

Freedom of choice leads to 'chaos'; life crucial choice

Some additional comments with regard to the letters of Irv Nelson and Elizabeth Millar (DN, Jan. 24), on abortion and choice issues seem in order. I found the argument put forth by Mr. Nelson quite compelling yet incomplete and inconsistently applied. Specifically, his claim that "choice and life are not mutually exclusive!" seems inconsistent with the theme of justice he introduced in the letter. Ms. Millar's letter seems to reflect (understandably) the general confusion held by many with regard to the morality of this issue and others we face these

before her. A person who assaults and kills another driver in an intersection because he has the "legal" right-of-way would be hard pressed to "justify" his actions. No one would argue his claim that his legal rights were being constrained by the other driver; that his "choices" were being frustrated. It would be found, however, that his reasons were insufficient to justify his actions and his actions would be judged accordingly. His choices may prove to be quite costly (if not foolish).

Justice flows from moral law, from the Law Giver, to preserve society

from itself. But law, hopefully as a reflection of moral law, also is to instruct the people as to "right living" before man and the Law Giver. Our recent decades of laws have "instructed" the people all right, but not in accordance with justice. The reasons of the party with most at stake in abortion are not heard before Lady Justice today for her judges have

betrayed her cause and "instructed" her people to ignore her plea. Women can "choose" to destroy their child today under the sanction of "law," but certainly not under the sanction of Justice.

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days. The implication of her letter seems to be that one choice is as good (or bad) as another. This form of morals has essentially rejected any recognition of a "right" response to this dilemma, thus reducing the argument to mere opinion which relegates "rightness" to a personally established and judged matter.

Hopefully, further exploration of the principle of justice would help in this struggle which many of us feel when dealing with the moral issues we face today. The principle of justice presumes that right and wrong can indeed be determined in a matter. It is the basis of law. Significantly, it is foundational to our system of government that a Law Giver established "certain truths to be self-evident: . . . ultimate truths in which government is to establish and ensure to all persons. Therefore, the role of government is to act for and consistent with these truths in the temporal realm with regard to the dispensing of justice.

Justice, in essence, requires that persons must "justify" or give reasons for their actions. Government bodies (our court system) weighs these reasons against the "acceptable" reasons derived from the fundamental standards of justice and render judgment accordingly. For example, killing someone may or may not be considered murder. It depends upon the reasons given. Generally, self-defense is viewed as a legitimate reason for killing. To kill in order to get someone's purse or wallet is not. Lady Justice is not blindfolded because she can't bear to see, but to ensure that justice is impartial, based solely upon the "reasons" given by the persons

When our Lady Justice looks at abortion, what would she be interested in? Let me suggest that her interest would be in the parties' claims and reasons for their actions or proposed actions. The claims of choice by the woman seeking an abortion would be weighed against the claims of other parties, the child, the father, society, etc. Justice is particularly interested in protecting the interests of the weak and the innocent. The child's claim of life would certainly outweigh the woman's claim of "one" of her choices being frustrated. I submit that Justice would reject her claim as being without sufficient moral reason. The woman would have been seen as having made the choice crucial to her, prior to conception. She is now faced with consequences.

What about in cases of rape or incest? While a very small proportion of abortions today, it can be understood as an extension of the above argument. Lady Justice simply seeks to establish the claims and reason of all parties and weigh these and render judgment. The woman's cry for justice for rape (if established) will be satisfied according to law and the man's insufficient reasons (if established) will get him his "just fruits." We're faced with the child. Would Justice find the child guilty? While there is certainly a conflict of "rights," and choices are being frustrated, none could be as crucial as life itself (excepting justice itself).

What if the woman isn't satisfied with the justice handed out and the choices she is left with? The man could arguably make the same claim. Society relies on the understanding that there are more important things to life than having "everything my way." Mr. Nelson's letter called it "responsibility." None of us have "total" freedom of choice. To have

letter

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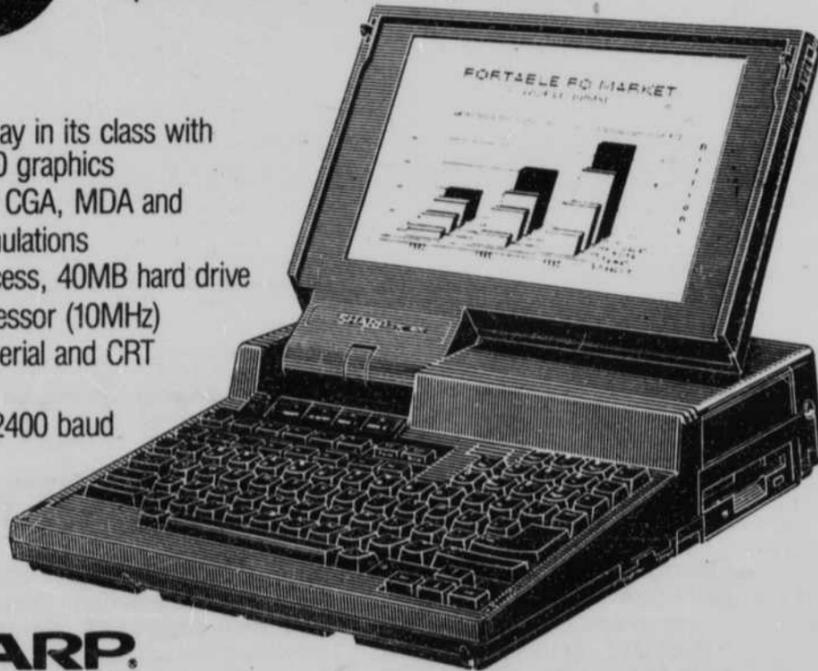
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