read the header right. I really am writing a column about why sons should be in sports. And, yes, this is a column for wives and mothers, not for husbands and dads. I feel qualified to address this subject because I put in hundreds (I'm not exaggerating) of hours in the bleachers. Soccer, t-ball, baseball, lacrosse, basketball, track, football (did I forget anything?) – we did them all. And I may as well mention it here: invest in one of those little cushy seats to take with you to all the games. Bleachers are very uncomfortable.

I am one of those moms who is a strong proponent of boys in sports. Call me a cheerleader if you will (though I never had the pom-poms). I will tell

you why: it is good for them. Sports can teach boys important things that Mom cannot teach them. And moms can learn a thing or two about their sons by having them involved in sports. But some moms are jumpy about their sons being in sports. It doesn't seem very spiritual for them to be *tackling* someone, or *stealing* a ball or a base, or *hitting* an opponent (or *being* hit) with a lacrosse stick. In fact, it doesn't sound very spiritual to have an *opponent!*

Well, let's think about these things like grownups. I'm going to give you three (or four) good reasons for boys (your sons, in fact) to be involved in sports. I'm sure there are many more reasons, but this is a short column, and I will lay out my own motherly thoughts on the subject.

LEARNING TO TAKE A HIT

First of all, the way I see it, boys need to learn how to take a hit. Christian men need to be fighters. After all, in Christendom there is a battle going on. Young boys need to be trained in many areas beyond academics if they are going to be skilled in battle.

For starters, they need to be tough, not whiners, moaners, wimps, or shirkers. In sports they learn to take a hit. And I learned how to take a hit from my vantage point in the bleachers when my son took a hit. (Third and thirty-five against the defending state champions. Screen pass. He met three defenders at the marker. Went on top, through the crowd cable, into and then under the bleachers.) We do not want the church populated with men who cry when they fall down. If they are pushed around on the basketball court, they will learn how to "suck it up" and "blow it out," as my son-in-law says. When they look at the

Men need to be protectors and fighters. Sports are a good way to introduce them to the idea.

gigantic size of the other team and see how completely understaffed they are, they will find courage to overcome. Men need to be protectors and fighters. Sports are a good way to introduce them to the idea. It is not a *real* war, but it is good training for the real ones.

PUSHING THEIR LIMITS

Secondly, competing in sports requires discipline, and discipline is good. Boys need to run and run and run until they don't think they can run any more, and then they need to run some more. This is why it is such a blessing to have a coach who thinks boys need to do this. If a coach allows them to take a little breather if their side hurts, they won't do so well in the world of real fighting. A good and godly coach is a huge blessing. Moms don't make good coaches because they want to have cookie and milk breaks, and they want to call the boys inside when it starts to rain. (We make far better cheerleaders and far better cookies.)

My son had to get up early to make it to six a.m. basketball practice every morning in the dead of winter when it was cold and very dark. He was tired when he went to bed at night. He had two-a-days in football in the heat of August, and he slept very well. He had to learn to do what his coach told him to do, no matter what he thought of it. This is a good lesson for a son to learn. Sports teach sons the discipline of obeying authority and pushing their bodies to do what they are told even when those bodies are tired.

REVEALING THE INNER MAN

But sports do more than this. They also teach your sons how to work with a team, how to submit to authority, how to encourage the slow guy, how to hit hard. And they teach patience. Time on the bench can be sanctifying, too. This can teach humility and endurance, just so long as the time on the bench is not for

poor conduct. But that can be a lesson also. I love a coach who will not stand for any slackness. I love a coach who calls a player to the bench when he is not doing what he is told. I love a coach who will not let a kid play who was late for practice or who was show-boating on the court. That is a great coach.

Sports are also very revealing. You see how your son is doing spiritually. And you see how *you* are doing spiritually. Is he throwing a tantrum when he doesn't get to play? Are you? Is he a crummy loser? Are you? Is he crying when he falls down? Are you? Is he kicking the ball in anger when he misses a shot? Is he passing the ball on the court or is he trying to get all the points himself? Is he playing dirty or giving the ref a bad time? Sports can show you all too plainly where your son's weak points really are, in front of you and everybody.

Finally, sports can give your son something to be proud of and something for you to be proud of as well. That's right. There can be a godly satisfaction and delight in catching the fly ball, in passing the scoring touchdown, in running a really good race. This is the way God made us.

CREATED DIFFERENT

And one last thing. Moms, don't treat your sons like they are daughters. I am with you when you say you don't want your girls playing football. But a son is a totally different animal. Overprotective mothers can end up destroying their sons. We want our sons to be tough and strong, able to handle heavy weather without being snapped in two. If we keep them in the temperature-regulated greenhouse of home, they will not grow up to be like "saplings grown up in their youth" (Psalm 144). RP

Nancy Wilson's article "Daughters in sports" is available right now on the front page of www.ReformedPerspective.ca. This article is reprinted with permission from *Credenda/Agenda*, Volume 15/4. *Credenda/Agenda* is published by Canon Press (www.canonpress.com).

Questions for discussion

1. Children can learn all sorts of lessons from sports
 - a. What are some good ones?
 - b. What are some bad lessons?
2. What can parents do to encourage the former and discourage the latter?
3. God has made men and women different. How should that play out in sports? Should we ask for different behaviors and different attitudes from our girls than from our boys? If so, what might some of those difference expectations be?
4. All sports have some degree of physicality (which is why chess is a competition, but not a sport). But how physical is too physical? Where is the line for men, and is there a different line for women?
5. A line is crossed when the goal of a sport is to injure an opponent (MMA fighting and boxing, which can both be won by knocking out an opponent), but football doesn't (or at least, it need not) involve intentionally injuring an opponent. So is it alright for Christian men? What about Christian women?
6. Of the four reasons listed below to be involved in sports, which should be given priority in our Christian schools? How might we choose to order these from most important to least important?
 - a. So that students can learn to be very good at that sport
 - b. Because sport is a means by which we can teach students other things, such as teamwork, leadership, discipline, compassion, etc.
 - c. To help students stay physically fit
 - d. For the sheer joy of playing.
7. What are the qualities of a good Christian coach?

by Jon Dykstra

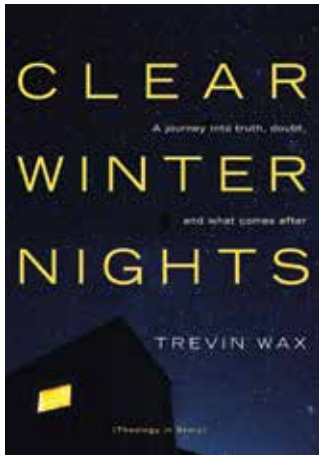
REVIEWS

EDUCATION MASQUERADING AS FICTION

Ryan Smith

CLEAR WINTER NIGHTS

BY TREVIN WAX
176 PAGES / 2013



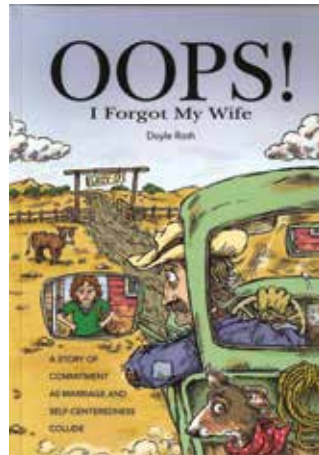
Chris Walker is a college student who begins to wonder if the Christian faith that he once held so dear might all be a farce. He becomes disillusioned with the Church and God, and enters a “dark night of the soul.” Chris ends up spending a few days with his Grandpa Gil, an 80-year-old retired Baptist pastor. In his Grandpa Gil, Chris finds a mentor who will patiently listen to his doubts and questions, and tenderly offer Biblical advice and answers.

Clear Winter Nights is well written, the characters are believable, and it has a feel-good ending; however, I found the storyline rather predictable. The strengths of this book are not in the story, but in the Biblical wisdom contained in its pages. Through Grandpa Gil, the author responds to a lot of common doubts and questions that young adults have with sound Biblical answers. I recommend this for young Christians and anyone who may be questioning their faith.

You can find *Clear Winter Nights* at Amazon.ca and at Christianbooks.com.

OOPS! I FORGOT MY WIFE

BY DOYLE ROTH
300 PAGES / 2004



Written as a series of emails and instant messages, *Oops! I Forgot My Wife* tells the story of Mitch and Stacy's crumbling marriage. Mitch wakes up one morning to find that he is alone in his house; his wife and kids are gone. Being self-absorbed, he can't see his part in the marriage falling apart, and he blames only his wife. Through prayer, hard work, and with the counsel of their elder (my favorite character – a rough around the edges, straight-shooting, tell-it-like-it-is rancher), they work through the issues in their marriage.

This book is a loaded gun aimed at husbands' hearts, giving practical, biblical advice on tearing down our self-centeredness and on building a marriage relationship with our wives that is established on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

I am always on the lookout for books on marriage and family that are practical, biblically sound and easy to read. This one meets all three criteria, but if I had to nitpick, this book does have some subtle Arminian undertones with regard to salvation. However, that does not take away from the message of the book. Written with humor and more than a little cowboy wit, I recommend *Oops!* for any husband, any guy thinking about getting married, and for a men's group to discuss. Find *Oops!* at Christianbooks.com.

TOGETHER FOR GOOD: COUNSELING AND THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

BY JAY E. ADAMS
174 PAGES / 2010



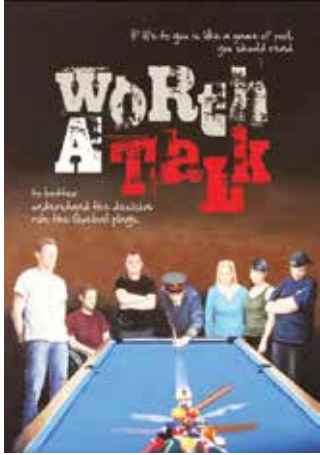
Bob Rawlston, a member of a liberal mainline Methodist Church, somehow ends up in Pastor Greg Dawson's small Reformed Presbyterian Church the morning he preaches on Romans 8:28. And what Bob hears makes him very ANGRY! Making a scene, he confronts Pastor Greg about what he thinks is garbage from the pulpit. Eventually Pastor Greg, and Deacon Fred (a cop by day) go on to counsel Bob and his wife Laura, who were the victims of a home invasion gone bad.

Throughout the book, an assortment of characters are introduced who are seeking counsel from Pastor Greg, as they deal with sin, confusion, doubt, and anger. Pastor Greg continually points them to the Word of God as the final authority, and to Jesus Christ as the only Savior.

Together for Good is well written, peppered with Scripture, has engaging characters, and is very much Reformed with an emphasis on nouthetic counseling. The author, Jay E. Adams, is a counselor and a Reformed Presbyterian, and both those aspects of his background shine through loud and clear in this book. I thoroughly enjoyed this book; in fact, I had to read it twice because I got lost in it! I highly recommend it to any Christian, especially those who may become office bearers in the church.

WORTH A TALK

BY ED VANWOUDEBERG
598 PAGES / 2012



Worth a Talk opens in idyllic Orca Cove with a less than idyllic situation: Blake McCormach is drunk again. Though his misery is very much of his own making, he blames others for his lot in life.

From cover to cover *Worth a Talk* boldly deals with issues like alcoholism that today's youth have to face. From bullying to drug abuse to anger, each chapter has a lesson to teach teens about the choices we make, and the dangers of living for self instead of living for God.

It is fiction, but intended to teach, so as with most novels of this "educational genre" the storylines are fairly predictable. However, the book does a good job of addressing the important choices all young people face. The best part is the discussion questions; they are a wonderful tool for facilitating important dialogues between teens and parents about life choices. It is easy to read but, if I had to nitpick, it could use some editing for conciseness.

The author, Ed VanWoudeberg, is a friend of mine, and someone I look up to as a mentor; his wisdom shines through in this book, as does his wonderful personality. I could almost hear his voice as I read this book. I recommend this book for parents of young teens.

It can be ordered at marnickpress.com.

FICTION THAT TEACHES

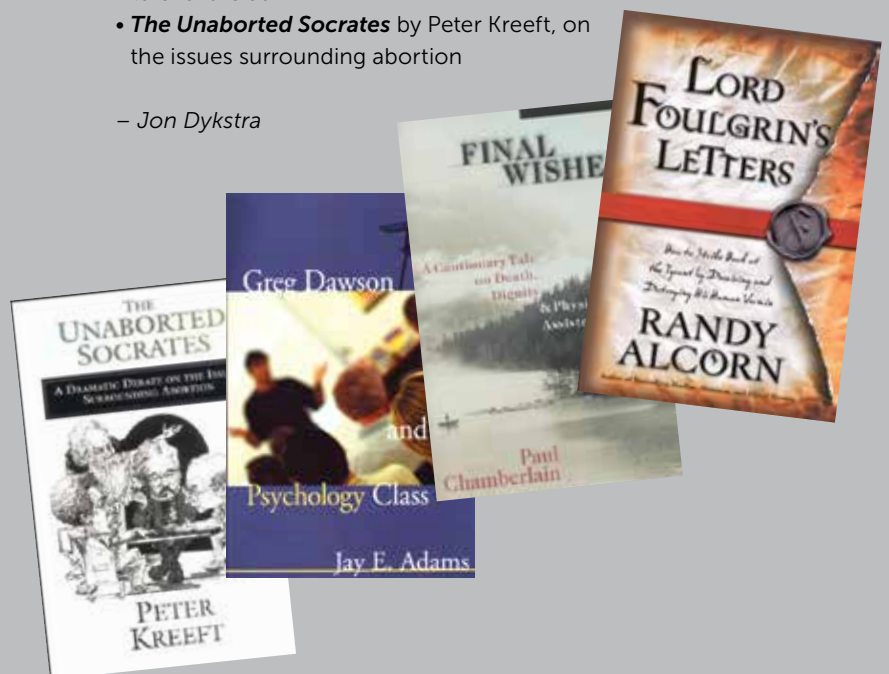
The books featured on these two pages could be accused of being textbooks masquerading as novels. It's true they are focused more on educating than entertaining, but most of them manage to pull off both quite nicely. And that makes learning a little easier, and the story format might even make it easier to retain what we're learning.

The tradeoff is that the information isn't presented as systematically or concisely as it might be in a traditional textbook. That's why you aren't likely to find any of these being used in a college course. However, if you want to start exploring a subject, these make for great, engaging introductions.

Four books are reviewed in this issue, and if you like them you might also be interested in some of these other "educational fiction" titles:

- ***Final Wishes*** by Paul Chamberlain, on physician-assisted suicide
- ***Greg Dawson and the Psychology Class*** by Jay Adams, on the various Christian approaches to counseling
- ***A Journey in Grace*** by Richard P. Belcher, on what Calvinism is
- ***The Darwin Conspiracy*** by James Scott Bell, on how evolution is a religion
- ***Pilgrim's Progress*** by John Bunyan, on being a Christian pilgrim journeying to Heaven
- ***Persuasions*** by Douglas Wilson, on encouraging others to be Christian pilgrims
- ***The Screwtape Letters*** by C.S. Lewis, on how the Devil seeks to ensnare us
- ***Lord Foulgrin's Letters*** by Randy Alcorn, on how the Devil seeks to ensnare us
- ***The Unaborted Socrates*** by Peter Kreeft, on the issues surrounding abortion

– Jon Dykstra



Mom & Pop Still on Top

BY: MICHAEL WAGNER



**SOCIETY WANTS US TO AFFIRM EVERY OTHER FAMILIAL ARRANGEMENT,
BUT WE DO SO AT A VERY HIGH COST TO THE NEXT GENERATION**

A married mom and dad, with their biological or adopted children, still form the best and healthiest kind of family. It's old-fashioned, yes, but the traditional family gives children the best opportunity to flourish – that's the inescapable conclusion of social science research over the last few decades.

MARRIAGE MATTERS

In 2011 the third edition of *Why Marriage Matters: Thirty Conclusions from the Social Sciences* was released by the Institute for American Values, a US-based think tank. This report was produced by a team of family scholars chaired by W. Bradford Wilcox of the University of Virginia. It summarizes the results of key social science research that compares the traditional family with other lifestyles to see how family structure impacts social well-being.

They found that, by every measure, the traditional family far surpasses the other alternatives.

But while traditional marriage remains the best, it is doesn't remain the most popular. Whereas the vast majority of people in previous generations wanted to get married and have children, nowadays a large proportion of the population deliberately avoids marriage. Cohabitation (that is, a man and woman living together outside of marriage), or just a series of romantic relationships, is preferable to many people today.

That's a problem, and for more than just these couples – this shift away from marriage is the root of many social problems that have worsened in recent years. Cohabitation, single-parent families, and divorce are three major alternatives to traditional life-long marriage. All three of those alternatives reduce the social well-being of the people involved. It's especially notable that children are negatively affected when their parents are not in a marriage.

COHABITATION

People who cohabit do so for a variety

of reasons. Some see it as a prelude to marriage; some see it as just a convenient dating relationship; some see it as an alternative to marriage, and there may be other perspectives as well. Even the couple may disagree about their reason for cohabiting – a woman might see it as a prelude to marriage, but her boyfriend considers it only a temporary relationship until his next love interest comes along.

The bottom line is that cohabiting relationships break up at a much higher rate than marriages. That is, cohabitation is inherently unstable. When children are involved, this becomes an especially serious problem. Children are harmed by the instability of their parents' relationship, and that harm increases when their parents' relationship comes to an end.

Wilcox and his team make this plain, writing, "children living in cohabiting unions do not fare as well as children living in intact, married families." And it's not just the children who are negatively impacted by this form of relationship; cohabiting couples,

...report relationships of lower quality than do married couples – with cohabiters reporting more conflict, more violence, and lower levels of satisfaction and commitment.

As a result, cohabiters have higher levels of depression than married people.

DIVORCE

Divorce laws were liberalized in many Western countries in the 1960s and 1970s to create an escape from unhappy marriages. This was supposed to benefit the children of the unhappy marriages as well as the parents who wanted out. But the supporters of divorce liberalization have been proven wrong. In most cases, divorce is harmful to the husband and wife as well as the children.

Children are harmed by the divorce of their parents in many ways. As Wilcox and his group report:

Why you won't read this in your newspaper

If you get a daily newspaper you've likely seen articles touting some new study, or a recent survey, that shows that children raised by homosexual couples do as well as (or even better than) children raised in more traditional families.

What you likely haven't seen are any articles on the array of evidence that shows that the exact opposite is true. As Michael Wagner highlights in this piece, a mom and dad, in an intact family, remain the ideal arrangement. This is no surprise to us – this is how God says it should be, so of course it would work best.

So why does the news make it seem like same-sex parenting is as good? Well, as they say, "When a dog bites a man, that's not news – it's hardly unusual. But if a man bites a dog, that's news." A study that says the traditional family is best is a "dog bites man" sort of situation – it isn't unexpected, so it isn't news. But if a study claimed that the ideal family for a child is one headed by a transsexual man married to an asexual woman, that would very likely make the front page.

– The editor

The children's well-being is sacrificed for the benefit of the parents.

Parental divorce or nonmarriage has a significant, long-term negative impact on children's educational attainment. Children of divorced or unwed parents have lower grades and other measures of academic achievement, are more likely to be held back, and are more likely to drop out of high school.

Children of divorced families are also more likely to live in poverty, and boys in particular are more likely to become involved in crime.

Divorce also increases the incidence of physical health problems in children as well as the incidence of psychological problems, mental illness, suicide attempts, and accidents that result in injuries.

In the last few decades suicide rates for teens have increased notably. Some scholars believe that the biggest single factor contributing to this increase has been the large number of divorces since the 1970s. Children of divorced families are also more likely to live in poverty, and boys in particular are more likely to become involved in crime.

The divorcing adults are also affected negatively. They have lower life expectancy than married couples, and higher rates of illness and injury.

Family structure is an important factor in domestic violence. Women living in intact, traditional marriages are the least likely to experience violence from their partners. Children living with single mothers, a step-family, or in a

household with their mother's boyfriend, are much more likely to become victims of child abuse than children in traditional families.

BELIEVING IN MARRIAGE = HAPPY MARRIAGES

Interestingly, people with conservative views about marriage are more likely to have happy marriages because they see it as permanent, and therefore give themselves unreservedly to the relationship. People with more liberal views, who see lifelong marriage as less important than their conservative counterparts, aren't as likely to have happy marriages.

This is how Wilcox and his team state the situation:

Individuals who value the institution of marriage for its own sake – that is, who oppose easy divorce, who believe that children ought to be born into marriage, and who think marriage is better than cohabitation – are more likely to invest themselves in their marriages and to experience high-quality marital relationships. Ironically, individuals who embrace a conditional ethic to marriage – that is, one that suggests marriages ought to continue only so long as both spouses are happy – are less happy in their marriages.

SACRIFICING THE CHILDREN

Many people today see marriage and the traditional family as overly restrictive. They want to live their own lives, make their own choices, and not be bound by the institutions of previous generations. If they want to cohabit or have a series of lovers, that's no one else's business.

However, a problem arises if children result from any of these relationships. The children of such carefree people don't have the stability or other benefits of traditional family life. These children are likely to suffer some of the negative consequences of growing up in a single-parent home or otherwise unstable home.

It is important to note that this inferior family situation is not a choice

the children have made; it was the choice made for them by the adults who want to live life on their own terms. In making their choices to avoid traditional family life these adults have removed choices from their own children. The children's well-being is sacrificed for the benefit of the parents.

The choice by adults to avoid marriage or break up a marriage can easily damage the chances of their children having good relationships in the future. As Wilcox notes,

Children whose parents divorce or fail to marry are more likely to become young unwed parents, to enter their marriages with lower commitment, to experience divorce themselves someday, to marry as teenagers, and to have unhappy marriages and/or relationships.

The children suffer negative consequences because their parents don't want to get married or be bound by their marriage vows.

CONCLUSION

The key point of *Why Marriage Matters* is that the traditional family – mom, pop and their biological or adopted children – produces much higher social well-being than any of the alternatives. The traditional family is not a solution for all the world's problems; the members of such a family are still sinners, and so a perfect family life is unattainable.

Nevertheless, the traditional family is a better arrangement for family life than any alternative known to mankind. This should not be surprising because God instituted the traditional family, and His precepts always enhance human well-being.

Thus when adults make private choices to avoid marriage and the traditional family, there are negative public consequences. The "retreat from marriage" (as Wilcox calls it) is clearly leading to decreased social well-being for the individuals involved as well as society as a whole. **RP**



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A CANADIAN CAMBRIAN FOSSIL STORY

An explosion of complexity

By: Margaret Helder

As far as beauty is concerned, Canada's Rocky Mountains can compete with other scenic locations around the world. However, these mountains have another claim to fame which makes them unique. A relatively small ridge between Mount Field and Mount Stephen in Yoho National Park contains a very remarkable collection of fossils.

It was in 1909 that Charles Walcott of the Smithsonian Institution noticed an unusual fossil. It was the discolored, extremely thin remains of a soft-bodied marine creature. Now wait a minute, he must have thought, what we normally find as fossils are the hard parts such as shell or bone from once living creatures! So what was this? Intrigued, Walcott returned to British Columbia and the area known as the Burgess Shale Formation for several summers. He found a whole collection of soft-bodied creatures previously unknown to science and shipped his finds off to the Smithsonian in the United States.

In the 1960s, British scientists collected more fossils from the Burgess Shale. Then, beginning in 1975, scientists from the Royal Ontario Museum have collected fossils and published their results on an ongoing basis. Such continuous effort, and long-term studies are justified by the insights these fossils provide.

AN EXPLOSION OF BODY TYPES

Based on Walcott's fossil finds, scientists coined the term "Cambrian Explosion." What was there about the Burgess Shale fossils that seemed similar to an explosion?

The key is to note that explosions are sudden and powerful.

The fossils from the Burgess Shale were from the Cambrian layer in the geological column, and what these fossils seemed to evidence were fully formed complex creatures, without any evolutionary ancestors. If we dig below Cambrian rocks all we find in those sediments are microbes. So the sudden appearance, in the Cambrian rock layers, of a vast array of different kinds of complex animals was surprising. It was as if these complex life forms had just, suddenly, "exploded" into being. So Walcott's finds drew attention.

According to evolutionary expectations, these complicated creatures should have slowly arisen from simpler organisms. But no evidence of these simpler ancestors could be found in the rocks lower down (older) than the Cambrian rocks. These ancestors are not there. How did this amazingly diverse collection of different body plans appear all at once?

NO ANSWER TO THE MYSTERY

Various scientists have described how

surprising the Cambrian Explosion is (as discovered initially from the Burgess Shale). Stephen Jay Gould, for example, declared:

Darwin has been vindicated by a rich Precambrian record, all discovered in the past thirty years. Yet the peculiar character of this evidence has not matched Darwin's prediction of a continuous rise in complexity toward Cambrian life, and the problem of the Cambrian Explosion has remained as stubborn as ever... (*Wonderful Life*).

Similarly Simon Conway Morris declared in 1993 that the emergence of many-celled animals in Cambrian rocks remains "the salient mystery in the history of life." (*Nature*, 361, Jan. 21).

Naturally scientists like to speculate about what could have caused an evolutionary process to go into astonishing overdrive. And there was an additional factor for them to try to explain. After the Cambrian explosion, this overdrive seems to have stalled. Gould articulated the conundrum in his book *Wonderful Life*. Regarding the Cambrian Explosion he wrote: "Since then, more than 500 million years of wonderful stories, triumphs and tragedies, but not a single new phylum, or basic anatomical design, added to the Burgess complement."

What we actually see in the Burgess Shale, Gould says, is the opposite of evolutionary expectations. Instead of an evolutionary tree, with simple life at the bottom branching out into ever more complex and more varied forms as time progresses, we have varied and complex forms suddenly appearing in the Cambrian.

MORE AND MORE FANTASTICAL CREATURES FOUND

The Burgess Shale was the first discovery of soft-bodied fossils of fantastic descriptions. Now we know about several more sites, and these have shed even more light on the kinds of creature which made up these marine communities.

1950s IN AUSTRALIA

It was in Australia in the 1950s that the next Burgess Shale community of marine organisms was found fossilized at Emu Bay on Kangaroo Island. The community was judged to have been deposited earlier (in secular estimates, 10 million years earlier than the Canadian fossils). This site included a typical collection of Burgess Shale type organisms including the large predator *Anomalocaris*, which could grow to one meter or more (turn to page 36 for a picture of this creature).

1980s IN CHINA AND GREENLAND

Then in 1984 two amazing sites were discovered with similar Burgess Shale communities of marine fossils. These were Chengjiang in Yunnan Province, China, and Sirius Passet in Greenland. Both these communities lie at a very low level in the rocks, judged by secular estimates to be about 15 million years older than the Burgess community. Both contain similar communities but with new types as well. Chengjiang, the oldest site, includes *Misszhouia*, a soft-bodied relative of trilobites, and *Primicaris* (another soft-bodied arthropod or animal with a jointed outside skeleton such as shrimp). Also there was *Myllokunmingia* (possibly a jawless fish), and another similar organism with a backbone. Sirius Passet,

for its part, exhibited a moderate number of arthropods (including trilobites and crustaceans), and sponges and worms with spiny exteriors. These worms are found at Burgess, too, but not at other similar sites.

1990s IN MOROCCO

In the late 1990s, several sites were found in southeastern Morocco, called the Fezouata community. The interesting thing about the Moroccan fossils is that they are considered very much younger (“30 million years” younger) than Burgess, and about 45 million years younger than Chengjiang. The rock in Morocco is not even considered Cambrian, but a higher lying category called Ordovician. The Burgess creatures

One of the key differences between the Walcott Burgess community and Marble Canyon is that the latter contains creatures found in the much lower lying fossil community in China. For example, the arthropods *Misszhouia* and *Primicaris* were previously known only from China.

As far as animals with backbones are concerned, the Burgess Shale exhibits much lower diversity than the lower lying Chinese beds. The Marble Canyon site, however, has yielded many specimens of *Metaspriggina* (with backbone), previously known only from two poorly preserved specimens from the Walcott quarry. Overall, the preservation and appearance of the fossils at Marble Canyon are remarkably

The technical article in Nature suggested that in their descent, these latter creatures “underwent evolutionary reduction and character reversal.” In other words, these animals went backwards from a modern “advanced” condition in the beginning.

were believed to have become extinct, missing from any rocks above mid-Cambrian levels, but here many were found along with other newly occurring Ordovician creatures like horseshoe crabs. These latter animals are famous as “living fossils,” occurring today along seashores such as the Atlantic coast in the United States. Curiously, no animal with a backbone was found in the Moroccan deposits although some are found at lower levels at other sites

TODAY IN NORTH AMERICA

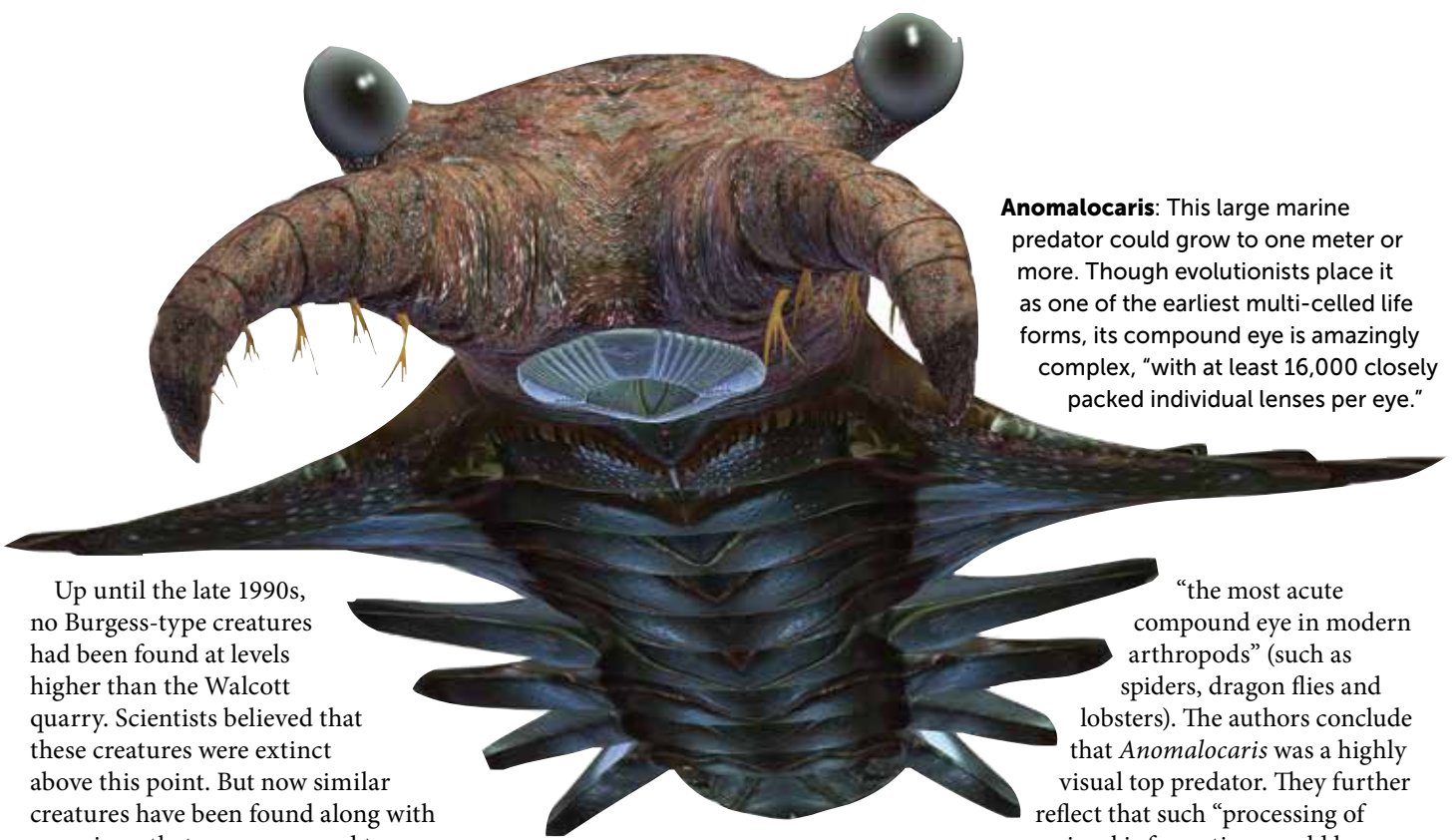
But the discoveries just keep coming!! In 2012 a Burgess type community was found at Marble Canyon, in Kootenay National Park, about 40 km from the original Walcott quarry. Scientists consider the Marble Canyon fossils only slightly younger than Burgess, but “shockingly” different in what is present.

similar to the Chinese fossils that lie at a much lower level.

EVOLUTIONISTS SCRATCHING THEIR HEADS

It is evident that the various characteristics of these Burgess type communities do not fit with evolutionary expectations. As expert Desmond Collins declared in 2009, the centenary of the discovery of Walcott’s quarry:

Additional Cambrian material is now coming from the Chenjiang fauna in China (particularly new chordates, the group that includes humans), and the Sirius Passet fauna in Greenland. Along with the Burgess Shale animals, they demonstrate that *virtually all animal groups alive today were present in Cambrian seas* (emphasis mine)(*Nature* 460 Aug. 20.)



Anomalocaris: This large marine predator could grow to one meter or more. Though evolutionists place it as one of the earliest multi-celled life forms, its compound eye is amazingly complex, “with at least 16,000 closely packed individual lenses per eye.”

Up until the late 1990s, no Burgess-type creatures had been found at levels higher than the Walcott quarry. Scientists believed that these creatures were extinct above this point. But now similar creatures have been found along with organisms that were supposed to have evolved long after the middle Cambrian layers. This meant that absence from the fossil record did not necessarily mean that organisms were extinct. So Burgess and the much higher Fezouata community included some types of organism in common. Marble Canyon and the much lower Chenjiang communities were similar. In addition, chordates (animals with backbones), common in the lowest Chinese deposits, but missing from the highest Moroccan deposits, and pitifully few in the Walcott quarry, were well represented at Marble Canyon. The take-home lesson is that it is extremely difficult to draw conclusions about the fossil record based on presence or absence of particular specimens or collections of specimens.

INCREDIBLY COMPLEX ANIMALS

As the first Cambrian community discovered, the Walcott quarry set the benchmark for studies on the nature of the community. By far the most striking organism turned out to be *Anomalocaris* (means weird claws). This creature, in shape, was like a flattened horizontal lying teardrop with the head at the fat end and with large intimidating looking appendages (like claws) extending from the head.

... the scientific literature tells us that all the elaborate body plans that we see in animals today, all appeared suddenly.... There was no time for an evolutionary process.

The creature had prominent eyes and swam by means of flaps all along each side. The first ones described were up to one meter long, but now specimens from China and Morocco have been discovered which were even larger. Specialists still considered the creature as “primitive” because it was found at the lowest levels in the rock record. Then surprising results started to be published.

Specialists soon declared that *Anomalocaris* was a top predator (catching other animals), but how sophisticated did it need to be to fulfill this role? The answer is “very sophisticated.” A study from Emu Bay, Australia, discovered fossilized eyes, about two to three cm in diameter, with at least 16,000 closely packed individual lenses per eye (*Nature* 480 Dec. 8/11). Eyes with these characteristics rival

“the most acute compound eye in modern arthropods” (such as spiders, dragon flies and lobsters). The authors conclude that *Anomalocaris* was a highly visual top predator. They further reflect that such “processing of visual information would have required optic neuropils [nerves] and brain to be of comparable complexity to crown-group (that is, modern) arthropods.” Obviously these creatures, which evolution theory would expect to be uncomplicated, were instead as beautifully designed as our best modern creatures.

A study from Greenland provides even more information on how wonderfully designed the anomalocarids were. The Burgess Shale specimens had stout spines on the front appendages. These were suitable for impaling large free-swimming prey. A similar creature, *Amplectobelua*, from China, had pincer-like appendages, good for grabbing large slow-moving victims. Then another type, called *Tamisiocaris* from Greenland, exhibited appendages specialized to function as sweep nets to catch small swimming creatures like water fleas or krill (*Nature* 507 Mar. 27/14). Thus these anomalocarids demonstrated a wide range of strategies to exploit different prey. The authors point out that large animals are only able to exploit small swimming prey when the latter are present in huge numbers. The conclusion of the study was that the ecology of the community was entirely modern. As the technical article declared:

The Cambrian pelagic [swimming] food web was therefore highly complex, containing multiple trophic [feeding type] levels, including pelagic predators and multiple tiers of suspension feeders. This underscores the remarkable speed with which a modern food chain was assembled during the Cambrian explosion.

Another creature, *Fuxianhuia* from China, was initially declared to be primitive, based on its appearance and its location in the rock record (*Science* 268 June 2/95). However, recently imaging technology has allowed scientists to peer under the surface layers of some fossils. Imagine their surprise when they discovered that, “Because of well-supplied blood vessels to its brain, we can assume this was a very active animal capable of making many different behavioral choices” (*Phys. Org.* April 7/14). Such research led to the conclusion that *Fuxianhuia* enjoyed as sophisticated a brain as most modern crustaceans (*Nature* 490 Oct. 11/12). The interesting

thing is that some modern arthropods such as the water flea *Daphnia* (classified in the group Branchiopoda) have much less fancy brains. If the earliest appearing arthropods enjoyed such good brains, what happened to the water flea relatives? The technical article in *Nature* suggested that in their descent, these latter creatures “underwent evolutionary reduction and character reversal.” In other words, these animals went backwards from a modern “advanced” condition in the beginning. Another Chinese arthropod, called *Alacomenaeus*, was discovered to exhibit a nervous system like that of the group Chelicerata (which includes spiders and horseshoe crabs). An article in *Nature* thus declared:

Alacomenaeus and *Fuxianhuia protense* demonstrate that the two main configurations of the brain observed in modern arthropods, those of the Chelicerata [such as spiders] and Mandibulata [such as lobsters], respectively, had evolved

by the early Cambrian” (*Nature* 502 October 17/13).

Taking stock of all this, we realize that the scientific literature tells us that all the elaborate body plans that we see in animals today, all appeared suddenly, and we see them preserved in Cambrian rocks. There was no time for an evolutionary process.

Not only that, but this marine community was as sophisticated in its ecological relationships as any community that we see today. And the most exciting thing is that in their eyesight and brain design they were as fancy as the animals we see today with similar body plans. None of this fits evolution theory, which would predict initially a few small simple organisms.

AN EXPLANATION

What we see can be called “sudden appearance.” These communities of marine creatures were suddenly buried as a result of sediments carried off the land into the sea as Noah’s flood began.

An article on some arthropods from Emu Bay Australia, for example, declared that some of the fossils observed “correspond to either carcasses or specimens buried alive.” (*Palaeontology* 52 #6 2009). That is how sudden the catastrophe was that buried these communities. The fact that we are unfamiliar with these particular organisms today merely demonstrates how much variety there was in animal communities on the pre-Flood earth.

Much has been written on the topic of how the Cambrian Explosion does not fit evolution theory. The book *Darwin’s Doubt* (2013 HarperOne) by Stephen Meyer and *Darwin’s Dilemma* (a DVD from Illustra Media) both show that even when long ages are considered in the discussion, an evolutionary process still would not be able to produce the Cambrian Explosion. RP

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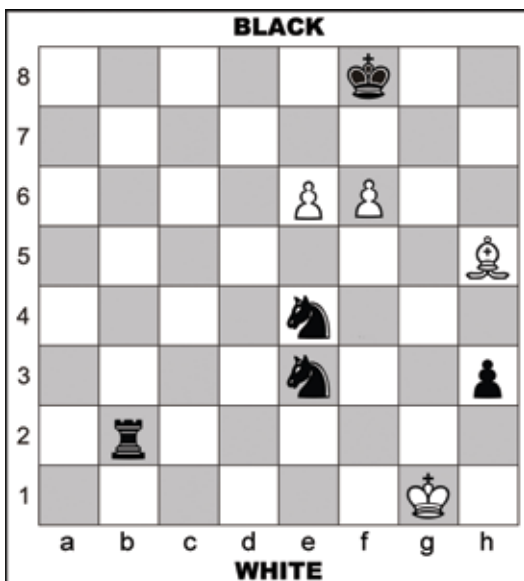
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Chess Puzzle #212



WHITE to Mate in 4
or, If it is BLACK's Move,
BLACK to Mate in 2

Riddle for Punsters #212

"Flamboyant Fashions for Fast Fortunes"

Why did George the salesman always wear a fancy three-piece suit when working at his clothing store? He had in _____ed heavily in the business and wanted to make a _____-dy sum so he figured that he should always be _____ably dressed.

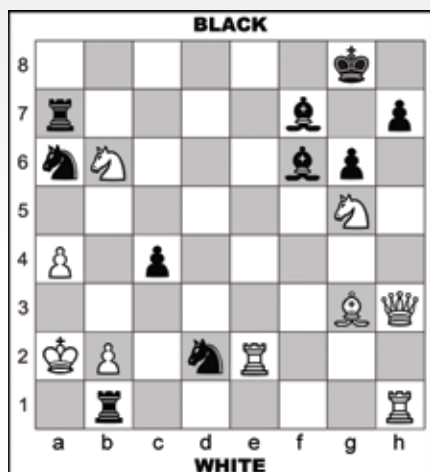
Problem to Ponder #212 *"Waffle-y good ice-cream on a hot day"*

Crazy Cones sells 3 scoops of ice cream in a (free) plastic bowl for \$4.50, 2 scoops for \$3.50 and 1 scoop for \$2.40, BUT, for this month only, the 2 scoops in a bowl is on sale for 20% off while the 1 scoop in a bowl has a buy 2, get 1 free deal. All scoops are the same size.

- With which choice of scoops does Cynthia get the most ice cream per dollar spent?
- Cynthia is treating her visiting relatives to ice cream. If a waffle cone is included with each of the three ice cream choices for an extra \$0.50, how much change does she get back from two twenty dollar bills if she purchases 4 large (3 scoop), 3 medium (2 scoop) and 4 small (1 scoop) waffle cones?

Last Month's Solutions

Solution to Chess Puzzle #211



White to Mate in 3

Descriptive Notation

- QxP ch K-B1
- B-Q6 ch B-K2
- QxB mate

Algebraic Notation

- Qh3xh7 + Kg8-f8
- Bg3-d6 + Bf6-e7
- Qh7xf7 ++

BLACK to Mate in 3

Descriptive Notation

- N-N5 ch
- K-R3 N-B7 ch
- K-R2 R(at QN8)xP mate

Algebraic Notation

- Na6-b4 +
- Ka2-a3 Nb4-c2 +
- Ka3-a2 Rb1xb2 ++

Answers to Riddle for Punsters

#211 – **"The fish weren't the only thing that got caught!"**

Now that spring had come, Edmund wanted to go fishing all day so it seemed appropriate to play **hooky** from school.

Answers to Problem to Ponder

#211 – **"Having Treble Unjumbling the Names of Instruments?"**

- | | |
|-----------|------------------|
| uleft | flute |
| clole | cello |
| prettum | trumpet |
| nilcrate | clarinet |
| tiraug | guitar |
| noivil | violin |
| borotmen | trombone |
| musrd | drums |
| aphonsoxe | saxophone |
| slambyc | cymbals |

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION

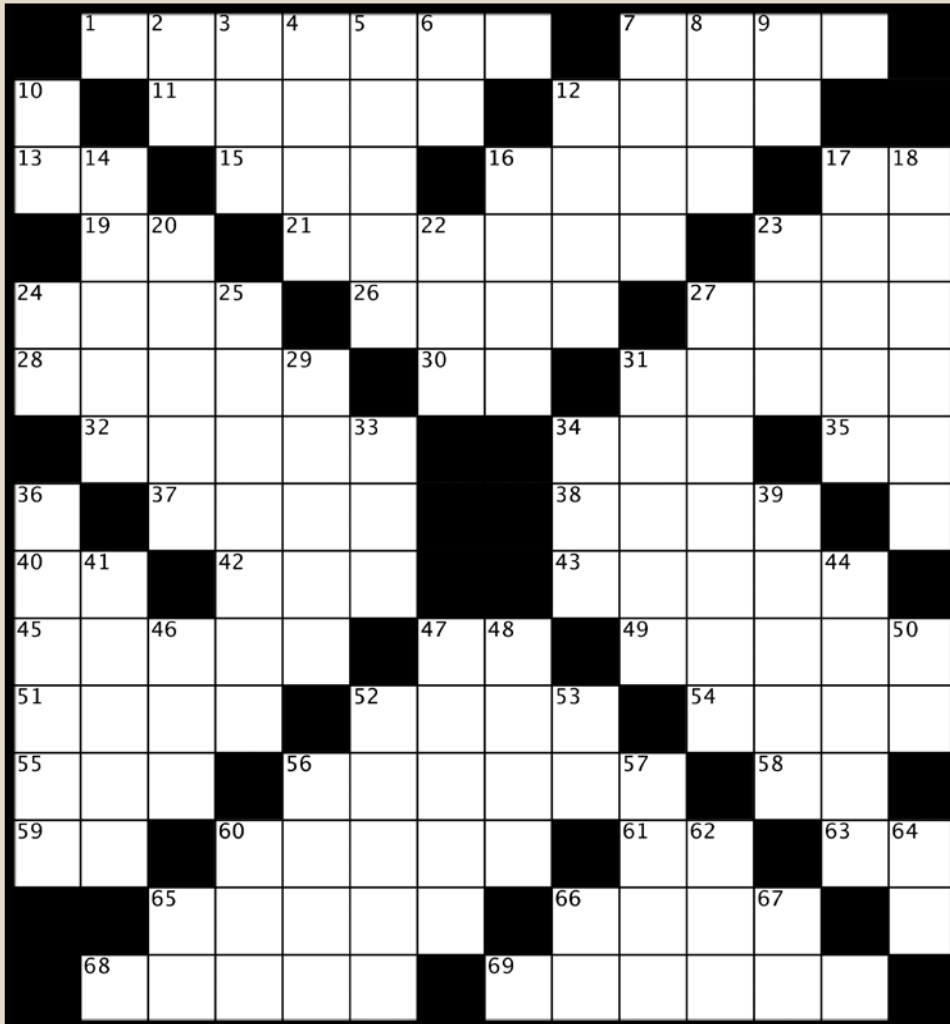
N	A	Z	A	R	E	T	H	M	E	A	L	S
U	L	I	D	L	E	A	A	R	N	I	E	
T	R	A	P	S	D	A	B	R	I	A	T	A
A	I	R			E	R	A	S	I	N	G	
H	A	M	S	T	E	R	K	E	N	L	A	P
		L	I	P	O	K	R	A	Y	E	A	
P	O	T	O	S	I	P	U	P	S	P	R	Y
E	R	R			T	R	I	K	E	H	I	E
A	G	A	R		H	E	N	N	U	R	S	E
R	U	N			C	E	D	E	T	L	A	
L	E	S		I	T	O	T	S	U	N	A	M
		P	A	R	S	L	E	Y		P	A	D
S	T	O	I	C	E	M	P		M	A	N	G
P	E	R	D	U	N	E	E		I	R	E	L
A	N	T	E	S		T	R	I	M	A	R	A

SERIES 9 #5

Joyce Mulder's very first crossword puzzle appeared in the March 1992 issue and, for 22 years since, she had challenged Reformed Perspective's readers every month again with a near innumerable collection of clues. To honor the conclusion of her 22 years of service this month, we are rerunning her very first contribution.

Joyce

On behalf of RP's readers, who have pored over your work as individuals and as families too, thank-you Joyce, for the intrigue, the fun, and the challenge!



SERIES 1 #1

PUZZLE CLUES

ACROSS

1. Food shop
7. Old wound mark
11. Love
12. To shoe a horse
13. Either
15. Canine
16. Act
17. Washington State's southern neighbor
19. From
21. Flew high
23. Health resort
24. Monkeys' uncles
26. Trolley
27. Used for walking

28. Things to be sat on
30. Example
31. Muscular organ
32. Narrow strip of leather
34. Snake
35. ___ Capone
37. Location
38. Fine _____
40. Not down
42. Seed
43. Fire remains
45. Burdened
47. Thereby
49. Spooky
51. Rushed
52. Fraud

54. Hurry
55. Even contraction
56. Made of flowers
58. Mother
59. Physician (abbr.)
60. Prophets
61. Preposition
63. ___ and behold
65. Lamp cover
66. Related by blood
68. Those who do
69. Stenographers

DOWN

2. Egyptian god
3. Different
4. Pigeon noises
5. Ergot
6. Concerning

7. Storage hut
8. Fish
9. Printed notice
10. Towards
12. Appear
14. Lasses
16. Pull
17. Musical drama
18. Baby toy
20. Extraordinary acts
22. He is; they ____
23. Ocean
24. Comparative word
25. Having many lines
27. Plume
29. Shiny material
31. Barn animal
33. Energy
34. Sheep sound

36. Throbbled
39. Blood fluid
41. Essay
44. Hemp
46. Lions home
47. Coastline
48. Boat paddles
50. Canadian expression
52. Toboggans
53. See 58 across
56. Anxiety
57. Body of water
60. Her
62. Metal
64. See 19 across
65. Adverb
66. Preposition
67. Not yes

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