

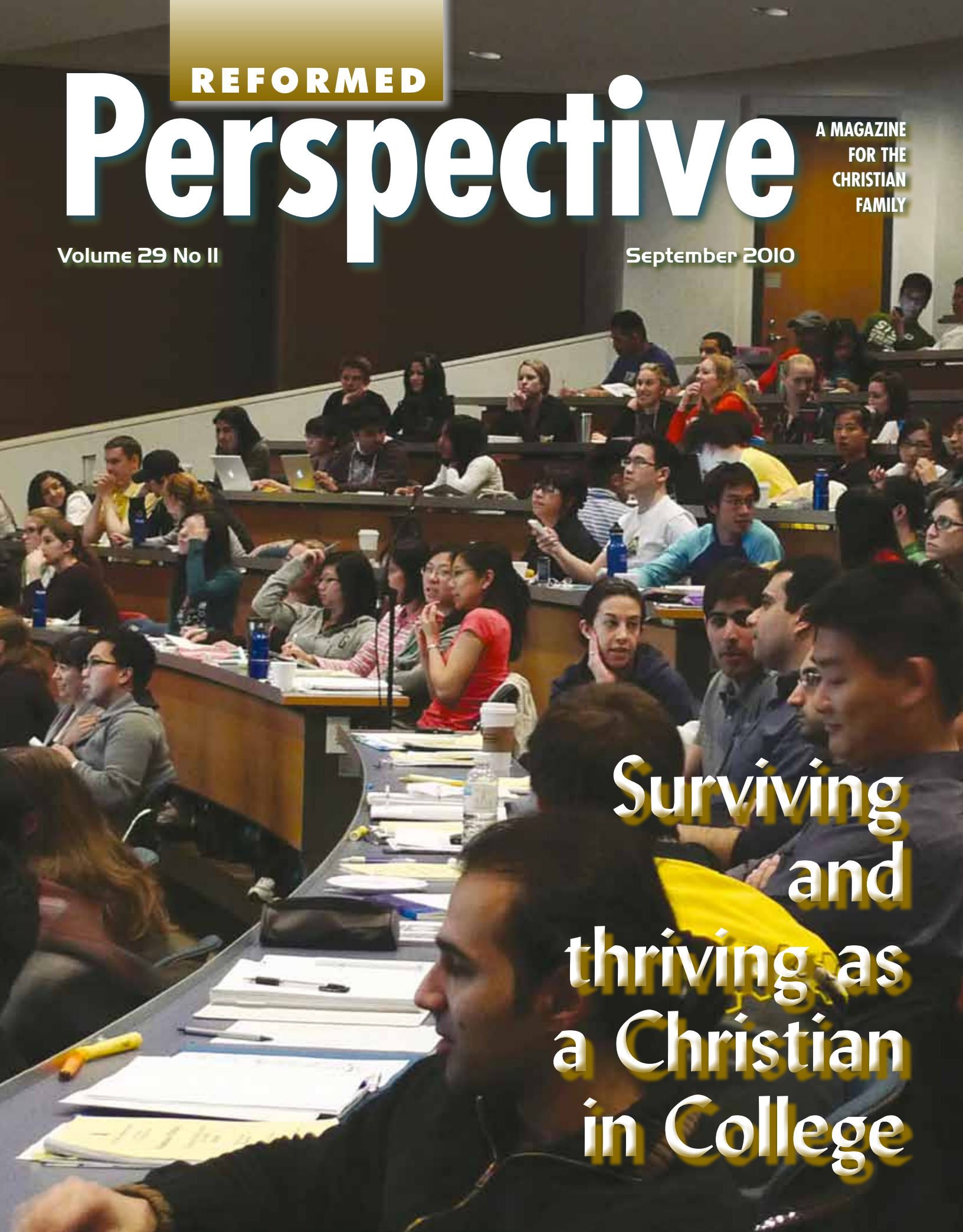
REFORMED

# Perspective

A MAGAZINE  
FOR THE  
CHRISTIAN  
FAMILY

Volume 29 No II

September 2010



Surviving  
and  
thriving as  
a Christian  
in College

# Instead of hype, HOW ABOUT HUMOR?

Editorial

Jon Dykstra

This summer an American court case grabbed my attention for three very different reasons. The first was because the decision was shocking – the opening line of *LifeSiteNews.com*'s coverage had me thinking it had to be April 1st:

*The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that a Christian student group does not have the right to restrict its membership to practicing Christians, in a decision Christian rights groups are calling a significant blow to religious freedom.*

This was so outrageous I had to double-check the story in *Christianity Today*. The opening line to their piece only got me more exasperated:

*In a 5-4 decision this morning, the Supreme Court said that a California law school can require a Christian group to open its leadership positions to all students, including those who disagree with the group's statement of faith.*

Even after double-checking, I was still having a hard time letting this sink in. The US Supreme Court had ruled that a Christian group had to let atheists, homosexuals and Muslims join, and even be leaders? Really?

## Be discerning, even reading the Christian press

Well, no, not really. That was the second reason the story grabbed my attention – the Christian media was going over the top with it. The opening line of the *LifeSiteNews* account was simply wrong, and *Christianity Today*'s opening salvo, while technically accurate, was also misleading. Both had put the worst possible spin on the story.

The student group – the Christian Legal Society (CLS) – was not being told they had to accept non-Christians. The group was being told that *if they wanted official club status* (and the funds that came with that status) at the University of California's Hastings College of the Law they would have to obey the University's non-discrimination policy. And that policy stated that official clubs could not discriminate on the basis of religion or sexuality, so any club that wanted money had to let anyone and everyone sign up.

## Arbitrary discrimination is wrong

This is clearly a ridiculous policy – it doesn't recognize that there are legitimate reasons to discriminate. Sure, we shouldn't discriminate *arbitrarily*, favoring one person over another for reasons that are inconsequential. That's why, for example, it would be wrong to limit postal positions to only people of a certain religion – how would a person's religion impact how well they deliver mail? But what about papal positions? "Is the Pope Catholic?" is a rhetorical question, but it shouldn't be if it is always wrong to discriminate on the basis of religion.

It turns out the university also applies their policy arbitrarily. CLS couldn't get official status because they wanted to be exclusively Christian, but the same policy also forbids discrimination on the basis of race, and yet the U of C still grants official club status to:

- La Raza (which is exclusively Latino)
- the Japanese Law Society
- the Korean-American Law Students Association
- the Hastings Jewish Law Students Association
- and the Black Law Students Association.

It's clear that the CLS is not getting treated fairly and it is disappointing that the Supreme Court didn't recognize it.

## Why cry when we can laugh?

But did the CLS really need to make a federal case out of this? This was the third reason this story grabbed my attention – it seemed Christians had missed out on a great opportunity to respond in a uniquely Christian manner.

Rather than suing, there was another way the issue could be addressed, a way that might be likened to answering "a fool according to his folly" (Prov. 26:5). If, as the Hastings College website declares, "All student organizations are open to *all* currently enrolled students" (emphasis mine) then the members of the CLS should, en masse, join other student groups and take them over.

Instead of fighting for their rights in the courts, Christians could have exposed the university's folly by *embracing* their non-discrimination policy. Imagine the fun that could be had! They could take over OUTLAW, the campus's official gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered group and instead of "gay pride" events OUTLAW's new management could sponsor a public lecture on the "virtue of humility."

The CLS membership could also take over the feminist Hastings Women's Law Journal and immediately announce the new leadership's plans for the next issue of the journal – September would be devoted to "Recipes the whole family will love." If that doesn't raise some eyebrows then the October issue can be dedicated to the exploration of complementarianism and headship.

At some point feminists will join with homosexuals to call for the very same change to school policy that the CLC wants – they'll want their groups back!

### Conclusion

Humor could have worked – it still might! – where battling it out in the courts failed. So why don't Christians try the humorous approach more often? I think it's because only a confident, secure sort can, when attacked, respond with a smile and a laugh, and that's just not us. We have every reason to be confident; we know our Lord has *already* triumphed! But we've gotten so caught up in the short-term, and so obsessed with the godless direction of our culture, that we've lost sight of the fact that everything is going to turn out alright in the end.

Now imagine what might happen if we started living our lives like we really believed that Jesus has already won!



## What's Inside

"Are they ready?" As our college-bound youth head off to campus, this is the question their parents are asking. Most of our young men and women have attended Christian schools, sat under the preaching of the Word, and been raised in Christian homes, so they've been thoroughly trained in God's Truth. But still the question lingers – are they really ready to stand up on their own to all the challenges of college life?

And what if one of those challenges is a professor the likes of Bill Savage? Savage is an English lecturer at the Northwestern University at Evanston, Illinois, and in a recent column in a Seattle paper he demonstrated a ravenous appetite:

*"I don't need to have kids to create mini-me voters: I get classrooms full of other people's kids, most already of voting age. And I'm not alone. As right-wing hysterics have recently noticed, universities in America are dominated by lefties like me. . . . For the foreseeable future, [conservatives] will continue to drop off their children at the dorms. After a teary-eyed hug, Mom and Dad will drive their SUV off toward the nearest gas station, leaving their beloved progeny behind. And then they are all mine."*

Are we confident our children are ready to go it alone against the likes of Prof. Savage?

This is actually the wrong question to ask. We aren't meant to go it *alone* (Gen. 2:18, Prov. 11:14, Ps. 133, Eccl. 4:10-11, 1 Cor. 12:20-27, Col. 2:19) and since God has given us the communion of saints, we don't need to.

In this edition of *RP* our various writers pass on great tips on how Christian students can survive and thrive while getting their degree, but the very best advice comes directly from Scripture, from Eccl 4:12:

*Though one may be overpowered,  
two can defend themselves.*

*A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*

We should thank God for his gift of the communion of saints, and ensure our college students remain tightly knit to Christ's body, wherever they might go to school.

### In This Issue

Editorial – Instead of hype, how about humor? — Jon Dykstra .....	2
Nota Bene .....	5
Ho-hum? Roxanne's Law is something to be excited about! — Mark Penninga .....	7
Going mommy-crazy — Gloria Faber .....	10
Hitchens vs Hitchens — Conrad van Dyk .....	11
A decade on campus — Michael Wagner .....	14
A degree over the Internet? — Tim Bloedow .....	17

Surviving and thriving in College — Jonathan Chase .....	19
The last state of that person is worse than the first — Christine Farenhorst .....	25
Best Books — reviewed by Janet Faber .....	27
Getting Rights Wrong — Neil Dykstra .....	28
Doing away with democracy. . . to save the planet! — Margaret Helder .....	31
Soup & Buns – Hidden Anger — Sharon Bratcher .....	34
Puzzle Page — Bob Leach .....	35
Crossword Puzzle – Series 17 No 8 .....	36





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To lose one pound, double-click  
your mouse six million times."**



**"Step 1: apply Miracle Cellulite Cream to  
problem areas. Step 2: run ten miles."**

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# Nota Bene

## News worth noting



### Oil and fowl don't mix but green can also be mean

by Jon Dykstra

In late June Syncrude Canada Ltd was found guilty of failing to properly protect waterfowl at its oil sands mining operation when, in the spring of 2008, 1,606 migratory ducks died after landing on one of Syncrude's "tailings ponds." These tailing ponds are where the water used in oil sands processing is stored until the residues settle out – it is, essentially, a mix of oil and water, and the ponds can cover hundreds of acres. Normally birds are kept from landing on these ponds by "deterrent crew" who scare them away. On this day, however, not nearly enough crew were sent out, and the birds landed. They were quickly covered in tar, and photos and videos of oil covered, dying ducks were broadcast worldwide. Prime Minister Stephen Harper commented that the incident had stained Canada's international reputation.



A similar sort of news story that hasn't received nearly the same sort of media coverage involves Canada's second largest wind farm, the Wolfe Island Eco-Power Centre. In 2009, in its first eight months of operation, 1,962 birds and bats were killed at the facility. This wasn't caused by any mistakes or negligence on the part of the staff – this is just the normal result of the regular operation of these giant windmills. Because of the damage done to bats and birds, the blades of the wind turbine generators have earned the nickname "Cuisinarts of the Air."

But wind farms get a free pass from the media. Instead of a fair comparison of various "green energies" versus traditional hydrocarbon energy sources, the media starts with the presupposition that the green sources are good, so they ignore any problems. To put both situations into context, the Canadian Wind Energy Association (CWEA) notes that tens of millions of birds are killed each year by cats, cars and collisions with skyscrapers. But there is still a trade-off – a cost – to all energy production. It's about time the media started acknowledging the negatives of "green energy" too.

SOURCE: *Financial Post* Jun 6, 2010 "Guilty verdict in Syncrude pollution case" by Carrie Tait; *Fraser Forum* July/August, 2010 "Birds, bats and the trade-off of wind power" by Diane Katz

### US approves Embryonic Stem Cell trials in humans

by Wayne Chase

The cloning company Geron has received the green light from the US Food and



Drug Administration (FDA) to conduct embryonic stem cell trials on humans. The trials will be conducted on patients suffering acute spinal cord injury and will involve injecting them with GNOPC1 – neural cells derived from embryonic stem cells.

While biomedical research involving embryonic stem cells found no foothold under the Bush administration, Geron appears to have timed its application for clinical trials using this controversial therapy following the results of the 2008 election. Distancing himself from his predecessor, US President Obama has indicated his approval of continuing stem cell research, particularly the research using embryonic stem cells.

Last August the FDA had called a halt to further research of GRNOPC1 in animal studies, as a number of safety issues arose. Medical researchers contend that the cells caused tumors and immune system rejection issues when used in studies involving rats. Many critics insist that Geron has been moving too quickly, and has failed to adequately demonstrate the safety of its product.

Pro-life advocates continue to challenge the ethics of research requiring the destruction of human embryos – the destruction of precious unborn human beings. Pro-lifers have also pointed out that adult stem cell material (which doesn't require the death of anyone) is more readily available and, unlike embryonic stem cells research, has already been proven to help patients battle a wide variety of diseases. Adult stem cells, they note, offers an ethical and successful research alternative that is being ignored by the political left.

SOURCE: *LifeSiteNews.com* August 3, 2010, Peter J. Smith's "FDA Gives Green Light to First Embryonic Stem Cell Trials in Human"

## Pro-life message blaring out of the speakers of abortion clinic

by Wayne Chase

Pro-life activists providing counsel to women seeking abortions at an Illinois abortion clinic this July found themselves confronted by the clinic's chainsaw wielding landlord.

The Northern Illinois Women's Center has had a history of confrontation with pro-life counselors. Recently they had been trying to drown out the sidewalk counselors' words of advice and offers of help to women entering the clinic by broadcasting a local DJ's talk radio show over blaring speakers. But on July 9, as the radio show's phone lines opened, one of the pro-life counselors took the opportunity to call in, and explained to the DJ how the talk show was being used at the abortion clinic. The indignant DJ himself then shouted, "God bless pro-lifers! God bless pro-lifers!"

As the DJ then gave time for the pro-life counselor to explain how mothers are being provided with the love, help, and hope which they need, the clinic's staff began to react in shock and dismay. The landlord of the abortion clinic, now determined to drown out both the radio and the pro-lifers, rushed out the clinic doors revving a running chainsaw.

While none of the pro-life counselors appear to have been threatened or injured, the incident represents yet another bizarre effort on the part of this particular abortion mill to ridicule and silence the pro-life voice.

SOURCE: LifeSiteNews.com July 12, 2010, Kathleen Gilbert's "Abortion Clinic Owner Responds with Chainsaw as Radio Blares: 'God Bless Pro-Lifers!'"

## Plagiarism? But it's, like, online, right?

by Wayne Chase

"Why haven't you credited your sources?"

It appears that this question is becoming increasingly irrelevant for undergraduate students accustomed to "lifting" material from websites in order to complete written assignments. Donald L. McCabe, a business professor at Rutgers University did a series of surveys from 2006 to 2010 and found that 40 per cent of the 14,000 students surveyed admitted to having copied sentences without acknowledging sources. It also

## Archie Comics introduces a homosexual character

by Steve van Leeuwen

Archie comics announced in April that it will be introducing Kevin Keller, its first openly homosexual character. Jon Goldwater, CEO of Archie Comics Co is quoted as saying, "The introduction of Kevin is just about keeping the world of Archie Comics current and inclusive. Archie's hometown of Riverdale has always been a safe world for everyone. It just makes sense to have an openly gay character in Archie comic books."

This development underscores a shift in societal thinking about the need



to be safe under the care of the Lord. Christians understand that living in sin has always been a dangerous endeavor since God punishes sin including the sin of homosexuality. God, through his blessings, and through his instruction and law promises to keep those that fear Him eternally safe: "...whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe" (Prov. 29:25b). It just makes sense to trust His Word. SOURCE: [www.archiecomics.com/blog/news/2010/04/archie-comics-introduces-first-openly-gay-character.html](http://www.archiecomics.com/blog/news/2010/04/archie-comics-introduces-first-openly-gay-character.html)

## The power of positive ... sinking

by Steve van Leeuwen

Well known Reformed Church in America minister, Robert Schuller, stepped down as head pastor of the Crystal Cathedral in July, passing the reins to his daughter Dr. Sheila Schuller Coleman. Schuller is best known for his TV program "The Hour of Power" and has authored and co-authored numerous books including *Tough Times Never Last but Tough People Do*, *Way To the Good Life* and *Living Debt Free*.

Schuller's theology is known as possibility thinking and he summarizes it as follows "possibility thinking and

self-esteem theology can both be summarized in this single sentence: The 'I am' determines the 'I can.'"

This man-centered theology has led many to believe that individual faith will make one successful. It is ironic that *The Orange County Register* recently reported that the ministry currently faces \$55 million in debt and that over 100 vendors have launched legal action against his organization.

SOURCE: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_H.\\_Schuller](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_H._Schuller); The Orange County Register, July 11, 2010 "Daughter of Crystal Cathedral founder taking reins" by Scott Martindale



seems that the number of students who consider plagiarism a serious problem is on the decline – Sarah Brookover, a Rutgers student interviewed by the *New York Times*, admitted her classmates rou-

tinely copy and paste text without providing referencing.

Educators and researchers who are studying the problem suggest that an important contribution to the trend lies in changing concepts of intellectual property, copyright, and originality. Students familiar with music file sharing, Wikipedia, and Web-linking may have fewer reservations about copying from online sources. There seems a diminished regard for absolute standards of morality, replaced by a very different standard: "It's OK if I can get away with it, isn't it?"

SOURCE: NYTimes.com August 1, 2010, Trip Gabriel's "Plagiarism Lines Blur for Students in Digital Age"





# Ho-hum?

## Roxanne's Law is something to be excited about!

by Mark Penninga

When it comes to politics and abortion, Canadians should be given a gigantic “F” on our moral report card. Of all countries in the world, we seem to be the only one that can't have a reasonable discussion about abortion or make any laws on the matter. So when MP Rod Bruinooge introduced a bill in the House of Commons this spring that would make it a crime to coerce a woman to have an abortion, one might have expected a good number of people to shout forth a collective and joyful HURRAH! The reality is quite the opposite.

You may remember Rod Bruinooge from an article about him in *RP* a couple of years ago when he became the new chair of the Parliamentary Pro-Life Caucus. With a Metis-Dutch heritage and a previous life devoted to computer game and film productions, he isn't exactly a stereotypical pro-life leader. But he has made it clear that he wants to challenge the status-quo when it comes to abortion.

Provisionally, Bruinooge will get the opportunity to have an item of Private Members Business (a bill or a motion of his choice) debated and voted on this fall, as a result of the “lottery” system that determines, at the start of each Parliament, the order in which Parliament will deal with each MP's chosen item.

Bruinooge chose a bill to address an issue that touched his heart. The bill was inspired by a fellow Winnipegite, Roxanne Fernando, who was brutally murdered for refusing to have an abortion. It was therefore fitting to call Bill C-510 “Roxanne's Law” in her memory and to put a face to the reality of the pressure that women face to “get rid of the problem” of a pregnancy that is unwanted by an upset boyfriend or family member.

### Exposing the pro-“choice” lie

This legislation addresses abortion in a way that no reasonable person can oppose without giving the impression that they think women *should* be coerced. Pro-life or pro-choice, who would argue that we shouldn't address the sad plight of women who face this kind of abuse?

Of course the pro-abortion activists have not come out in support of this. In Canada these forces are so strident and vehement that anything that deviates from the current reality (absolutely no laws addressing abortion) is instantly con-

demned and labeled as an attack on women's rights. How ironic and sad it is that a bill that would protect women from attacks is viewed this way!

What this bill does is reveal that those who oppose it cannot be called pro-choice. If they really support choice, they should be supporting the choice of the women who are abused because of their choice to keep their child. There is little hiding the truth that these forces are pro-abortion, not pro-choice.

### Healing the pro-life rift

But there is more to this. Canada's pro-life community has a sad history of division. When it comes to strategically working to end abortion, Canadian pro-lifers generally fall into one of three camps.

#### 1. *No half measures*

In one camp are those who would argue that a law that does not provide *equal* legal protection for *all* unborn children is simply not moral and cannot be put forward or supported by pro-lifers. For this group, it is unjust to advance a law that leaves some unborn children outside of its scope – such as a bill that would limit abortion to 12 weeks gestation. To do so would be to “condone” those abortions not prohibited by the legislation.

But it becomes evident quite quickly that most attempts at addressing protection for unborn children politically cannot be supported with this criteria. Take for example the recent “unborn victims of crime” bill in Canada, which would have recognized a separate legal offence for killing a pregnant woman's unborn child during the commission of an offence against her. This bill would have given legal protection only to those unborn children who are “wanted” by their mothers, and not to those children whose mothers want to abort them – making the bill unjust, according to this “equal protection for all unborn children” view. It becomes very difficult to find any legislation that would be considered just with this criteria, apart from a complete ban on abortion.

#### 2. *It isn't perfect but. . .*

A second camp generally argues that we live in a sin-filled world and being involved in politics means that we simply have to work with what is possible. We have to move

# TAKE ACTION

- 1) **Pray that this effort would be blessed.** Pray for strength for MP Bruinooge and the other MPs who take much criticism for being pro-life in word and deed.
- 2) **Go to [www.ARPACanada.ca](http://www.ARPACanada.ca)** (or call us at 1-866-691-2772 if you don't have internet access) and find the action item devoted to this bill on the left side of the home page. This will take you to an article that includes a link to a quality legal analysis by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Print off a copy of that analysis.
- 3) **Write your MP** and CC Justice Minister Rob Nicholson, Prime Minister Harper, and bill-sponsor and Rod Bruinooge. All of their contact information is on our website. Here is a sample letter you can use:

*Dear Honourable Mr./Ms.*

*There is a noteworthy piece of legislation that has been introduced in Parliament that I would like to draw your attention to and encourage you to support. Bill C-510 (Roxanne's Law) would make it a crime to coerce a woman to have an abortion. Roxanne's story is a disturbing glimpse of an all-too-common reality in which women are coerced to have an abortion, even to the point of murder. This legislation would send a clear signal to society that women have the freedom to continue their pregnancy without threat of violence or intimidation.*

*The fact that this bill pertains to abortion should in no way make it unworthy of Parliament's support. On the contrary, Canada stands out from every other Western nation in its refusal to come up with legislation relating to abortion. Some have argued that there is no need for this legislation because of the protection that all people have already from the Criminal Code. In response to this and other common legal challenges, I urge you to read a quality legal analysis at [www.RoxannesLaw.notlong.com](http://www.RoxannesLaw.notlong.com).*

*Please go beyond voting in support of this legislation. Do what you can to create a culture in Parliament where important topics like this can be discussed openly, without mean-spirited attacks or endless rhetoric.*

*Thank you for your service to our nation.*

*Sincerely,*

- 4) **Print off the petition** on the same page of our website, collect signatures from your family, friends, and church community, and submit it to your MP or Rod Bruinooge (remember that all mail to Parliament is free). If you are bringing it to your MP, please try to make an appointment to meet with him or her in the constituency so that you can explain why you believe this is important.
- 5) **Engage your community** in this discussion by writing a letter to the editor of your local paper, introducing this bill and calling for its support.
- 6) **Record your action items** on the ARPA Canada action meter, on the right side of our website. It only takes a few seconds!

*If you need any help with these items, don't hesitate to call us or email [info@arpacanada.ca](mailto:info@arpacanada.ca).*

in steps toward a complete ban on abortion which means that some steps may require support for a law that protects some unborn children more than others. This view has sometimes been referred to as the "incremental" or "imperfect legislation" approach.

Pro-lifers in this camp would generally support all steps as long as the effect is a continuing chipping away at abortion. For example, they would support a bill in Canada that would limit abortion to 20 weeks gestation (but continue to work to bring that to a complete ban).

### 3. Making all abortions more difficult

A third group is somewhat in the middle. They recognize that incremental measures must be taken because that is the very nature of politics. But they are not comfortable with gestational limits on abortion, as it seems to put a stamp of approval on the abortions before the gestational limit (eg 12 or 20 weeks). As a result, they would support legislation that makes it more difficult to have an abortion (like informed consent laws, requirement to view an ultrasound, etc).

But there tends to be inconsistencies with this approach. What exactly are the differences between the morality of gestational limits and other limits? Does requiring informed consent still put a stamp of approval on abortions after the consent is obtained? If that argument is made, how is it different then a gestational limit?

### A bill to make everyone happy

The good thing about Roxanne's Law is that it speaks to abortion in a way that should not divide pro-lifers on this contentious matter. Everyone who calls themselves pro-life should be able to support this law because it doesn't give partial legal protection to the unborn. No abortions are actually prohibited by C-510 (so all unborn children are still treated equally.)

Rather, the bill affects only the mother of the child. It gives additional protection to those women who want to keep their babies. It does this by making it a crime to coerce a woman against her will to have an abortion.



Send a letter or email  
to your  
Member of Parliament



Sadly, no babies are directly protected by this legislation (as they were with the Unborn Victims of Crime Act), but at least their mothers are given additional protection in order to help them choose life. This is an important step in uniting pro-life Canadians because we can work together in support of this legislation and hopefully increase our trust as we realize our common heart and the need to combine forces more in the future.

#### **Work to be done**

When ARPA members met with MPs in Parliament this spring we were surprised at the critical reception this bill was getting, even from pro-life MPs. Why was this so?

Anything relating to abortion has become a liability to our politicians, or at least that is what most believe. There are some good reasons for this. The mainstream media simply can't cover the issue without rhetoric. When the Conservative government went along with what the House of Commons voted for and chose not to include abortion in the maternal health plans that went to the G8 meeting, the *Globe & Mail*, CBC, and *Toronto Star* found a way to rant about this for at least 4 weeks straight. Even though this "controversy" didn't register in most of the other G8 nations, apparently Canada was being extreme by not forcing abortion upon third world countries, some of which currently outlaw it. So the media has successfully turned any mention of abortion into a hot potato.

Another reason why our MPs have become increasingly hesitant is because of us, the pro-life community. When some MPs have in the past tried to show leadership on the abortion issue, they experienced the practical effects of a divided pro-life community (for example, Paul Steckle's Private

Member's Bill C-338 to ban late-term abortions, introduced in 2006, was not supported by some pro-life groups).

When not even the pro-life community can be counted on to support legislation against abortion, and the pro-abortion community has the mainstream media on their side, it takes a rather strong politician to still tread these waters.

Yes, some blame does lie on the shoulders of the MPs themselves. Many don't seem to realize that running from the issue doesn't help their cause. If the public knows that they are pro-life already, why bother trying to hide it? The media can smell blood and will only strengthen the attack as the politician squirms. Just admit that you are pro-life and want to see abortion ended. That is what being a leader is about. Some "pro-life" MPs need to be challenged by their constituents to show some integrity in this regard.

When the 1990 attempt at an abortion bill failed, some pro-lifers used the justification that a flawed bill couldn't be supported and that we should not have a hand in bringing anything forward that doesn't protect all unborn life. But after 20 years of no changes, perhaps it is time that we realized that we can't count on the pro-choice crowd to introduce abortion legislation. The options are to either work at achieving the most restrictions possible and continually working for more, or give up on all political efforts and retreat to other sectors of the pro-life movement. It is exactly the latter option that many seem to be taking. So little effort is being put into legislative changes. It is much easier to stay outside of the political process and condemn it and those involved in it.

This may all seem like too big of an issue to do anything about, but the reality is that we have an opportunity right now to make a difference. We need to support Roxanne's Law and encourage our MPs to do the same.



# Going mommy-crazy

## It happens to all of us

by Gloria Faber

If you are new to being a mother, I think what I have to share here might be quite helpful. Hopefully it will encourage you. Or perhaps it will shock and scare you. I share it so you can know that if something similar is happening to you, you can know you aren't alone!

### Worse than any other

Yesterday I had a bad day. I still can't believe how bad it was!!

Now last week, when my son decided to ride his bike *and* fly his kite at the same time, well, I thought that was a bad day. The lady across the street who hit him with her car, she thought it was a pretty bad day. My son couldn't understand (being only five and in that self-absorbed stage) why everyone was crying, ranting and "hurting his feelings"; he thought it was a very bad day too (though he was most upset that his arm hurt and that he was grounded from his bike). That day. . . well, I was emotionally exhausted.

Was it a worse day yesterday? Not in any one big way. It was more like Chinese water torture where each small drop of water falling is not so bad of itself, but when you feel two thousand on your head throughout the day then you may go mommy-crazy. Yes, I think mommy-crazy should be a new diagnosis in the psychiatric diagnosing tool – the DDSM. Wouldn't that be helpful in describing one's condition? Instead of ranting and raving about your very bad day you could just nod your messy-hair head and say, "Yes, I have succumbed – I've gone mommy-crazy!" Then that wild deer-in-the-headlights look in your eyes won't have to be explained – everyone will understand (though some more than others) and they won't even comment about the jam on your pants or the greenies on your top.

It was yesterday that our newly potty-trained son decided to regress. . . and needed to be changed 8 times! And it was on that same day that he dumped all the safety pins on the floor, the water on the floor (twice) and the cards all over the floor. Oh, and did I mention that I then found him standing in the toilet enjoying a nice bath! It was only yesterday that I yelled in frustration, and not just once but twice (perish the thought!). Only 24 hours ago the smoke alarm went off because we burnt the toast (I can still hear the shrill beeping!). And then in a frantic rush to get to sports day I bashed my funny bone so hard that I just sat down and cried



(though more from all the previous stuff than the pain). Oh, I shouldn't forget this – if someone can please explain my son's need to take all of his clothes off, strip his bed and then pee or poop, I would not feel so frazzled.

I'm sure there was even more, but I have, in order to preserve my sanity (or what is left of it), conveniently forgotten the rest.

### Tomorrow. . .

So yes, yesterday I think I went mommy-crazy. When it exactly started I can't say, but I know that it ended precisely when I woke up this morning. I am thankful that every day is a new day, filled with new mercies every morning. How could I go on otherwise? The weight of all my "Arghhhhh!" moments have been left behind. What a blessing!

So if you, like me, often ask yourself, "What am I doing?" or "Do I know what I am doing?" be reassured that, in Christ and with everything under Christ's reign and control, our feeble efforts are being blessed. Even on the bad days when you have failed miserably, God is still using you. As long as we are willing to share our faults with our children and apologize when we have sinned, we can teach them about human limitations. . . and God's unlimited grace.

So we don't need to beat ourselves up for a bad day; we need to remember we are forgiven!

# Hitchens vs. Hitchens

## One brother worships the father the other brother denies

**“The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’” – Psalm 14:1**

**“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing” – 1 Corinthians 1:18**

by Conrad van Dyk

It’s not often that two brothers publish their memoirs in the same year. Yet, Peter and Christopher Hitchens, both major British-born journalists and essayists, have just come out with their autobiographies. On the surface they couldn’t be more different.

Christopher Hitchens, well-known for his bestseller *god is not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (and featured in the June issue of *RP*) explains his political and atheist convictions in *Hitch-22*. Peter Hitchens, on the other hand, shares his conversion to Christianity in *The Rage Against God: How Atheism Led me to Faith*.

The differences between the two brothers extend well beyond the capitalization of God’s name. Their memoirs provide an interesting snapshot of the current God Debate, as it is often termed.

### 3 themes

Perhaps it all sounds a bit like a variation on the story of the prodigal son, and certainly the dust-jacket of Peter’s book taps into this sentiment. It reads (surrounded by red target marks no less):

*Two brothers.*

*Two beliefs.*

*Two revolted.*

*One returned.*

Despite such sensationalism, *The Rage Against God* is a remarkably good read. It’s only about half as long as Christopher’s memoir, but it succeeds in large part because it’s not a conventional memoir. In fact, Peter Hitchens does not simply chronicle his conversion story, but instead uses his life experiences to write a polemic against some of the more common anti-theist arguments. There are three questions or topics that he focuses on, and they may be briefly outlined as follows:

**1) Are conflicts fought in the name of religion conflicts about religion?**

Peter Hitchens suggests that contemporary Christianity does not tend to wage crusades and that atheists apply the

argument that religion causes conflict only selectively and when it suits their leftist tendencies.

**2) Can we arrive at morality without God?**

Peter Hitchens argues that the gradual decline of Christianity in Britain after WWII is responsible for much of the current social and ethical malaise. There is of course a danger here of nostalgic thinking, but Hitchens does make some strong points about how much further Christian morality takes us than the self-interested slogans of materialist culture.

**3) What happens when we get a completely atheist state (like Stalin’s Russia)?**

Atheists often point out that faith has caused violence and persecution. Peter Hitchens retorts that such cruelty occurs when human beings *misuse* the teachings of religion. In other words, “Man is not great.” In fact, atheists have to admit that, “Atheist states have a consistent tendency to commit mass murders in the name of the greater good.”

### Can we be charitable without God?

It’s worthwhile delving a little further into one of these topics of debate. Here is a longer passage from Peter Hitchens’ argument that Christian morality is the leaven of western civilization:

. . .the fact that people can arrive at the Golden Rule without religion does not mean that they can arrive at the Christian moral code without religion. Christianity requires much more and, above all, does not expect to see charity returned. To “love thy neighbor as thyself” is a far more complicated obligation, requiring a positive effort to seek the good of others, often in secret, sometimes at great cost, and always without reward. Its most powerful expression is summed up in the words “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13 KJV). The huge differences that can be observed between Christian societies and all others, even in the twilit afterglow of Christianity, originate in this specific injunction.



Christopher Hitchens, by contrast, sees martyrdom (laying down one's life) as a sign of either lunacy or religious fanaticism (especially after 9/11). In fact, it's easy (and common) for atheists to brush off the idea that religion makes morality possible (a rather artless argument in itself), and so Peter Hitchens is more measured in pointing out that it's the *kind* of morality that Christianity produces that is categorically different.

We see the difference when we compare an attempt by Ian McEwan, novelist friend of Christopher Hitchens, to describe how atheism might arrive at the concept of charity. McEwan's well-known novel *Saturday* (2005) describes one day in the life of Henry Perowne, an affluent neurosurgeon and a type of Everyman atheist. Perowne is a firm believer in evolution and chaos theory, and a firm believer that somehow out of this scientific view of the cosmos must come a sense of morality.

.....  
***Dawkins writes: "So we should no more allow parents to teach their children to believe, than we should allow parents to knock their children's teeth out"***  
 .....

At one point, Perowne walks along a street in London, England, during the protests against the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. He sees a street-sweeper cleaning up the garbage and realizes that it could be him:

For a vertiginous moment Henry feels himself bound to the other man, as though on a seesaw with him, pinned to an axis that could tip them into each other's life.

In other words, when we realize that everything happens by chance (including our material success), we see that the other person could be us, and so we practice charity. The irony of the scene of course is that Perowne's epiphany has no substantial effect (the two figures never talk or interact) and the novel is rather depressing in its elitism.

### **Irreligious fervor**

Ian McEwan and Christopher Hitchens are two of a larger number of militant atheists who have embraced their non-belief with near-evangelistic zeal. According to Peter Hitchens, such zeal is dangerous, and in the last part of his memoir he compares it to the totalitarian demands of communism. Peter Hitchens spent a number of years as a resident correspondent in Moscow during the collapse of the Soviet Union, and so he makes the fascinating argument that,

Soviet Communism used the same language, treasured the same hopes, and appealed to the same constituency as Western atheism does today.

It is a sobering picture. Peter Hitchens describes in detail the ruthless extermination of religion by the Bolsheviks and

**IT'S HARDLY RELEVANT THAT PETER BELIEVES IN GOD SINCE THERE IS NO GOOD REASON TO, - AND INDEED MANY REASONS NOT TO - BELIEVE IN THE EXISTENCE OF LITTLE BROTHERS.**



he counters the sentimental idea that socialism might have succeeded instead under Leon Trotsky. He writes that communism "failed not because it was badly led or unlucky, but because it was wrong. . . . it sought to render unto Caesar the things that belong to God." Christopher Hitchens campaigns relentlessly against fascism, but, according to his younger brother, his own leftist assumptions and utopian visions will inevitably lead to totalitarianism.

In two ways, Peter Hitchens' critique feels belated. For one thing, the linkage between communism and atheism may seem to many post-modern readers a memory of the cold war era. In addition to this generational gap, there is the fact that Christopher Hitchens has undergone a gradual conversion from Trotskyite to neo-conservative. In the final chapter of *Hitch-22*, he writes that the conviction of a real and authentic internationalist Left seems no longer possible and that the real hope for a better future lies with an interventionist America.

### **The stakes are huge – our children**

Despite these objections, Peter Hitchens is eerily prescient when he makes a link between communism and the education of children. One of the chapters of *god is not Great* is entitled "Is Religion Child Abuse?" and Richard Dawkins, another New Atheist, has similarly argued that children have a "human right" not to be indoctrinated by their parents. Dawkins writes: "So we should no more allow parents to teach their children to believe, for example, in the literal truth of the Bible, or that the planets rule their lives, than we

should allow parents to knock their children's teeth out or lock them in a dungeon" (as quoted by Hitchens). The facile analogies are obvious, but Peter Hitchens points out that removing religion hardly leaves a vacuum:

It is ridiculous to pretend that it is a neutral act to inform an infant that the heavens are empty, that the universe is founded on chaos rather than love, and that his grandparents, on dying, have ceased altogether to exist. I personally think it wrong to tell children such things, because I believe them to be false and wrong and roads to misery of various kinds. But in a free country, parents should be able to do so. In return, I ask for the same consideration for religious parents.

The stakes are high and it's clear that the desire to prevent parents from teaching religion would introduce a tyranny that looks rather similar to communist-style state education.

It is interesting in this regard that Christopher Hitchens never made much time for any of his own children (he acknowledges some remorse for this) and that the idea of family life appears to mean very little to him. Christopher Hitchens is proud of his Bohemian life-style (really a euphemism for boozing and the like), and there is an interesting line in Peter Hitchens' memoir where he writes about visiting his brother: "Christopher even cooked supper, a domesticated action so unexpected that I still haven't got over it." Perhaps the domestic act of raising children is also something that one takes up once in a while, as a hobby. But that's not child abuse.

### Less is more

Perhaps this is a bit harsh, and the danger of autobiography is that it opens one to unfair *ad hominem* satire. Indeed, Terry Eagleton's review of *Hitch-22* in *The New Statesman* (Christopher Hitchens' former Leftist magazine) is scathing in its critique of Hitchens' "unflagging fascination with himself" and offers a long series of quotations to suggest that Hitchens is just "a fawning little name-dropper."

Peter Hitchens, by contrast, seems much more aware of the dangers of autobiography. In recounting his sins (in true Augustinian fashion), he writes, "I should be careful here. Confession can easily turn into showing off one's wickedness." Such a caveat also makes us wonder what we are to do ultimately with a work of autobiography. There is no doubt that the conversion narrative or spiritual autobiography has a central position in much Protestant literature. It has been suggested that the American religious experience puts a special emphasis on personal authority (and thus on autobiography) because historically when colonists were removed from their original communities of memory, then the meaning of Christianity became deeply invested in the religious experience of particular individuals.

So we may well wonder whether the life-story of a C.S. Lewis, or to a lesser extent a Peter Hitchens, does not run parallel to the Catholic practice of conferring sainthood. The heresy of course is that it is a kind of self-canonization, even in its most humble form. And this is where Christians have to be careful not to read memoirs in order to base their faith on the fact that other reputable people believe as well.

The same thing of course applies to the other camp. In one of the great novels of the twentieth century, G.K. Chesterton's *The Man Who Was Thursday*, the author points out that his protagonist (Gabriel Syme) is heroic precisely because he refuses to follow someone of superhuman intellectual stature. Chesterton comments: "Many moderns, inured to a weak worship of intellect and force, might have wavered in their allegiance under this oppression of a great personality."

Christopher Hitchens is well aware that he represents such a personality, and while he promotes free-thinking and skepticism he also seeks the admiration of his intellect. Peter Hitchens seems more alert to the danger of what Nietzsche called the *superman*. He points out that in his youth "Winston [Churchill] was our savior" and that as a result there was a tendency to confuse patriotism with Christianity. Perhaps as a result of this awareness of the cult of personality, Peter Hitchens is markedly reticent about the details of his upbringing and avoids the personal in favor of the polemical. It certainly allows the Protestant reader to admire him for his heroic attempt to overcome pride and egoism.



# A decade on campus

## Observations from a long-time student

by Michael Wagner

The dominant philosophies on secular campuses are not Christian, and could even be described as actively anti-Christian. But while a Christian student just starting college or university has good reason to be concerned I strongly believe that a student who works hard and treats people with respect will be treated with respect in turn.

### Nine years as a Christian on campus

I became a believing Christian during my undergraduate years and later went on to graduate school at two different universities. In total, I had nine years as a Christian in secular universities. My experiences gave me a particular outlook on how a Christian student should approach his or her studies in secular institutions. Different people will encounter different circumstances, so I wouldn't want to lay down a set of proposed rules for Christian students. This article is just "for what it's worth" based on my own observations and experiences. I was in a social science field, so my views apply primarily to the study of social sciences.

I became a Christian just before my second undergraduate year. My new church was conservative and evangelical, but not Reformed. So I didn't have a Reformed worldview – the prevailing worldview of my new Christian circle was dualistic: serving the Lord involved praying, evangelism and explicitly Christian activities, everything else was of the "world."

In this respect, my university studies were not an integral part of my Christian life. I was expected to be a good student, but I did not have a Christian way of thinking about areas of study. I felt a strange unease with many of my subjects because there often seemed to be information that challenged my Christian beliefs and I didn't know how to handle that information intellectually.

Anyway, after finishing my undergraduate degree I discovered Reformed theology. To make a long story short, the apologetical approach of Cornelius Van Til changed my thinking entirely and helped me to understand a comprehensively Christian approach to looking at many things in life, including my studies in the social sciences. Most of all, it gave me the confidence to face challenging perspectives and ideologies without feeling that my Christian beliefs were being undermined.

Christian students and other conservative students are going to face challenging information and perspectives at



Photo, and cover photo, by velkr0 at Flickr.com

*Many professors sincerely want their students to be exposed to various perspectives.*

secular (and even Christian) colleges and universities. That's a fact of life. The big question is, how should they respond to these kinds of challenges?



## 1. Seek help from conservative experts

### *Conservative scholars*

First of all, it's very helpful to find out who the conservative scholars are in a particular field. There are conservative political scientists, historians, economists, sociologists, etc. A Christian student who is beginning to study in one or more of these areas will benefit by becoming familiar with the conservative scholarship in that area. Many of these conservative scholars do not have a specifically Christian perspective, but understanding their work can often help provide an intellectual bulwark against the reigning left-wing orthodoxies in those fields.

For me, discovering the work of conservative intellectuals in my field (political science) helped boost my confidence enormously. For the first few years of my undergraduate degree I thought all academics were leftwing, because all of the material we studied in class was basically leftwing. I don't recall any classes where I was introduced to conservative scholarship, except perhaps for the purpose of mockery. Although academic work in the social sciences is dominated by leftists, there are important conservative scholars whose work is recognized in their fields.

### *Conservative organizations*

There are also organizations that can be helpful for conservative students looking for intellectual support. One is the Intercollegiate Studies Institute or ISI ([www.isi.org](http://www.isi.org)). It's not a Christian organization as such, but its purpose is to help college and university students defend the principles that underlie Western civilization. Another good one is the Claremont Institute ([www.claremont.org](http://www.claremont.org)). Again, it is not specifically Christian, but it focuses on the philosophical defense of traditional Western positions. These two organizations are not activist groups with student chapters, but provide academic information buttressing conservative views and perspectives.

## 2. Just be a student

Secondly, I think it is important for a student to approach his or her post-secondary institution as a student. That might sound strange, but I'm trying to make a point about the different attitudes people have when they go to school.

When I went to university I saw myself as a student. I was going to university to learn from the professors. I knew most professors were leftwing and would favor leftwing perspectives, so I wasn't under any illusions that way. But my purpose for going to university was to learn, to get the education that I needed, not to change the university or the people there.

There are horror stories about Christian and conservative students being mistreated by professors. No doubt there are cases like that, but I think they are the exception rather than the rule. Most professors are professional in their attitude and just want to be treated with respect like anyone else. Generally they're nice people. If someone is a good stu-

dent, works hard, and treats people with respect, he or she is likely to be treated in the same manner, even if he or she is a Christian and conservative.

Students who study the social sciences and humanities at a secular post-secondary institution are likely going to be taught from a leftwing, non-Christian perspective. If the student is self-conscious of this fact from the outset, he or she does not need to fear. There is no compromise involved in learning our opponents' theories and perspectives and showing a proper respect for people who hold those views.

Personally, I benefited tremendously from learning various leftwing perspectives. In fact, nothing helped me more to understand the weaknesses of socialist theory than gaining a deep understanding of that theory. Oftentimes it's easier to construct an effective criticism of a perspective or philosophy when you know it inside out. And there's no doubt that anyone can learn non-Christian and anti-Christian views at secular colleges and universities.

.....  
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.....

Some people may view my approach as being one of compromise. I know that when I was in graduate school some of my Christian acquaintances would ask sneeringly, "How can someone with your views survive at that university?" The implication was that I must have been compromising my views to get by.

In fact, I knew one conservative Christian university student who would basically accuse me of being a compromiser. His approach in any class he took was to be outwardly confrontational. He wanted to publicly challenge every comment by a student or professor that disagreed with his Christian perspective. It seemed like he saw it as his task to change the university by convincing the students and professors to adopt conservative Christian perspectives. He was going to straighten out all those leftwing professors and student organizations, and put them in their place. So every time he heard something he disagreed with – boom! – he swung into action. He wasn't going to let those leftists get away with anything without an argument. As a result, his university life was miserable and full of controversy. Eventually he dropped out.

Personally, I don't think his approach achieved anything. He needlessly offended lots of people and contributed to the stereotype of conservative Christians being loudmouthed and angry.

He saw me as a compromiser because I focused on my studies rather than spending my time fighting unnecessary and pointless battles. But the Lord put me in university to

acquire knowledge and credentials, and I wanted to put first things first.

Don't get me wrong. It's good and necessary to stick up for Christian principles at times, but students need to pick their battles carefully. When a point must be made, it needs to be made in a spirit of meekness and humility. Being seen as an argumentative person won't help the cause.

The fellow I just referred to isn't the only one to take that confrontational approach to student life. The year before I attended a particular graduate school, another conservative student had been expelled from the program I was about to enter. He was interviewed in the media and stated that he was kicked out because of his conservative views. That made me fearful for my prospects in the program. So I spoke to a professor who knew that fellow and was sympathetic to him. Basically, this professor said the guy was overzealous and very pushy about his views. Then I spoke to another graduate student who was in the program with that student and I got the same story in more colorful words. Basically, the guy who got expelled was a hothead. Even the people who liked him said he had a temper problem. He had to confront someone every time he heard an idea he disagreed with. There's no need for that.

### 3. Most profs will appreciate hard work

When I began that graduate program I had a course with a female professor who seemed hostile to me. She knew I was conservative and didn't like that. I could sense tension in her presence. Then for one of her classes we had to do readings in a particular aspect of feminist theory and discuss them in class. I didn't agree with the material at all, but I worked hard to be ready for the discussion, and it paid off. She was

impressed by my grasp of the issues and stated she could tell I'd done a lot of work. That changed her attitude towards me completely. I had not relinquished my views, but we had a positive change in our relationship because I proved that I was a serious student. I could discuss the material knowledgeably and respectfully. I think most professors, whatever their views, will treat Christian students with respect if the students work hard and treat others with respect.

Later I had another experience that helped me to understand that many professors sincerely want their students to be exposed to various perspectives. I was a teaching assistant for a liberal professor in a class that covered controversial issues, including abortion. He called me into his office one day and said something like, "You're pro-life, right?" Of course, I answered "yes." So he asked if I would take one whole class to present the pro-life position. Not both sides on the issue, just the pro-life position. I was flabbergasted at such an opportunity. The students would get the "pro-choice" position as well, but from some other source. The point is, though, that this professor wanted his students to get an accurate presentation of the pro-life side, even though he personally supported abortion. There are plenty of professors who want their students to get a good grasp of the various ideas and perspectives in our society, even ones they disagree with personally.

In most cases professors are good people and won't gratuitously punish a Christian student who works hard, takes the subject seriously, and treats other people respectfully. That's my experience, anyway.

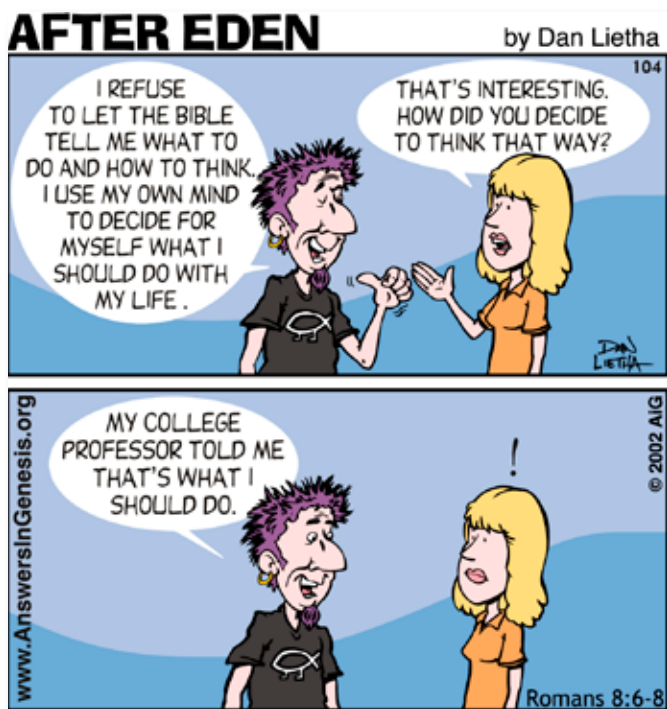
### Conclusion

A college or university is a tool to gain the knowledge needed for a career. It can be a dangerous tool, but used rightly it can help even Christian students to develop in their callings and thereby serve the Lord. The atmosphere is often hostile to Christian perspectives, but in most cases that can be managed.

You don't go to university to straighten people out. You go to university to get an education. So get your education and be a good witness by being a good student. You are going to hear lots of information that contradicts your views but that's okay. It doesn't hurt to learn non-Christian perspectives if you understand that they aren't Christian and shouldn't be embraced.

I had a very positive experience at university so my analysis and advice is colored by that positive experience. Some Christian students have apparently had very bad experiences with hostile people at secular universities. So you might want to get a second opinion that disagrees with what I've written. But I strongly believe that a student who works hard and treats people with respect will be treated with respect in turn, even if he or she holds Christian views.

*Dr. Michael Wagner has a BA (Honors) and MA in Political Science from the University of Calgary and a PhD in Political Science from the University of Alberta.*



# A degree over the Internet?

## Earn a university degree in half the time and cost, and from your home

by Tim Bloedow

When parents and their children first start considering post-secondary education options, the cost is always a major concern. Even the most inexpensive four-year degree will cost tens of thousands.

But for Christian parents there is also another pressing concern – the hostility to God that is evident on many university and college campuses. If we’ve Christian-schooled, or home-schooled our children through grade twelve it can seem like we are throwing them to the wolves when we send them off to a secular university.

If you talk to some students going to college and university you’ll find out that isn’t just a silly feeling either. Sure, some of the attacks they’ll face are obvious – we know the Physiology professor is going to say we’re little different than monkeys. But others are a lot less so – when the Psychology professor shows Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth* in class is that an attack on God’s Truth, or merely weird? So before your son or daughter heads off to campus here are two questions to ask:

1. Are they ready to face the onslaught of heathen ideology at university?
2. If they are prepared, is that what they want to deal with?

If the answer to either of these questions is no, what are your options? Are there any options?

Well, one might be to send them to a good Christian college. But there is another option that you should consider: distance learning.

### Distance learning

Distance learning can be as simple as doing the same courses online from the comfort of your own home that you would otherwise take in a university classroom. In Canada, this is one of the approaches used by Athabasca University ([www.athabascau.ca](http://www.athabascau.ca)), which bills itself as “Canada’s Leader in Online and Distance Learning.”

But there are other distance learning methods as well. In the US there has been a stronger push for distance learning so there are more options there including a favorite (for the price and time involved) which involves simply paying to write an exam that demonstrates your knowledge of course content. CLEPs (College Level Examination Program) are the most popular equivalency exams. For the cost of the exam, \$72 US, you can earn three course credits that would otherwise cost you \$400-\$600 for a typical classroom course. This option enables you to get credit for what you already know, or

to study on your own and simply take the course test rather than the whole course.

People who can’t conceptualize anything but the bricks and mortar post-secondary model that exists today may be concerned that a distance learning approach is superficial and dubious. The reality is, however, that these distance-learning credits are accepted towards accredited Bachelor degrees.

The only catch is that this CLEP approach has you earning credit towards an *American* degree. However, that isn’t the problem some might think it is. The biggest concern some Canadians have expressed regarding the pursuit of a US degree is caution that any professional accreditation earned in the US is accepted here. This is an important concern but the reality is that most distance learning options available today are not for the professions like doctor, nurse, engineer, etc. If you want a general arts degree, a US degree will almost certainly be as well received in Canada as a homegrown degree.

So don’t let fear of the unknown keep you from at least investigating distance-learning opportunities for cheaper and faster education and the development of superior study skills.

### A growing phenomenon

Microsoft founder and billionaire Bill Gates is not the best authority on everything, but he has notable things to say about education. He praises online education in his 2010 letter for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He wrote about an academic program for dropouts who wanted to get their high school degree: “There are no lectures, and kids can move ahead at their own pace. A lot of the kids start out making progress more slowly than they would in a traditional class, but with the support of the teachers in the school and as they get used to the online approach, almost all of them move through the courses a lot faster than normal classes would let them. This is very motivational to the kids because they can do more than a year’s worth of schoolwork in a single year.”

An article in a recent issue of *ChristianWeek* (“Distance education changing the seminary landscape”) is devoted to the growth in the use of distance learning options for Seminary students. Gus Konkell, the president of Providence College and Theological Seminary in Manitoba, said, “I think about program delivery because if one can find a way to deliver programs within people’s reach, you will get more students.”



### CollegePlus! – the approach we’re using

In the interests of full disclosure I should tell you that the approach I’m going to describe next is one I’m involved in. When my wife Lynette and I were investigating options for our son we found out about CollegePlus! and we were so impressed that our son registered and we signed up as an Affiliate/promoter.

But we’re not the only Reformed Christians excited about it. The program has been endorsed by such well known Reformed folk as R.C. Sproul Jr., Doug Phillips and Gary Demar.

So what got them and us, interested in this approach? Three things:

This is a Christian initiative and developing a biblical worldview is part of things.

It assigns a degree coach to students, to help them navigate through all that’s involved with distance learning.

It gets students through faster and a lot cheaper – they encourage most students to develop a two-year plan to complete their degree and the total cost works out to between ten and fifteen thousand dollars

Having said that, this approach is not for everyone. The end result is an American degree so if a Canadian needs a specifically Canadian degree, this is not the approach for them.

Overall though, I think this is an option most students would benefit from investigating. Investigating it is easy to do too. Any student who submits a request for more information is assigned a degree coach right off, and before they are ever asked for money this coach will canvass the student’s intentions, interests, goals, etc. and do the necessary research to determine whether or not CollegePlus! is a good option for this student.

These coaches also help with what I think is one of the more pressing issues for young people today: what do they want to do with their lives? Where do they think God is calling them to serve? What options exist in terms of their interests, gifts and skill sets? A 2008 Statistics Canada study, using 2005 figures, revealed that nearly a quarter of Canadian students who were between 18 and 20 years old in 1999 had dropped out of a postsecondary institution by their mid-20s. In the U.S., only 52 per cent of students in America’s 50 larg-

### More info on CollegePlus!

Much more information on CollegePlus! can be found online. If you use the exact web address below, the author of this article, Tim Bloedow, will get a commission if you register:

[www.collegeplus.org/scholarship4086](http://www.collegeplus.org/scholarship4086).

Or you can mention his Affiliate number – 4086 – when you register. If you have any questions Tim would be happy to answer them. You can reach him at [tim.bloedow@rogers.com](mailto:tim.bloedow@rogers.com) or 613-496-0091.



*What if you could get your degree working from home?*

est school systems graduate in four years. A major reason for not finishing on time is that many students change their program midstream and have to take additional courses. The underlying reason for much of this wasted time and money is lack of direction and motivation in the students.

These problems can be substantially mitigated with the help of diligent life-purpose planning. This is a priority for CollegePlus! – helping students discover and fulfill God’s purpose for their lives, and helping them structure their education plan accordingly. They do this with the involvement of their degree coaches, and through the use of some great preparatory material that help students learn speed reading, memorization skills and “Life-Purpose Planning.” Most coaches require students to work through these programs before they start pursuing their course credits. Why? To give your child the foundation necessary to guarantee success.

You can purchase these preparatory materials ahead of time. We have already picked up these materials for our son, and he is working through them. I have learnt one of the memory techniques and it has already been very useful.

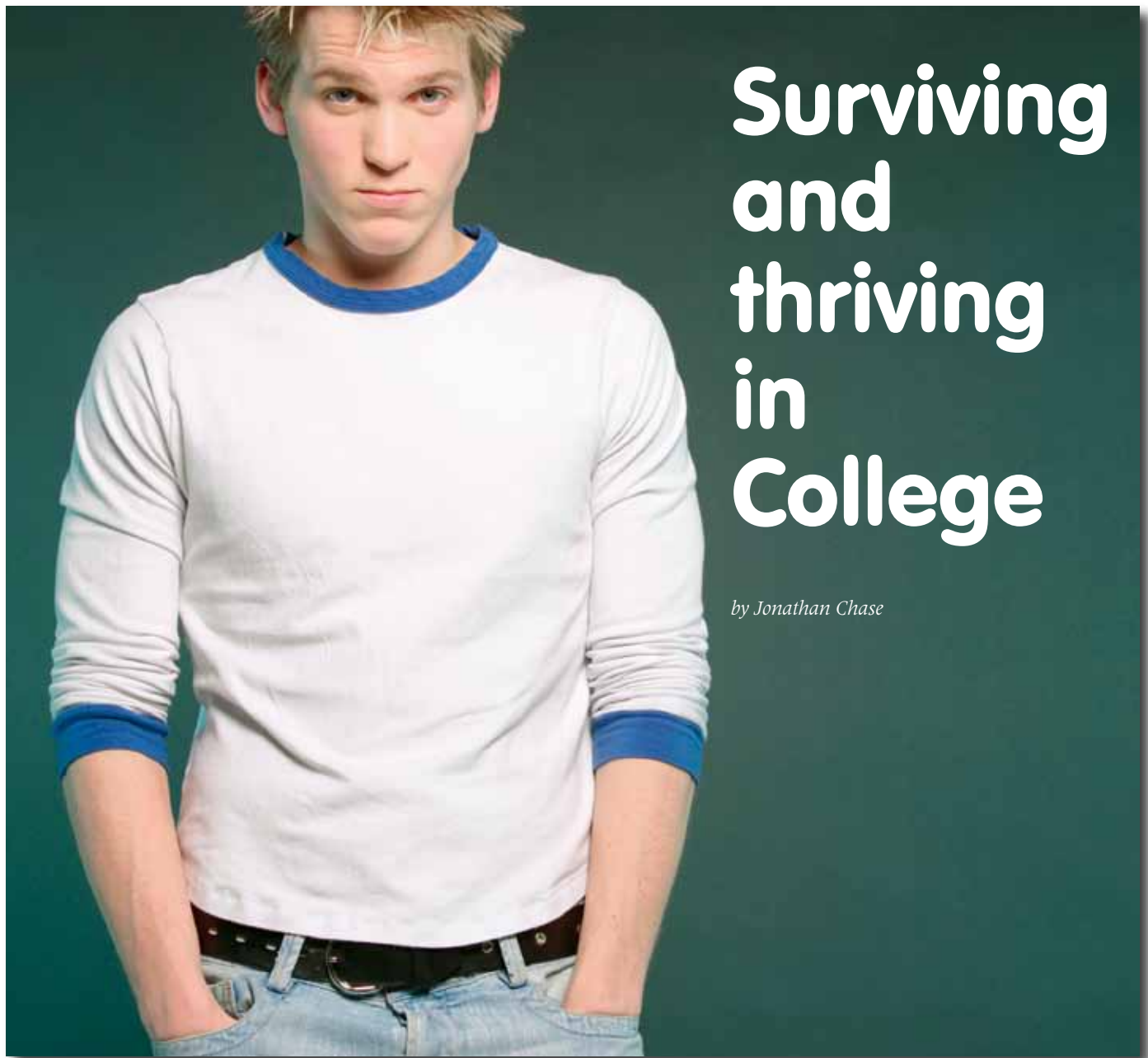
I could go on, but I think this will be enough to pique your curiosity. More information can be had on CollegePlus! by looking at the sidebar.

### Distance learning is worth investigating

Let me conclude by encouraging you again to investigate the distance learning option. However you go about doing it, it has such amazing benefits. If you’ve been to university yourself you’ll remember how so much of first and second-year college involves repetition from high school – distance learning enables students to escape the trap of wasted money and time. In addition our children can learn without sitting through the secular indoctrination that is so much a part of campuses today.

So imagine now, instead of your son or daughter taking four years and \$40,000 or more to get a four-year degree in which half of the courses were so much nonsense, that they do it in half the time, and with no debt. What an exciting legacy for parents to leave their children!





# Surviving and thriving in College

*by Jonathan Chase*

"It's really incredible that anyone could look at something that was so obviously created by an intelligent being, and think that it just formed by chance!" So said the professor of archeology at the community college here in northwest Washington, during his series of lectures to us on the history of the Neanderthals.

If this sounds like a promising development, don't hold your breath. The professor was talking about "thunderstones," very crude, very ancient stone knives. Modern archaeologists now believe that thunderstones were created by Neanderthals living in Europe. However, at the time they were discovered the thunderstone's odd shape was attributed to a natural process – they were thought to have been formed by lightning strikes (thus our professor's comment).

Does that sound vaguely familiar to you?

## **Intimidating**

All irony aside, it's safe to say that a Christian in today's secular academic world is undoubtedly going to be registered for classes with professors and classmates who understand the world from a very different perspective. This can often be a very unsettling experience, sometimes with very serious academic consequences on one hand, or spiritual consequences on the other.

For freshmen coming from a Christian school, entering an environment where the truth of the Bible is not acknowledged can entail some sharp learning curves. In fact, a student can almost surely expect to face the dilemma of either sitting uncomfortably while the Christian faith and the principles thereof are maligned, or speaking up and facing loss of respect and, potentially, academic censure.

Moreover, if Christian students are seriously engaged in the lectures, discussions, and academic research, there may well be times when they will call the Christian faith and ideology into question and wonder whether there are, in fact, sufficient grounds for what they believe.

Nevertheless if a Christian approaches his or her college career with the right attitude and several key principles in mind, the academic chapter of our lives can be genuinely helpful, good for our faith, and (dare I say it?) even fun!

### We know what's coming

The ridicule and censure that we may receive because of our faith shouldn't surprise us. The secular world is opposed to the truth, just as God has told us it would be. If you've seen the movie *Expelled* or *Indoctrinate-U* you'll know that the aca-

demic world isn't too tolerant of anything conservative, and particularly anything that has to do with a Creator.

In fact, such an attitude is an essential part of sustained truth-suppression, to borrow an idea from Romans 1. The knowledge of God is being suppressed by deliberate futile thinking, a crucial thing for us to remember; it isn't that our professors haven't heard of God before.

This reality complicates the precise course of action that the Christian student should take when faced with a dubious assignment. After all, as the saying goes, you can't reason a person out of a position they didn't reason their way into. So it is with professors.

Although every professor will say that they grade objectively, and most probably sincerely try to do so, trying to

# PLANNING A MOVIE NIGHT

by Jon Dykstra

Two years ago college students from the American Reformed Church at Lynden were repeatedly running into Al Gore's global warming "documentary" *An Inconvenient Truth* in their classes. It was either being referenced or the film itself was being shown in Science classes, English classes, and even Psychology classes (in the Psych class it was promoted as a way to gain insight into the psychology of denial).

At the suggestion of some parents, we watched it as a group – about a dozen or so students, my wife and I. Together we broke down the film's flaws and exaggerations, what it got right, and its overall worldview. It was an enjoyable evening that led to several more, at an interval of about once every month or two. In that time we've contended with a variety of bad films that were having a big impact on college campuses, as well as some quite-good conservative documentaries.

The most important element of the evenings is that the students come together. As Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 teaches, we are stronger together and that's one reason God has given us the communion of the saints – for our encouragement and strengthening. When the college crew comes together it gives them a chance to see they aren't alone. They see that others may be wrestling with the very same issue, and they can work together to answer some of these pressing questions.

If you're interested in running your own college crew movie night, we've found there are a couple of important elements:

### 1) Student-organized

My wife and I have hosted most of these evenings at our house, but we don't organize them. I'm too old to know what topics would most appeal to students, what questions they're being confronted with in their classrooms, or even what nights would work best for them. So the events are organized by Jonathan Chase. He sends out the invitations and together we talk about what film we want to show, what night would work best, and what we're going to do about food.

### 2) Older-involvement

While we don't yet have the gray hair celebrated in Proverbs 20:29, the contribution my wife and I make to the group is our experience. I went to a secular college and my wife went to a Christian university so we've been there, done that. We've wrestled with some of the very same questions these students are contending with today and in the years since we left college we've also come across books, or DVDs, or other resources that answer some of these questions. So there is a real benefit in having a couple of older voices involved in the discussion. Additionally I preview most films, so that I can come up with a few questions to facilitate discussion and my wife will often make brownies for the same reason. If there is a particularly troubling issue raised in a film I'll also do some research to find a good book or website that addresses it.



*If these evenings sounds like something you might be interested in trying, I'd strongly encourage you to give it a shot. God has given us the communion of saints and this is one very enjoyable way we can come together to discuss, to discern, and to encourage one another. If you have any questions feel free to email either me (editor@ReformedPerspective.ca) or Jonathan Chase (juskajoetagg@gmail.com).*



.....  
***What a student doesn't want to do is write a long paper about how evolution is just a theory, the information is unreliable, and besides, Darwin may have actually had schizophrenia.***  
 .....

impart a Christian perspective into the mind of an atheist or, a conservative perspective into the mind of a liberal is, pardon the cliché, a lot like fitting a square peg into a round hole. In short, it is simply difficult for just about anyone to see the logical dots of an opposite worldview connect together.

**Tough task to go against the grain**

Consider, for example, how much extra work it would take if you had an environmentalist professor and you wanted to write a paper arguing that global warming is a hoax. The same applies in reverse as well: if your professor is a skeptic, and you're arguing for global warming, providing sufficient data to satisfy him or her will prove to be a considerable task indeed. Every assertion you make will need to be backed up with thorough reasoning, clear data, and perhaps a case example or two, which is nearly impossible to do in the space constraints of a university paper. Wherever there is a detectable gap in the data, as there certainly will be in any composition short of a doctoral thesis, a skeptic will cry "Aha!" and the red ink will fly.

This is truer still when the paper in question is limited to five or ten pages, and entire fields of debate have to be left out. Unstated arguments that you assume to be implied and understood might not even be detected by your professor if he or she agrees with you, even while a professor who disagrees with you might regard such unstated components as substantial holes in your reasoning.

And if it is difficult to communicate an argument to a professor of a different environmental understanding, consider how much more difficult it will be to make a convincing Christian argument to a steadfastly secular professor.

So that begs the question, is there anything to be gained from casting one's GPA to the wind and asserting the facts in 20 pages of double-spaced Times New Roman, only to have it tossed into the recycle bin? Admittedly, one could argue that it has Biblical precedent (one might think of Jeremiah's scroll being read to an unreceptive Jehoiakim – Jeremiah 36), but it doesn't seem like a very economical way to make a point.

**So what can we do?**

So then, what is a Christian student to do?

**1) Don't seek after controversy**

I would suggest that, while Christians shouldn't run from controversy, there is no need to seek after it. In fact, if



the possibility exists of evading the subject altogether in the context of graded material, that may be the best option of all.

In English class, towards the end of my freshman year, my classmates and I were shown several movies covering such topics as the criminality of George W. Bush's Patriot Act, the depravity of big business, and unfair laws in our society (think: gay rights). While I spoke up on these issues in class as much as anyone else, the two course papers that I wrote were on unrelated matters – earmarking and zoning laws – and consequently, I was still able to walk away with an A.

**2) Don't underestimate your prof**

Even if these costs have been counted and a student nonetheless feels the need to submit a composition that challenges the professor's beliefs, there are still other things to consider. For one thing, the possibility always exists that the

professor is right, or at least right about ninety per cent and wrong only on one or two critical points.

In fact, the very theory of evolution is a case in point: evolution happens all the time, and Darwin was spot-on in his observations about the finches; the argument only goes south when the principle is generalized to account for the origin of all life. What a student doesn't want to do is write a long paper about how evolution is just a theory, the information is unreliable, and besides, Darwin may have actually had schizophrenia.

If that seems obvious, consider some of the more equivocal examples, such as the science of carbon dating, data on global warming, the benefits of legalizing prostitution, or evidence for textual errors in Biblical manuscripts. A common knee-jerk reaction to ideas that may challenge one's faith is to seize the first piece of counter-evidence that presents itself, but this may not actually be the right evidence, and this response does little to convince one's professors that he or she is a critical thinker.

Perhaps that is also why Proverbs 25:8 says:  
Do not go out hastily to argue your case;  
Otherwise, what will you do in the end,  
When your neighbor humiliates you?

### 3) *Be unafraid*

While it can be scary to have our faith challenged, we don't need to be fearful. In fact, rather than a fearful approach, it may not be a bad idea to sit tight during the lecture and let the ideas percolate for a while before making any conclusions or offering any response. After all, before every peer-reviewed journal, dissertation, or textbook is brought to the table, we already know that any idea or theory that truly contradicts the Bible is wrong, so the truth will ultimately speak for itself. One thinks of Gamaliel's council in Acts 5, roughly paraphrased: If an idea is made up, eventually it will fail. It is along similar lines that Jesus tells us in Matthew 10:26 "So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known."

### 4) *Do your homework*

That being true, however, one might well ask, what does one do when falsehood is more persuasive than truth? The Bible is clear about the deceptiveness of sin – our troubles all started with the snake's attractive lie!

There are many cases of Christian students that entirely renounced their faith upon "considering the evidence" – the well-known atheist author Christopher Hitchens claims to be such a person – and, if one does not have one's fundamentals plainly set down, it is only a small step to do so.

In fact, it is only a small step to turn right back around when new evidence comes about, or turn in an entirely different direction altogether; this may be what the Apostle Paul refers to when he writes, "that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes" (Eph 4:14). In this sense, faith is

## FISH OUT OF WATER:

### Surviving and thriving as a Christian on a secular campus

by Abby Nye

New Leaf Press, 2005  
229 pages; Paperback; \$14  
Can.

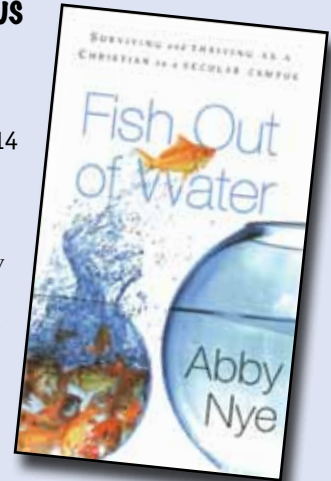
reviewed by Jon Dykstra

Parents might think they know what college will be like for their children, but as Abby Nye points out in this slim volume, in the last twenty years things have really changed. Nye wrote *Fish out of Water*, while in the third year of university, at the suggestion of her journalist parents. She was shocked, and overwhelmed by her first year on campus, but stuck it out, and started taking notes on the strange and perverse goings on at today's secular campus.

It started with her Welcome Week orientation activities, which included a meet and greet where guys and girls who had just met were greeting each other with a French kiss. Throughout the year, the weirdness continued – some of the activities included "National Condom Day" followed shortly after by a "campus-sponsored activity called 'Just How Kinky Are You?'" The campus "Counseling and Consultation Center" prepared for February by handing out a flyer titled, "Road Trip?" which advised students to set up a "drinking plan" for Spring Break and gave tips on what to do if your drinking buddy was so drunk he stopped breathing.

But it isn't just the weirdness that Nye addresses. She also tackles some of the day-to-day challenges Christians will face. She notes the hypocrisy many colleges have towards everything and anything, except Christianity, in a chapter titled, "We will not tolerate intolerance." Her most helpful and practical advice can be found in the chapter "Pick your battles" where Nye shows how to stand up in a godly, respectful and effective way, and also shares thoughts on when it is probably best to just walk away instead.

While Nye probably isn't Reformed, most of her advice is biblically sound. This is a great volume for parents and college-bound students to read. And, amazingly, the book can be read for free online at [answersingenesis.org/articles/foow](http://answersingenesis.org/articles/foow).



not “making a virtue out of not thinking,” as Bill Maher mockingly claims in his popular documentary *Religulous*, but rather, it is a grounding point – an anchor – without which one would be perpetually adrift. The well-known author C.S. Lewis, who converted to atheism at the age of 15 and then back to Christianity years later, attests to this in his *Mere Christianity*, where he writes,

“Now that I am a Christian I do have moods in which the whole thing looks very improbable. But when I was an atheist I had moods in which Christianity looked terribly probable. This rebellion of your moods against your real self is going to come anyway. That is why Faith is such a necessary virtue: unless you teach your moods where they get off, you can never be either a sound Christian or even a sound atheist, but just a creature dithering to and fro, with its beliefs really dependent on the weather and the state of its digestion. Consequently one must train the habit of Faith.”

Faith is certainly necessary as a grounding point. Nevertheless, Maher’s claim still seems to hold some truth; it is very easy to use faith as an excuse for not thinking, and it can sometimes be very unhelpful to do so.

It is important to understand that it’s OK to be wrestling with the ideas we encounter in the classroom. In fact, faith that has struggled with challenges is sure to be stronger than faith that has dismissed them. If we don’t allow our faith and our education to interact, we end up with a wealth of secular ideas that weigh on the backs of our minds, up against a faith that is weak and delicate from deliberate and sustained unemployment. If we don’t use our faith and allow it to interact with real-life ideas, it will ultimately atrophy.

In essence, then, the best thing we can do for our faith is to know exactly where we stand, and why, and from where (or rather, from Who) we cannot be moved, and then, only after that, give the opposition their hearing. In

this way, ideas that opposes the truth can fall on their own accord.

In that sense, doing a bit of independent research can have huge payoffs for our peace of mind.

Perhaps giving an example will manifest more of my naiveté than I care for, but it illustrates the point. It’s an ordinary day at college when you hear one or two people protesting against “anti-gay” laws. This issue used to bother me; after all, this is a free country, so aren’t we imposing our religion on everybody else if we make gay marriage illegal? Even though homosexuality is wrong, it seems inappropriate for us to make it illegal. After all, adultery is wrong too, and we don’t outlaw that.

When my English teacher brought the issue up in class, I didn’t really know what to say. The students around me agreed this was an unfair law imposed on society by the Bible-thumpers, and I didn’t say a word. Deep down, I sort of agreed. Afterwards, the issue continued to trouble me until I watched a short ten-minute lecture by author and talk-show host Gregory Koukl. I was startled to discover that, in fact,

gay marriage isn’t illegal in the sense that I had always understood it to be. Actually, gays are allowed to do whatever they want, and they get “married” in churches all the time here in the United States. The only sense in which gay marriage is illegal is that the rest of society isn’t being forced to acknowledge the legitimacy of their marriages by handing out marriage contracts to them in City Hall. This completely turns the issue on its head, and it really has nothing to do with religion; if a society doesn’t want to acknowledge that union as a marriage, it has every right to not to, whether for religious reasons or even if only because it would be bad for humankind in a Darwinian sense. The only ones imposing their beliefs on others are the gays, by trying to force everyone else to call their union a marriage. Nonetheless, the issue is presented in a way that makes it look as if gays are the ones being imposed upon. Having discovered this, I wish now that I had done my homework sooner, so that when that English class came around, I could have shown the issue to be the fraud that it is.





While every false idea will fall, we need to realize that some lies may last a very long time: the Piltdown Man discovered in 1912, was a prominent “proof” of evolution for decades, until 1953, when it was discovered to be a complete fraud. That means we may not always find an answer to every troubling idea or issue we encounter in college. And we’ll have to learn to be content in those instances. But at the same time, we need never act like God’s Truth is fragile, or that it can’t stand up to scrutiny.

In summary, a Christian student should come into any secular college class with the expectation that he or she will be doing twice as much work as the other students: doing the in-class work, and then doing at-home research individually to understand the material from the context of faith.

#### 5) Remember the communion of saints (Eccl 4:9-12)

It makes us wonder, wouldn’t it be nice if we could come together to expose every lie that survives criticism long enough to make it into the college classroom?

In effect, that is precisely what we have begun to do here in Lynden, Washington. At a suggestion from some parents, Jon Dykstra (editor of this magazine) invited the college-going members of the church over to his house one evening to watch Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth*, which is frequently

shown to college students in many left-leaning schools and universities; in fact the producers have developed an entire curriculum around the film for use in middle schools, high schools, and college classrooms. The film is *the* model of student-oriented documentaries, complete with impressive-looking charts, plenty of distractions, and a melodramatic soundtrack.

Our idea, though, was for all of us to watch it together outside of the classroom, so that we could all compile our thoughts together and see if the former President-by-right (according to himself) was on to something and wasn’t just inventing the Internet again.

We all found the evening to be tremendously helpful and the discussion afterwards carried on almost to midnight.

Since then, we have supported the left-wing film industry by doing this same thing several more times with documentaries such as Michael Moore’s *Fahrenheit 911*, Bill Maher’s *Religulous*, and also some more right-leaning films such as *Unborn in the USA* (on abortion), *Indoctrinate-U* (on our liberal education system) and the popular movie *Expelled* (on intelligent design and academic freedom). Not only are these Friday nights fun (who can say no to chips and salsa or pizza and ice cream?), but they also provide us with a balancing perspective on these major public issues, which we may not be getting from anywhere else. In fact, some of the evenings went so well that we felt compelled to expand our audience to the whole church and school community when we watched the movie *Collision*, a documentary which you may have read about in previous issues of *RP* (“Collision: a film for our churches” Feb. 2010). Perhaps this is something for you and your fellow college-goers as well? (See the sidebar on “Planning a Movie Night”)

#### Conclusion

In sum, it is no easy thing to be a Christian and an effective witness of the truth of God in an academic world where His Name is tacitly taboo. There seem to be primarily two antithetical inclinations in this setting, to which most every Christian student is susceptible. These can be conveniently equated with the “right” and “left” that we are warned about in Proverbs 4:27,

“Do not swerve to the right or to the left;  
turn your foot away from evil.”

On the one hand, it is tempting to seek out evidence to bring down every idea that challenges our faith. However, it may not be the most helpful course of action to challenge our professors, particularly within the context of gradeable disquisition. On the other hand, however, this is no reason to think that we can get an easy ride through our college careers by setting aside our Christian faith when it comes to the college classroom. On the contrary, there can be no ground in our lives where our faith does not prevail, and in the midst of our academic pursuits, this may mean that we find ourselves with twice as much work to do as our classmates. Nevertheless, faith that has done its homework is strong faith indeed.

## How to Stay Christian in College

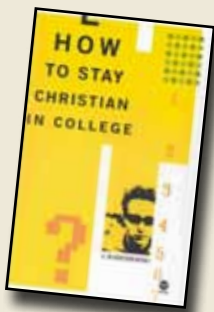
by J. Budziszewski

Navpress, 2004

180 pages; Hardcover; \$14 Can

J. Budziszewski is a Christian professor, teaching philosophy at the University of Texas, but he was once a college student who drifted from the Church soon after starting college. His transition from Christian to militant agnostic to Christian again, took almost 12 years – he returned to church at 30 after God tore down his “walls of self-deception.” So as a student, as a professor, and as a returned Prodigal, the author knows his subject matter!

Though it has hints of Arminianism throughout, this is a book that any Christian student heading off to any secular campus could benefit from reading (Chapter 6, “Myths about Love and Sex” is worth the price of the book all by itself – it is a succinct, tactful, and no-nonsense contrast of the world’s attitudes and beliefs about sex with the Christian position.) A few years ago Sarah Vandergugten did a great review of this title, so for a more in depth overview of the book’s merits check out the “Book reviews” section of our website at [www.ReformedPerspective.ca](http://www.ReformedPerspective.ca).



When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person,  
it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none.  
Then it says, "I will return to my house from which I came."  
And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order.  
Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself,  
and they enter and dwell there, and

## The last state of that person is worse than the first

Matthew 12:43-45

by Christine Farenhorst

In 1966 the Great Cultural Revolution took place in China. Youth uprisings, or more accurately, youth riots, occurred in major cities of that country. Local police were unable to cope with these violent groups of young people, and the army stayed aloof. Marauding bands swept through towns and cities, all carrying huge posters of Mao and waving copies of his little red book of sayings. These young people subjected many older fellow countrymen and women to ridicule, parading them through streets, humiliating them, and calling them "bourgeois." They also looted homes, stole heirlooms, overturned gravestones, put dunce hats on politicians, and broke into Buddhist temples.

By August of that same year, when it had become obvious that these youth groups, or cadres of Red Guards, were gaining an upper hand, Mao came forward to give this so-called Cultural Revolution his official blessing. On the 18th of August 1966, he publicly appeared at the Tiananmen Gate, and a teenage girl wearing a Red Guard armband stepped forward and pinned a Red Guard insignia on Mao's uniform. The more than one half million people gathered together in the square went wild with enthusiasm.

The Red Guard numbers swelled – they grew to nearly twenty million in the next few months. Their members included college youth, high school teenagers, and a great many who were not yet teenagers.

In her book *No Tears for Mao* (Academy of Chicago Publishers, 1995), Niu-Niu – born a few days after the onset of the Cultural Revolution to middle class parents – records how, in 1970, fifteen or twenty men pointing rifles and carrying little red books suddenly burst into their home and arrested her parents. She was four years old.

"I couldn't understand why they broke our windows and turned everything upside down in our house. I cried out, horribly afraid. When I ran towards my parents, the men formed a wall around them, beating them, screaming insults at them. . . My grandfather begged them to stop, but they knocked him to the floor. . . After they had broken everything in the house, gathered everything that could be burned – our old paintings, books, papers, pho-



tographs – they stole the clothes, the furs, the jewelry and the two little golden Buddhas on the altar of our ancestors. They even wrecked our ancestral altar. . . 'You're criminals!' the leader screamed, 'Counter revolutionaries! You have to pay for your crimes!' He gave the order to take my parents out. But they resisted, struggling. For this their faces were beaten bloody with belts. . . I saw blood running from their mouths."

Niu-Niu did not see her parents again until 1978 when she was twelve years old.

### "Forgive me, Mao"

There is a rather pathetic story of a young Chinese man who earned his living as a barber in the years prior to the Cultural Revolution. He was illiterate, the son of a peasant, and a short stocky man. One day, perhaps a bit tired or overworked, he accidentally nicked the ear of one of his wealthier clients. Consequently he lost his job and, forced to resort to more menial work, was reduced to becoming a street sweeper.

Chang Ta Pao, which was the young man's name and which means "big firecracker," was a rather crude person but a hard worker who greatly admired the leader Mao Tse-tung. Angry and resentful about losing his job, he welcomed the

Cultural Revolution which gave him opportunity to act out his resentment. Becoming head of a Red Guard Cadre in his town, he totally demolished the home of the man whose ear he had nicked, the man who had caused him to lose his job.

Public demonstrations often took place during these years – demonstrations which local people were ordered to attend. During these gatherings, people either had to self-criticize or make speeches regarding their respect and admiration for Mao Tse-tung.

.....  
***“Today I am going to do something special to prove that my undying love and loyalty belong only to Mao. . .”***  
.....

On one such occasion, Chang Ta Pao mounted the platform. He wore an army cap, a neat white shirt, and khaki pants. It was a far cry from the sorry rags he had worn as a street sweeper. A huge portrait of Mao, round-faced and rosy, was displayed on the platform. Everyone noted that Chang Ta Pao was carrying something wrapped in red paper. It was not a large package. Those closest to the front could see it was quite small. Slowly Chang Ta Pao approached the picture of Mao. He knelt in front of it, stood up, and knelt down again. This he did some three or four times. Then he turned to the audience.

“Comrades,” he began haltingly, “Today I am going to do something special to prove that my undying love and loyalty belong only to Mao. Before Mao came to power China was miserable. I was miserable! Mao and the Communist Party saved China. Mao and the Communist Party saved me. All that I have today, Mao gave me. That’s why I swear before heaven that I will give every drop of my life for Mao.” At this point the little man began to weep. Then, tears dripping down his cheeks, he carefully unfolded the red paper in his hands. A large pin with the image of Mao on it was revealed. Unbuttoning his white shirt, he bared his chest. No one spoke. Everyone in the crowd watched him intently. The one-time barber’s fingers shook and the pin almost slipped from his sweaty hand. Chang Ta Pao turned and bowed to the portrait once more, saying as he did so: “Mao, you are like a god to me and I will do all in my power to please you. Accept the prayer of your humble servant.” Then he turned about again and in front of his captive audience, pierced himself with the medallion, pinning it to his chest. The people watching him were awed and then suddenly, one of them began to clap. Others followed and then all shouted: “Long live Mao Tse-tung!”

Chang Ta Pao developed an infection as a result of the piercing and had to go to the hospital. The doctor who removed the pin was treated as a criminal. Acclaimed by the

local populace as a hero, as a model revolutionary who loved Mao, the pin had become an object of idolatry. And Chang Ta Pao recovered.

A few months after the pin episode, however, he was held in disgrace by the Party. In the middle of another gathering Chang Ta Pao had stood up and had enthusiastically shouted: “For the love of Mao, I have decided to name my newborn son Mao Tse-tung.” Everyone present looked at him with horror. Only a short while ago, theirs had been a society where it had been a sin to pronounce the name of the emperor. This emperor was Mao now and to name your child after the emperor was considered extremely presumptuous if not profane. “Down with Chang Ta Pao!” they called as one, and before the little ex-barber knew what was happening, his hands were tied behind him and he was beaten black and blue.


After this incident Chang Ta Pao lost his job as head of the Red Army Cadre, his family was relocated to a shack, and he was assigned to carrying heavy stones from one place to another. There was really no purpose to the job. It was merely a task to exhaust and humiliate the man. From being stocky and muscular, he became thin, dirty and fearful. He could be observed kneeling at the side of the road; could be heard calling out in a trembling voice: “Mao, Mao, Mao, you know I adore you. My heart and my blood belong to you. Pardon me, for I have sinned. I deserve death because I mis-spoke. I must go to hell. Order your punishment but please don’t leave me with the criminals. I’m ashamed and I have to die!” As he bent in prayer guards beat him with their belts, forcing him to stop his mindless litany and to return to his mindless work.

A few months after his demotion, Chang Ta Pao committed suicide. A number of people in town went to view his body. It was in a kneeling position. He had pierced his body with another Mao pin and on his thigh a piece of paper was displayed which read: “Forgive me, Mao.” A piece of his tongue was lying on the paper. Chang Ta Pao had cut it off before cutting his wrists.

### **Conclusion**

Communism attempted to cast out demons they identified as Buddhism and materialism and class inequality. But its error was that it did not replace these demons with love for and obedience to the One Creator and Savior of the world. Instead, other spirits, also evil and cruel, came to roost. One type of selfish, power-hungry idolatry simply replaced another form of the same.

Lest we begin to pat ourselves on the back, thinking that this horrible brand of atheistic Communism is far removed from us, remember that Paul tells us in Ephesians 2 that we all used to be dead in the trespasses and sins in which we once walked; that we all used to follow the course of this world; and that we all used to follow the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. Put simply – all reborn people were once dead.

The question is: with what has our first state been replaced? 



# BEST BOOKS: THREE FOLKTALES FOR LITTLE FOLK

reviewed by Janet Faber

## THE EMPTY POT

by Demi

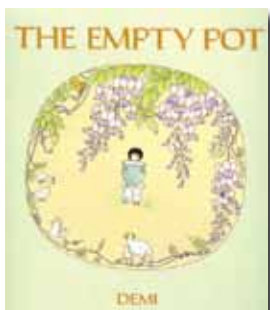
Books can be the quietest and most patient of teachers. Folktales are definitely such books. A folktale is a very old story that has been passed down through the generations and has hidden wisdom for the reader to discover.

In the book *The Empty Pot*, written by Demi, an aging Chinese Emperor announces an unusual test to choose his successor – he will give a seed to each child in his kingdom and the one who grows the best flower will be his heir. Not known to anyone is the fact that the seeds have been cooked and will not sprout.

A boy named Ping, who is usually able to make anything he plants burst into bloom, is unable to make the seed grow. When spring comes all the children come to the Emperor with pots of beautiful flowers except for Ping, his pot is empty. Ping's pot is chosen by the emperor and he is rewarded for his courage to be honest.

This book has exquisite illustrations that depict Chinese architecture, birds, foliage and clothing in minute detail. The award winning artist and author, Demi, has used ink and water color to enhance the enjoyment of this book.

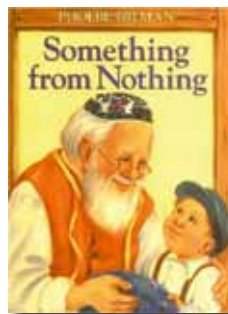
*The Empty Pot* is a quiet and patient teacher of the eighth commandment.



## SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

by Phoebe Gilman

Some of my best friends are books and the book *Something From Nothing*, a Jewish folktale written by Phoebe Gilman, is one of my favorite friends.



When Joseph was a baby his grandpa makes him a blanket. It eventually becomes worn and ripped and Joseph's mother tells him to throw it out. Joseph runs to his grandfather and asks him to "fix it." Fix it he does! Grandpa sews the blanket into a jacket. The scenario repeats itself as each new item gets tattered, but Grandpa reuses the material to make a vest, tie, and finally a button. But Joseph loses his button and even Grandpa cannot make something from nothing. But alas, Joseph can. . . the next day in school he writes a wonderful story about the demise of his blanket.

This folktale is told in a repetitive manner. "There's just enough material to make. . ." is a sentence children love to finish when they become familiar with the story.

The illustration, done in watercolor and pencil, are of Jewish people long ago who live in a *shtetl* in Eastern Europe with the men in long beards wearing *yamakas* and the women wearing *babushkas*.

*Something From Nothing* is a warm and endearing folktale that I would recommend as a good friend.

## ANANSI AND THE MOSS-COVERED ROCK

by Eric Kimmel

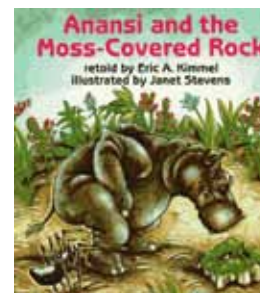
There is something exciting about stories. One minute you are sitting in a comfortable chair and next you are walking through the jungle in Africa.

*Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock* is a folktale that is based on West African and Caribbean folklore. Anansi, which means spider, uses trickery, cleverness and cunning, to gain something for himself, but his tricks frequently backfire on him. There are many different folktales about Anansi.

In this book Anansi, the spider, is walking through the jungle when a strange moss-covered rock catches his eye. When the cunning Anansi discovers that the rock has special powers he uses it to trick a lion, elephant, giraffe, and zebra into fainting while he steals their food. But a little bush deer will not be fooled and she uses the rock to teach Anansi a lesson and the last laugh is on him.

The illustrations in this book will be enjoyed by young and old alike. You just have to laugh at the pictures of the fainting hippo, the dejected lion, and the shocked elephant. If you look closely you will find a little mule deer peeking out from the background on most pages.

This is a fun and playful book to be read to your favorite little person.



# Getting Rights Wrong

## A history of human rights thought, and Canada's human rights system

by Neil Dykstra

Today, when we hear about “human rights” it is most often in connection with Canada’s Human Rights Commissions and Human Rights Tribunals. The purpose of these agencies is to administer Human Rights Codes – rules put in place to tackle the supposed systemic racism and bigotry in Canadian society. Every province and territory has one, and there is yet another Commission to govern areas of federal jurisdiction.

Christians need to be well aware of these agencies as they can, and are already impacting Christians in our workplaces, and even in our churches. They have been limiting Christians’ freedom to express and live out our faith. One needs to look no further than the Alberta Human Rights Tribunal order handed down to Red Deer’s Pastor Stephen Boissoin – it ordered him to recant his biblical beliefs on the sinfulness of homosexuality, and restricted the topics that he could preach on.

These commissions and tribunals were set up to fight *for* human rights – how is it that they are now being used to attack Christians’ human rights?

### Human rights vs. Civil rights

It’s come about through these Commissions’ intentional confusion of true *human* rights – those bestowed by God – with *civil* rights, which are given by man.

So to understand the proper role of the Commissions and Tribunals, one must first come to an understanding of what human rights actually are, and how they have been warped to further an ideological agenda.

### Human rights

The common definition of a human right is a fundamental right that all humans hold simply because they are human. We don’t need and can’t do anything to earn these rights; we have them simply because of who we are – human – rather than what we can do. They are rights that the government does not give – only recognize – and may not interfere with. They can be summed up in one overarching right: the right to see to one’s own survival. Any potential or real transgression of such a right would legitimately authorize him or her to use force to prevent, punish, or reconcile the wrong.

These rights are evident in Scripture, but are also self-evident in creation itself, leading some secular political philosophers to arrive at similar conclusions to those based on the revealed Word of God. The best example of this is the right to life. Creation bears witness that humans have a

natural predisposition to protect ourselves from things that would harm us. In scripture, God enshrined this right to life, first in the promises made to Cain (Gen 4:15) then to all mankind through Noah (Gen 9:6), and codified in the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:13), where God reaffirms the right to life by forbidding anyone from killing.

### Civil rights

It is important to properly distinguish a human right from a civil right. A civil right is granted on the basis of citizenship under a government. Civil rights are privileges granted by government so they can also be abolished by government. Human rights, however, exist apart from government.

Examples of human rights are the right to life, liberty, and property. Liberty would include the right to freedom of expression, freedom of association, and freedom of conscience and religion.

Examples of civil rights that most agree are essential to any legitimate government are equality before the law, the right to vote, and mobility rights. These are often called first-generation civil rights. Second-generation civil rights include entitlements that can only be provided through the compulsory distribution of wealth: the right to education, housing, or healthcare are a few examples. These rights cannot possibly be absolute (apply to everyone) as human rights are, since their provision is limited by the wealth that the government appropriates. Finally, third-generation rights are those that grant privileges to groups of people. One example of a group right is the right for those who live in Quebec to insist that businesses there operate in the French language.

### A change in terminology

A critical shift in language has obscured the meaning of the term “human right.” Civil rights are now routinely called human rights, which gives them additional weight in the court of opinion. The Ontario Human Rights Commission, for example, now refers to housing as a human right, which must be fulfilled by government policies such as welfare and social housing.

This change in terminology resulted in a shift of the basis of human rights – instead of being based on *who* we are (beings made in the image of God), human rights are now said to arise from human needs, from *what we want*. As we shall see, this parallels a shift in the perception of the purpose of government away from the protection of liberty and towards the fulfilment of need and wants.

## The historical evolution of human rights

While the concepts of rights and privileges have been part of society since creation, rarely did they extend equally to every human being. Such a notion of a “human right,” that is, a right that every human being holds, was not considered at length until the 17th and 18th centuries. Until then, the rights of the individual were usually subject to the arbitrary disposition of a monarch, a dictator, or the clergy. Some societies were able to place limits upon such arbitrary power (the Magna Carta set some limits on the king’s power, for example), but typically did not base such limits on any concept of inalienable human rights.

### *Biblical foundation*

The foundation of the theory of human rights in Christian theology is unmistakable. The concept of the human right to freedom of conscience from the state was central to Augustine’s fifth-century work *City of God*. Thomas Aquinas, a thirteenth-century priest and philosopher, argued extensively that the powers of men were subject to a natural order created by God, the foremost of which is the right of humans to live and procreate. Reformer Martin Luther insisted that the right to freedom of conscience was so central to our being that it should never be restricted by any authority.

### *Social Contract*

In the seventeenth century, political philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke formulated the Social Contract theory of government. This theory recognized that humans hold inalienable rights, that of life, liberty, and property. Locke derived these rights from scripture, but also saw them as self-evident in nature. Legitimate government, he said, is only formed when the holders of rights voluntarily and reversibly cede some of them in order to receive civil rights – chiefly the collective protection of their rights from foreign and domestic enemies. In order for the rights to remain inalienable, the people must always retain the ability to take their rights back from the government. Modern democracies of today are largely founded on this social contract model.

What was controversial about the Social Contract theorists was the right of all men to rebel against what they saw as tyranny – a ruler who wields civil power without the people’s consent. This is inconsistent with God’s command to respect whatever authorities He has placed over us (Romans 13:1-7). At the same time, God does encourage us to seek freedom when we can (1Cor 7:21-23).

### *Marxism/socialism and collective rights*

The common understanding of human rights deteriorated dramatically in the mid and late nineteenth century, as the materialist philosophies of Marxism and socialism took hold. Under these political schools of thought, rights held by individuals must be at first balanced, and eventually overruled, by collective rights. Foremost among the rights that characterized socialism was the right to equality, not just under the law, but in all aspects of life. Other collective rights included economic rights: the right to a job, the right to an income, the right, even, to a passenger train making it to its destination on time.

## God-given rights vs. the world’s pale imitation

### **RIGHT TO PROPERTY**

*“You shall not steal.”*  
(Exodus 20:15)

### **SOCIALISM**

I have a “right” to food, clothing, a free education, etc. so you better give me the money I need for this. . . or I will take it.

### **RIGHT TO LIFE**

*“You shall not murder.”*  
(Exodus 20:13)

### **ABORTION**

I have a “right” to do with my body as I will, so you better allow me to kill my unborn child.

### **RIGHT TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL**

*“We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”*  
(Acts 4:19-20)

### **FREEDOM FROM RELIGION**

I have a “right” not to be offended, so you better not say I’m a sinner

The socialists, fascists, and communists used this interpretation of human rights as justification for the seizure of individual rights, and what followed was a host of atrocities in the first half of the twentieth century. Millions died from genocide, starvation, imprisonment, and war. The arbitrary seizure of property by socialist and communist governments impoverished countless more. Democracy was suspended, the free press destroyed, and political opponents imprisoned or killed. Even the Church suffered immensely in the void of human rights, either forced to propagate state ideology or go underground. Some, like the Spanish church at the hands of communists during its civil war, were even violently destroyed and the clergy executed.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations in 1948, was heavily influenced by this socialist view of rights. The Declaration does make mention of the true human rights of life, liberty, and property. But it puts them as equals alongside a long list of civil rights and entitlements that must restrict human rights in order to be enacted. Some of the economic entitlements are the right to income from social security (Article 22), the right to a job and a living wage (Article 23), paid holidays (Article 24), food, clothing, housing, medical care, and child welfare services (Article 25), and compulsory education (Article 27).

### **Recognition of human rights in Canada**

The theories of natural law and social contract formed the basis of the American constitution, and were influential in the evolution of the government of the United Kingdom at the time that the Dominion of Canada was created. This is what the preamble of the constitution of Canada, enacted by the British government in 1867, refers to when it speaks of “principles of government similar to the United Kingdom.” This was assumed to include the human rights of freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press. These assumptions were held up in Canadian courts as an “implied bill of rights.” Nevertheless, these rights were not specified in detail, and



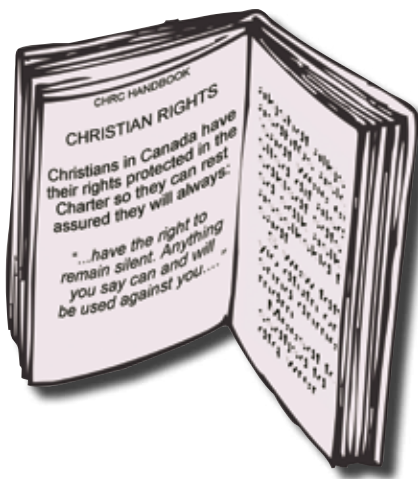
were routinely ignored by Canada's lawmakers for decades.

With the adoption of the UDHR in 1948, the provinces began to pass laws to fulfil its objectives. It began with regulations on discrimination in employment. Ontario began the trend when it passed its Fair Employment Act in 1951, which prohibited businesses from discrimination in hiring. Other provinces enacted similar laws in the ensuing decade, adding pay equity restrictions and accommodation laws in a scattershot fashion.

At the same time, the Jehovah's Witnesses were fighting significant persecution by provincial and federal governments for their religious beliefs. Their religion was completely banned by the federal government from 1940 to 1943. After that, the devoutly Catholic Duplessis government in Quebec continued to charge many Witnesses with sedition for opposing the teachings of the church. They were forbidden from distributing pamphlets, endured frivolous and vindictive charges, and had one of their services raided by police without a warrant. The Jehovah's Witnesses brought the need for a standing Charter of Rights to the attention of the Canadian government through several court victories and considerable public pressure. Diefenbaker's government proposed the first Bill of Rights in 1960, as a statute, which would limit the government from passing laws that would infringe upon the rights of Canadians. It recognized the human rights of life, liberty, and property, and only added essential civil rights of equality before the law and access to justice. But, as a statute, the Bill had no effect on provincial laws, or even federal laws already in existence, and could easily be ignored or repealed by subsequent governments.

During Pierre Elliot Trudeau's last term in office, the ineffectiveness of the Bill of Rights was corrected with the introduction of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which was passed as part of the Constitution Act in 1984. Since it is now part of the constitution, this Act is nearly impossible to repeal by the government of the day. The Charter applies to all levels of government – but not directly to private dealings between individuals.

The Charter recognizes the human rights to life and liberty – but conspicuously omits any mention of property rights. It refers to liberty rights as “fundamental freedoms.” It then lays out the basic civil rights of all citizens, such as mobility rights, the right to vote, and equality before the law. There were, unfortunately, several exemptions made for such things as affirmative action (reverse discrimination) and the promotion of multiculturalism, which undermine the principle of equality before the law. Furthermore, the Charter also enshrines some second-generation and third-generation



civil rights that many believe are better administered as individual statutes, but were included to appease special interest groups to ensure passage of the bill.

The Charter, though, contains a significant loophole in Section 1. Every human and civil right may be limited by government as long as it is a “reasonable limit demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.” This places the unelected Supreme Court of Canada as the final judge of what constitutes a reasonable limitation on our rights.

This loophole enabled the various Human Rights Codes in Canada to continue to operate in conflict with our fundamental freedoms. In the most high-profile charter challenge of a human rights law, John Ross Taylor lost a 5-4 Supreme Court decision, which concluded that the restrictions on free speech in the Code pass the “reasonable limitation” test.

### The Canadian Human Rights Act

A few years prior to the enshrinement of the Charter, Trudeau's government in 1977 passed the Canadian Human Rights Act as a statute. This Act built on both the Bill of Rights and various provincial human rights statutes that were passed in the 1950s and 60s. Unlike the Bill of Rights, the Act doesn't only limit the actions of government, but also applies to private dealings between individuals. The Act created the Canadian Human Rights Commission and Tribunal to serve as the enforcement bodies.

The Human Rights Commissions are also generally tasked with advising Parliament and provincial legislatures on human rights policy. They, like all bureaucracies, strive to expand their role and resist contraction. The only way to expand human rights is to adopt the collectivist ideology that ushers in more and more civil rights, but redefine them as human rights. The expense to our true human rights is collateral damage that they would sooner ignore.

They explain away the restriction of our rights with fluffy language. Human and civil rights “reinforce each other” in a harmonious “matrix,” devoid of any obvious “hierarchy.” Each right can supposedly be perfectly balanced against the other. Only the experts in the Commission can know exactly where this perfect balance lies, and so our liberties must remain at their whim and disposal.

In promoting this ideology, the Commission constantly cites declarations from the United Nations over and above our constitution and the will of our elected Parliament. They also derive their intellectual authority from socialist advocacy groups such as the Southern Poverty Law Center. The Commissioner of the CHRC even took part in the Durban Review conference, which Canada officially boycotted due to its radical anti-Semitic agenda and its goal to institute worldwide laws forbidding criticism of Islam. Upon a perceived funding cut, the groups that rushed to the CHRC's defence included the who's who of the left: the NDP, the Communist Party of Canada, the public sector labour unions, Islamic groups, and anti-poverty activists.

The Human Rights system in Canada is not based on the principles of protecting human rights. It is in their interest to take them away, and as gradually as possible to prevent the people from noticing.



# Doing away with democracy... to save the planet!

## The global warming debate is spawning revolutionary talk

by Margaret Helder

At first glance it would be far from obvious why an issue like global warming would involve cultural concerns. This is a strictly scientific issue, isn't it?

However a longer look will make it clear that in the climate change community those promoting CO<sub>2</sub> controls, and the "deniers" represent very different moral and spiritual values. The truth is these two groups have two completely different visions of what human society should look like in the years ahead.

### A left/right thing?

Global warming defenders have noticed that their critics tend to hold to a certain set of attitudes, and they think they know why. A January 21, 2010 *Nature* editorial defined critics this way:

"People with individualistic values, who prize personal initiative, and those with hierarchical values, who respect authority, tend to dismiss evidence of environmental risks, because the widespread acceptance of such evidence would lead to restrictions on commerce and industry, activities they admire."

The other school of thought is also readily identified:

"By contrast, people who subscribe to more egalitarian and communitarian values are suspicious of commerce and industry, which they see as sources of unjust disparity. They are more inclined to believe that such activities pose unacceptable risks and should be restricted."

### A religious right thing?

These two categories are quite general and roughly define rightwing political views and leftwing. However the climate change advocates are apparently focusing on a more restricted group of people – not just the rightwing, but the *religious* rightwing. Thus the article in *Nature* points out:

"the same groups who disagree on 'cultural issues' – abortion, same sex marriage and school prayer – also disagree on whether climate change is real. . . ."

In other words, climate "deniers" in the U.S. are mostly seen as conservative Christians. The article in *Nature* maintains that this "cultural" issue – religion – is the main predictor of what position any given person will adopt on climate change. Differences in "gender, race, income, education level, political

ideology, personality type or any other individual characteristic" do not affect conclusions concerning climate change the way culture/religion does, declares *Nature*.

### A pigheaded thing?

The article in *Nature* depicts those people with a conservative religious worldview as going to great lengths to protect their favored viewpoint. These conservatives are unwilling to consider, so the article says, that the issues which they value [for example large families], might nevertheless be detrimental to society – and the issues which they deplore [for example abortion], might nevertheless be good for society. In order to protect their worldview, the article says, such people interpret scientific evidence in a biased way.

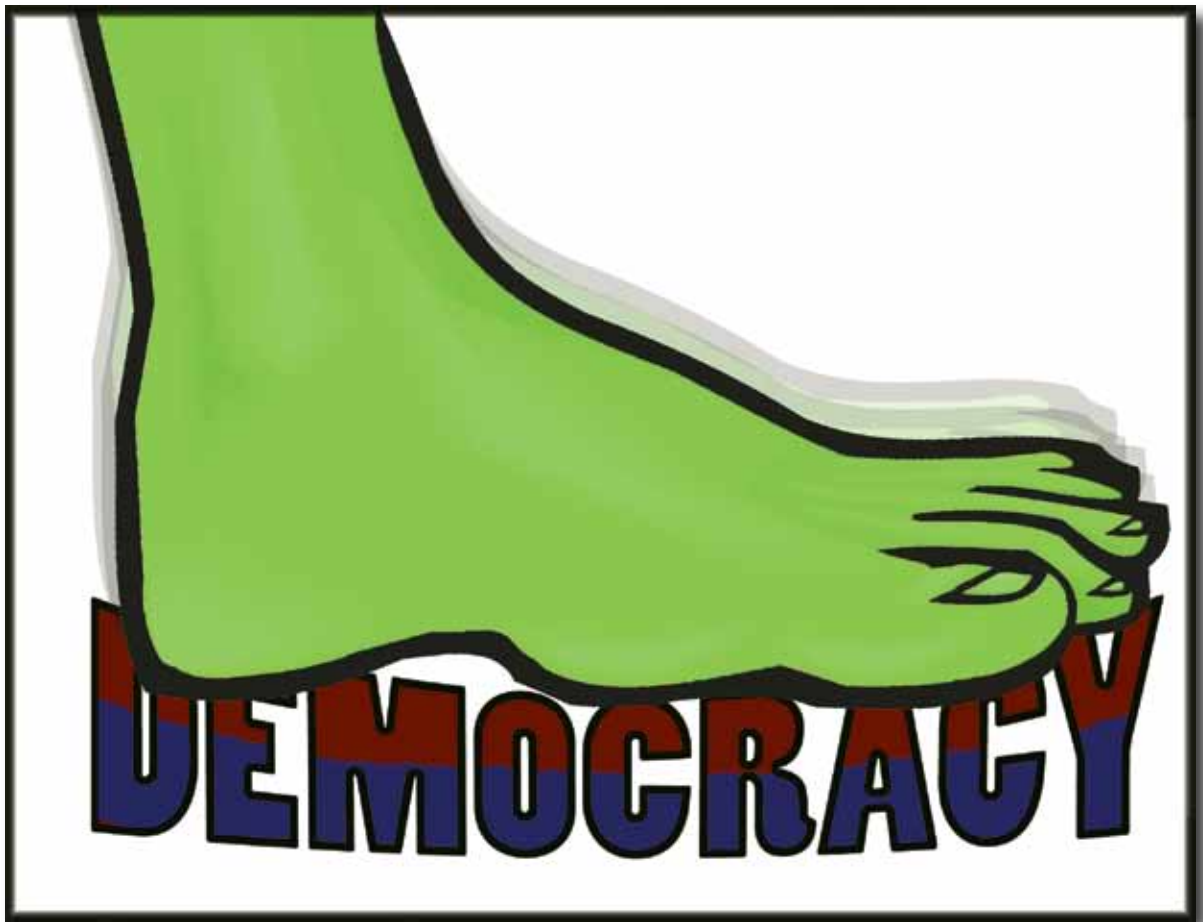
The charge that conservative religious/Christian people are prone to carry out dishonest manipulations of the data, is commonly encountered. Thus Stephen Schneider, author of a recent book on climate change, declared in correspondence to *Nature* (April 22/10):

"Understanding science does not lead in itself to effective policy, in fact, my book demonstrates that special interest or ideological chicanery is more responsible than scientific ignorance for blocking policy."

We see the term "special interest" often used as a euphemism for conservative Christians, suggesting that their view is somehow irrelevant to the public square. Also "chicanery," of course, means dirty tricks. Dr. Schneider certainly was not mincing his words! It is the people with a cultural/religious agenda who are blocking climate change policy, he says, not those who are ignorant of the whole issue.

Likewise a letter to the journal *Science*, signed by 255 leading scientists and members of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and including 11 Nobel laureates, called upon the "climate deniers" to desist from their political harassment of climate change scientists. According to an item in *Edmonton Journal* (May 7/10): "The letter takes direct aim at 'climate change deniers' saying they are 'typically driven by special interests or dogma'."

Obviously in the view of these scientists, the battle is not primarily one concerned with interpretation of scientific data, but with worldviews. In the same vein, an editorial in *Nature* (Jan. 21/10) declares that "As comforting as it may be



to think that the best evidence will eventually convince the public on its own, climate scientists can no longer afford to make that naïve assumption.”

### Soft selling it

Since people tend to listen more sympathetically to people who share their own values, some scientists now recommend that the climate change community find people from among the various cultural/religious groups who will carry the message to their own people. Thus the editorial in *Nature* declares:

“People have more trust in experts – and scientists – when they sense that the speaker shares their values. The climate-research community would do well to use a diverse set of voices.”

So apparently the climate research community will no longer send individuals looking like anarchist radicals to audiences full of conservative individuals. As with any issues then, it is important for each Christian to critically evaluate all arguments, even those which come from individuals within their own ranks.

### Do away with democracy

The issue of climate change involves much more than mere carbon dioxide emission controls and carbon taxes. If the hardcore environmentalists have their way, human society will be organized along completely different lines in the near future.

Two prominent experts, Stephen Schneider and James Hansen, each wrote books on climate-change which appeared in print late in 2009, just before the Copenhagen conference in December. According to a review in *Nature* (Mar. 18/10) the writings of these men suggest that “their convictions have pushed them towards simplistic, almost authoritarian [anti-democratic] visions of political decision-making.” According to the reviewer, both authors seem to take the position that the science of climate change compels a specific course of political action. There is no room for prioritizing or choices.

This is completely contrary to the way democracies operate. Thus the reviewer, a professor of environmental studies at the University of Colorado, declares: “Hansen’s complaint that leaders of sovereign countries have not acceded to his demands, implies a criticism of democracy also present in Schneider’s book.” The reviewer further points out:

“If science leads inexorably to particular outcomes, then it would seem to favor autocratic forms of governance. The middle man – the general public – is easily ignored if heads of state need only hear the expert voice of science.”

Democracy itself however may not be the only issue subject to change. A book by Al Gore, published about the same time as Hansen’s and Schneider’s, and also reviewed in *Nature*, promotes a solution which seems surprising from such a prominent politician. Of Al Gore’s book, the reviewer declares: “It is



jarring to learn that Gore thinks that the solution to the climate crisis will come about only through 'massive changes in human behavior and thinking.' Again, he does not say how a new global consciousness is to be delivered."

### Do away with children

Paul Ehrlich, long a prominent environmentalist, has always seemed like one of the more extreme advocates ever since the publication of his book *The Population Bomb* (1968). In a recent publication, he uses the dual themes of human population and human behavior to propose some solutions that are totally Orwellian (or seem straight out of *Brave New World*). Dr. Ehrlich, in the April 2010 issue of *PLoS Biology* declares that his ambitious objective is to change human behavior in order to avoid a collapse of global civilization. Thus he declares "The urgent need now is. . . for better understanding of human behaviors and how they can be altered to direct *Homo sapiens* onto a course toward a sustainable society. . . Understanding such things as how social norms are generated and how individual actions get translated into group behavior are, in my opinion, central to organizing a successful effort."

Having just stated that it would take many decades for humane actions to change a significant upward trend in our population size into a downward trend, he then declares that human behavior must change rapidly and this must include a humane reduction in the size of the global population.

### Do away with capitalism

He further insists that "Corporations are not an essential feature of capitalism, and, in any case, [if capitalism depends on perpetual growth]. . . capitalism will disappear." Dr. Ehrlich proposes that a cartel of scientists, social scientists and like thinks, should adopt a revolutionary stance and "compel governments and other organizations to take a more direct and effective course. . . ."

### Do away with nations

Furthermore these efforts, Dr. Ehrlich informs us, should be "transnational," not "international," since the latter term suggests the participation of nation states, and these jurisdictions are "clearly obsolescent institutional structures" (p. 5).

This revolutionary program, obviously leading toward one world government, has been shown to involve changing human behavior to reduce our population and to rid the world of commerce. However there are no humane ways to reduce human populations in the short term, and the extreme changes in human behavior sought by this man, could only come about by means of a most rigorous and brutal dictatorship. Dr. Ehrlich may be at the end of a controversial career, in which he has repeatedly and wrongly predicted the planet's doom due to overpopulation but a respected scientific journal saw fit to publish this piece.

Such solutions are a long way from simple discussions of emissions controls and carbon taxes, but as we have seen, many prominent people consider that there is little room for individual points of view or even of political choices when it comes to environmental issues.

### We are democracy's protectors?

It is sobering then to reflect that Christians may be one of the few influences protecting democracy at this time. If, as they suggest, it is the Christians who call into question the environmentalist agenda, then by that same token, it is Christians, who are protecting the right of elected officials rather than a clique of scientists, to influence their government's program. It is Christians also, who reserve the right to think and speak differently from the politically correct secular media and who thus protect the right to free speech. Note that several prominent environmentalists want to change the way people think, and the thinking they want changed involves the people who disagree with the environmentalist agenda.

Obviously the culture wars are about more than climate, they are about every aspect of modern life and they even involve spiritual values.



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- Send your requests to [editor@reformedperspective.ca](mailto:editor@reformedperspective.ca). Ads will appear in the issue **two months after submission** (ex. if you submit in December, it will appear in February).

This is for groups and individuals whose philosophy and worldview is in accord with that of *Reformed Perspective*, so we reserve the right to refuse any ad.



# Soup & Buns

## Hidden Anger

*Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written:*

*"It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.*

Romans 12:17-19

by Sharon L. Bratcher

As the judge was about to make his ruling, he was interrupted. A spectator in the back of the courtroom stood and walked to the front and declared in a loud, firm voice, "My name is Keith, and I find the defendant guilty." He proceeded to pronounce the sentence, as if he fully expected the rest of the law community to back him up on his decision.

The judge was rather stunned. Keith did not have the authority to make that decision, or to choose the consequences. Who did he think he was?

### Self-appointed judges

When God says in Romans 12 that, "it is mine to avenge" (or "vengeance is mine") He is stating that He is the judge, and not us. He is saying that it is just as ridiculous for us to step up to the bench to create consequences as it would be for Keith. *He* has the authority. We do not. And while it seems crystal clear in verses 17-19 of the same chapter that we are never to "get back at people," Jeremiah 17:9 informs us that our hearts are "deceitful above all things and beyond cure." It takes the two-edged sword of God's Word to show us the sin that remains in our lives.

It's easy to think that we don't really seek revenge. We don't take possessions from others, or think it through as: "Oooh, she did that to me, so I'm going get her back!" Good Christians must be a lot sneakier than that. We have to rationalize that our behavior isn't really so bad.

### Subtle vengeance

Enter the concept of passive-aggressive behavior, which is also called hidden anger. An online definition says that passive-aggressive behavior "can manifest itself as learned helplessness, procrastination, stubbornness, resentment, sullenness, or repeated failure to accomplish requested tasks for which one is responsible." Often it is not admitted by the doer, and sometimes it is not even realized or understood by him, or by those who are frustrated with him.

Passive-aggressive behavior begins when one is afraid, for whatever historical reasons, to deal with conflict in an open manner. Conflict happens, and there is a productive way to deal with it, through healthy, honest and direct communication.

On the other hand, unproductive anger is expressed in aggressive ways such as shouting or striking something or

someone, or through manipulation, avoidance, or passivity. As one psychologist has expressed it, "Passive-aggressive behavior is born of the similar fears of being controlled or caught in confrontation, and the need to work around others more than with others." (*Overcoming Passive-Aggression: How to Stop Hidden Anger From Spoiling Your Relationships, Career, and Happiness*, by Tim Murphy and Loriann Oberlin.)

Passive-aggressive behavior is a type of revenge.

Sally is angry with Bill and so she neglects sewing his favorite pants, blaming it on her busy schedule. Jared knows that his wife wants him to finish the plumbing project he started two weeks ago. Shannon conveniently "forgets" to do her chores or the homework she hates. Harry doesn't clean the kitchen thoroughly because that way he won't be expected to do so. Something in them (selfishness, wanting their own way, anger, revenge) directs them to make excuses instead.

Murphy and Oberlin state that anger is not an emotion: rather it is a *reaction* to an emotion such as fear, disappointment, frustration, unhappiness, or sadness. Hidden anger contains the extremes of fear and avoidance which lead "to the point that you'll do anything to avoid expressing yourself because your faulty thinking leads you to believe that even a minor disagreement is akin to great conflict." And we hate conflict.

### Recognizing our sin

When we realize that God has the authority in the situation, and not us, perhaps we can recognize when we have sought revenge through passive-aggressive behavior. We have acted like Keith in the judge's courtroom.

We are not to repay evil for evil even in the sneaky, underhanded, rationalized ways that come so easily to us. But neither do we have to let others continue to hurt us. Instead of reacting with passive revenge, we must learn to recognize what is happening, and with God's strength seek to deal with the situation if possible with honest, open communication. If that fails, we will need to trust God to care for us throughout our trials, and trust Him to be the Judge.

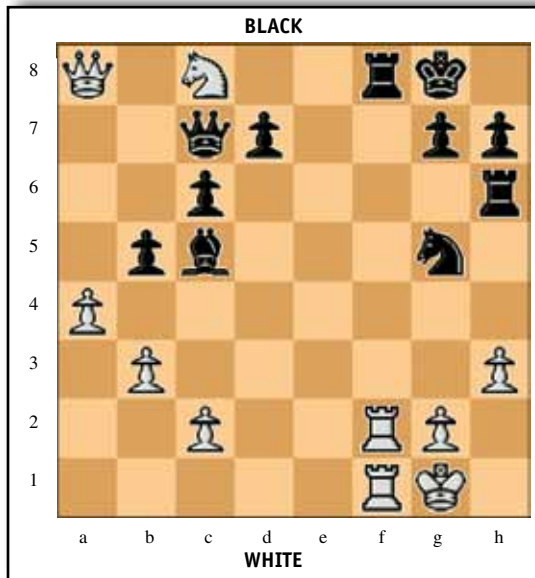
*On the contrary: 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. . . . Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.* Romans 12:20-21



# ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

Send Puzzles, Solutions, Ideas to Puzzle Page, 43 Summerhill Place, Winnipeg, MB R2C 4V4 OR [robleach@gmail.com](mailto:robleach@gmail.com)

## CHESS PUZZLE # 169



White to Mate in 3

Or, if it is BLACK's Move, BLACK to Mate in 4

## NEW PUZZLES

### Riddles for Punsters #169 - "Fowled up Dinner Plans"

Why did the hungry chicken cross the road to go into a KFC restaurant?

The not-too-bright chicken had heard that the restaurant was famous for s \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ chickens at meal time.

### Problem to Ponder #169 - "Foursome Football Toss on the Beach"

Four friends were standing on a large beach in positions forming a 10 m by 10 m square. They managed to toss a football clockwise around the square for ten minutes without anyone failing to catch the ball.

Taking into account time taken for catching and throwing the ball, the football travelled between each player at an average speed of 5 m/s.

How many times did the ball travel around the square?



### Answer to Riddle for Punsters #168 - "Scientific Enlightenment"

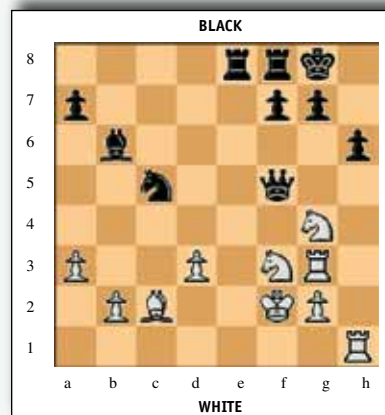
Why is Thomas Edison remembered mainly for his invention of the light bulb? Because it was his b r i g h t e s t idea.

### Answer to Problem to Ponder #168 - "Car Change Calculations"

A hospital parkade has parking places for 300 vehicles. At noon one day, 90 parking spots were still empty. After that, **every five minutes** two vehicles left and five vehicles entered. a) How many parking spots were still empty one hour later? b) At what time of day did the parkade become full? c) If the parkade remained full from that time until 4 p.m., after which time **every ten minutes** six vehicles left for every one that entered, how many vehicles were still in the parkade at midnight? d) If the fee for evening parking (after 6:00 p.m.) is a flat rate of \$5.00, how much money was paid to park all the vehicles that arrived between 6:00 p.m. and midnight? e) How many \$2.50 milkshakes could have been bought with that same money?

- The net gain was  $5-2=3$  vehicles every five minutes so  $3 \times 12=36$  more entered than left and one hour after noon (so at 1:00 p.m.) there were  $90-36=54$  spots still empty.
- Continuing at that rate of overall gain of 3 vehicles every 5 minutes,  $54/3=18$  more five-minute intervals were needed to fill the parkade, so **it was filled 1½ hours later, at 2:30.**
- After 4:00 p.m. there was a net loss of  $6-1=5$  vehicles every ten minutes or  $5 \times 6=30$  vehicles every hour so at midnight (8 hours later) there were  $300-30 \times 8 = 300-240 = 60$  vehicles.
- After 4 p.m. 1 vehicle entered every 10 minutes and between 6 p.m. and midnight there were  $6 \times 6=36$  ten-minute intervals so 36 cars entered so **the money paid was  $\$5.00 \times 36=\$180.00$ .**
- That money could have bought  $\$180/\$2.50=72$  milkshakes.

## SOLUTIONS TO THE (JULY/AUGUST) PUZZLE PAGE



SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 168

### WHITE to Mate in 3

#### Descriptive Notation

- NxP ch K-R2 (or K-R1)
- NxQ dis.ch K-N1
- RxP mate

#### Algebraic Notation

- Ng4xh6 + Kg8-h7
- Nh6xf5 dis.+ Kh7-g8
- Rg3xg7 ++

or

- Ng4xh6 + Kg8-h8
- Nh6xf5 dis.+ Kh8-g8
- Rg3xg7 ++

### BLACK to Mate in 2

#### Descriptive Notation

- NxP dbl ch
- K-B1 R-K8 mate

#### Algebraic Notation

- Nc5xd3 dbl +
- Kf2-f1 Re8-e1 ++

NOTE: Black's knight move not only attacked the white king, it caused a "discovered check" by the bishop, thus "double check". The white king had only one move, then the rook attack produced "checkmate" since the nearby white knight was pinned by the queen and so could not capture the rook. A beautiful combination of moves!



# Crossword Puzzle

Series 17 No 8

Last Month's solution  
Series 17 No 7

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
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63				64						65				
66										67				

**ACROSS:**

- 1. Expanse of land
- 6. Five line humorous verse
- 14. Locating device
- 15. Winter sport location
- 16. Go quickly
- 17. Limbless reptile
- 18. Invalidates
- 19. Tree of tropical America
- 20. Methyl ethyl ketone, for short
- 21. French female noun suffix
- 22. Pesky insect
- 24. All
- 25. Helps a criminal
- 27. Ancient (abbr.)
- 29. Disencumber
- 30. Minerals
- 32. Not Elsewhere Included (abbr.)
- 33. Special Garden
- 34. Small islands
- 37. Grab firmly
- 40. Disperses in defeat
- 41. Author of Uncle Tom's Cabin
- 42. Two-toed sloth
- 44. Definite article
- 45. Or's accompaniment
- 47. Intestinal tissue
- 48. Ich bin \_\_\_\_\_ Berliner
- 49. Attend a party uninvited
- 51. Large deer
- 53. Discussion
- 54. Hard wood of a Philippine tree
- 56. Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis
- 59. Musical abbreviation
- 60. \_\_\_\_\_ Malvinas, aka Falkland Islands
- 61. Prairie girl's name
- 63. Blackbird
- 64. Say out loud
- 65. One of a strict Mennonite group
- 66. School subject
- 67. Rotations of duties

**DOWN:**

- 1. Croatian name for Trieste
- 2. Took off very fast
- 3. First man
- 4. Birthday desserts
- 5. Journey
- 6. Aromatic herb
- 7. Incongruity
- 8. Chinese dish
- 9. Become beloved
- 10. Tenth letters of the Arabic alphabet
- 11. Monotonous song
- 12. Yarmulkes
- 13. Part of the trousers
- 22. Gypsum used for art
- 23. Inactive or sluggish
- 24. Help
- 26. Capital of Lebanon
- 27. Anxiety
- 28. Italian greeting
- 29. Drives back
- 31. German city
- 35. Musical instrument
- 36. Moral
- 38. Perspire
- 39. Island and historic county in NW Wales
- 43. Black and white bird
- 46. Daisy
- 49. China, in France
- 50. Math term
- 51. Israel's only port to the Red Sea
- 52. Battle not to be forgotten
- 53. Rugged rock
- 55. Applaud
- 56. Wing-like
- 57. Formal wear
- 58. Team cheer
- 60. Israel, for short
- 62. Republic of South Africa

*Joyce*