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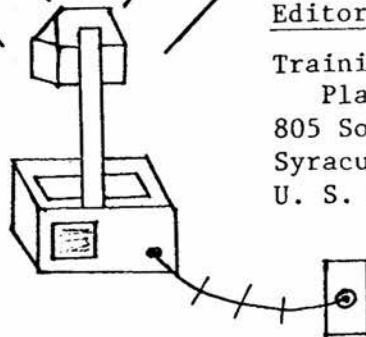
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TIPS

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Body, Mind & Nature of the Human

The major theme for this month's TIPS will be human nature, the body and human health.

Human Nature & Potential

*More and more work is being done on the prenatal behavior of infants, including what influence the prenatal environment has on their later personality and intellectual development, and how much learning may take place even in utero.

*In the 1700s and 1800s, there were many bright people whose gifts were recognized early in life, and who received an excellent education--some of them without even attending school. If one understands the potential of the human brain and the power of wise pedagogy, one is not surprised to hear that in those days, a ten-year old child might command as many as 12 different languages, as did William Rowan Hamilton (1805-1865), who became one of Ireland's most accomplished scientists who made important discoveries in mathematics, optics, and mechanics. In addition, Hamilton also became proficient in philosophy and poetry, and was a very sociable and loyal person.

*After 20 years of effort, a British research group has been able to come up with a complete description of the entire nervous system, in terms of all neurons and their connections, of a one millimeter-long worm. The description is voluminous and will be boiled down to a skeletal 500-page monograph. One is staggered to learn that it took all this to merely deal with the 302 neurons of the worm, while the human nervous system contains an estimated 100 billion (Science, 13/7/84).

*Ordinarily, the human cerebrum is 45 millimeters thick. The eminent British neurologist John Lorber once treated a 26-year old man whose cerebrum had been flattened against the skull by hydrocephaly to a thickness of less than one millimeter, yet the man had an IQ of 126, was socially normal, and had earned a first class honors degree in mathematics (Science Digest, 10/83, p. 71)

*The power of the placebo effect. The bone relics of Saint Rosalia in Palermo, Italy, have for centuries cured diseases and warded off epidemics. It has been quite some time since a learned professor discovered that the bones were those of a goat. However, this in no way diminished the power of the bones to heal people miraculously of their afflictions.

Not only are placebos the single most powerful natural medical treatment known to humans, but the appearance of a placebo pill can affect expectations as to what it might accomplish. Capsules are considered more potent than pills, and bigger ones are presumed to be better. Lavender capsules are most likely to be considered hallucinogenic. Black pills are considered stimulants, yellow and orange ones either stimulants or anti-depressants, and white ones pain killers (Science Digest, 10/83)

*Behavioral scientists and even ethologists have contorted themselves for decades to avoid language that might suggest that animals think or have consciousness. Of course, some psychologists would even do this in regard to humans. However, members of the very same profession have had no inhibitions about using language pertaining to computers that implies that they have, or will have, all sorts of human-like capacities, including mental experiences and even consciousness (American Scientist, Fall 84).

*Do lobsters feel pain when they are aborted, or do babies feel pain when boiled to death? Researchers have found it almost impossible to come to grips with the concept of pain, because pain is such a relativistic and subjective experience. How much science reduces to language is made dramatically clear by this problem. For instance, some scientists have claimed that various animal species do not experience pain, and that those who attribute pain to them are merely anthropomorphizing, i.e., projecting human feelings, emotions, sensibilities, or even identity, onto animals. A few years ago, there was an intense debate in the scientific literature whether lobsters who are being boiled prior to human consumption are experiencing pain. Some people believe that lobsters die painfully when thrown into boiling water, but get anesthetized and die painlessly if put into cold water that is slowly raised to a boil. Some scientists then waded in with the argument that increasing activity and escape attempts by a lobster being boiled either quickly or slowly were a sign of pain, while other scientists denied it. Thereupon yet other scientists pointed out that if we apply the same criteria to humans, we would have to conclude that they do not experience pain because one can dismiss any agitated behavior such as screaming or complaints as being insufficient evidence for pain, and any verbal statements of their painful experiences as being meaningless individualized abstractions. Thus, how can one ever prove that a person complaining of pain is actually feeling pain?

All of this has relevance to the question whether babies that are being aborted feel pain. After all, the methods used to kill them are very gruesome, including in essence burning them to death with salt solutions that destroy their skin, or tearing them apart limb by limb. Quite understandably, pro-abortion advocates would like to claim that aborted babies do not feel pain, while anti-abortion advocates tend to claim they do. In support of the latter position, we are told that a 12-week fetus will already respond to being touched, will give a startle response to a noise, and drink more rapidly if sugar is added to the amniotic fluid. However, pro-abortion advocates claim that the fetus is "merely responding to a stimulus, but is not suffering," and that "pain is not a sensation, but a perception." In fact, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists itself issued a statement that "we know of no legitimate scientific information that supports the statement that the fetus experiences pain early in pregnancy." The problem is that there is also no evidence that lobsters experience pain when they frantically try to get out of the cooking pot, and if one takes the logic of

science only a few steps forward, then we have no evidence that anyone feels pain. All of this goes to prove yet once more that the intellectual, scientific and literary leaders of society will prove whatever society has decided to be and do (Science 84, 5/84; source item submitted by Karl Williams).

Future Prospects or Potential Developments

*We have reported before on the increasing evidence that, contrary to earlier thought, nervous tissue may regenerate, even in adulthood. There has now been yet another discovery that there may be massive neural regeneration in bird brains, and possibly so each season (Science, 22/6/84). Since this regeneration was associated with an increase in the production of the male sex hormone, the question now is whether a similar phenomenon might be observed in other animals and humans, and whether it can be stimulated by the administration of sex hormones.

*There is a biofeedback pop culture, but there is also some serious research going on on clinical applications of biofeedback that is beginning to look exceedingly promising. By looking at their EEGs, people can learn to control their brain wave patterns, and people with epilepsy can even anticipate seizures and take preventive actions. Perhaps even more spectacular is learning to exert conscious control over certain processes of one's autonomic nervous system, such as blood pressure. Using such techniques, some people with cerebral palsy and long-term spinal cord injuries have begun to gain or regain extensive functioning. There is still much that is unknown about neural pathways and their control, and if one pathway is severed, the brain does not automatically utilize available alternatives unless it is systematically trained to do so. Muscle control around certain damaged areas can also be learned through biofeedback so that chronic or otherwise deteriorating conditions, some of them of an orthopedic nature, can be arrested or reversed (APA Monitor, 11/83)

*Because a fertilized human ovum can develop not only inside the womb but also outside of it, it is theoretically possible for a man to "bear" a child, though of course the child would have to be "delivered" by something like Caesarean section. We should be very surprised if some men--probably with feminine tendencies--do not try to do this soon.

Problems in Health Services & Health Products

*Yet another form of "mutual disablement" has been the huge damage awards which juries have imposed against the manufacturers of children's vaccines, such as DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis, which is whooping cough). Only 3.2 children per million vaccinated with DTP suffer any kind of injury, whereas without these vaccinations, pertussis complications alone would produce brain damage or death in 10 times as many children. Because damage suits have begun to cost more than the drug companies were able to earn in profits from these vaccines, all but one (Lederle) have quit making it, and suddenly, a shortage of vaccine has arisen which will persist for some time. Thus, many babies will not be able to get either all the DTP shots that they should have, or even any at all (Healthwise, 2/85).

*Another massive human service product area that has virtually no support is that of non-prescription skin wound medications that supposedly disinfect and/or promote healing. There are dozens of compounds (mercurochrome, iodine, alcohol preparations, ointments, antibiotic cremes, etc.) that as a class (though not in each individual instance) have been used for literally scores of years, and on which people have spent hundreds of millions of dollars. Yet this entire industry and its associated practice has virtually no empirical basis whatsoever. Apparently, not one single adequately controlled research study had ever been conducted on the

effectiveness of any of these products, and until 1984, there was only one study that was even half-way credible. It involved toddlers in a rural day care center who were treated against insect bites and minor cuts. Thus, it is quite possible that washing a wound, using soap, and applying a sterile covering may be as effective as anything else (Consumer Reports, 7/84). By the way, historically, many of these products have deliberately and unnecessarily included an agent that burns (as in alcohol-based merthiolates) when applied to a wound because people assume that if it doesn't hurt, it can't be doing any good.

*It is a myth of the medical culture that the health of a nation is related to the extent and quality of its health care system. A study released in 1984 compared the US, Great Britain, West Germany, France, and Japan. It found that Japan, with the fewest physicians per capita and the second lowest per capita health costs, had the lowest rate of infant mortality, fewest deaths from heart disease and the greatest life expectancy. While quality health care is more available in the US and elsewhere, health itself is less prevalent than in many other countries. One can hardly argue that this is due to the poor genetic stock of the nation or to adverse natural conditions, and thus we have to conclude the rather obvious, namely, that it is due to our style of living.

Health Problems as a Reflection of Societal Values

*Stressful news. The Time 6/6/83 cover story was on stress. Stress is now considered to be a major contributor, either directly or indirectly, to 6 of the leading causes of death in the US. The three best-selling drugs are an ulcer medication, a hypertension drug, and a tranquilizer. One can suspect that people do not really understand the sources of their stress, because a nationwide poll of mostly married people between ages 18 to 60 found that they thought that the greatest source of stress in their lives was societal changes and attitudes towards sex. It is estimated that in just a few months between 1982 and 1983, the number of stress management enterprises in the US tripled to over 300. These provide services to hospitals, clinics and corporations (Time, 6/6/83).

It is generally believed that the necessity to make a significant change in life pattern is the single most common denominator for stress. We can thus see how in the lives of devalued people, the constant discontinuities in place, relationship, assignments, roles, etc., can contribute dramatically to death, especially considering that directly or indirectly, stress is known to be a major contributor to the 6 leading causes of death in the US.

An analysis of the relationship between economic conditions and death rates has shown that during the 25 years beginning in the late 1940s, every 1% increase in the American unemployment rate brought with it an increase in deaths of 1.9% from heart disease and cirrhosis and 4.1% from suicides, as well as an increase of about 3.5% in first admissions to state psychiatric institutions.

*Virginia Slims cigarettes have been trying to seduce women into smoking by appealing to their thirst for liberation, and have used the slogan "You've come a long way, baby." Actually, cigarette makers have been harping on this same theme since the early 1920s by trying to persuade women that smoking was a badge of modernity. Females in cigarette ads were depicted as modern and liberated. Models and debutantes were hired to walk in the New York City Easter parade smoking, and to smoke in the lobby of the Waldorf Astoria. Opposition to women smoking was branded as "man's inhumanity to woman." One of the funniest cigarette ads featured a smoking physician with the message, "A lung surgeon needs steady nerves." All of this has finally paid off by a surge in smoking among teenage girls, to the degree that even feminist groups are telling the cigarette industry to let up its pressures upon women--never mind the men (APA Monitor, 11/83).

*According to the Center for the Study of Anorexia and Bulimia, the incidence of eating disorders has been rising rapidly and may have assumed "epidemic proportions." However, 90% of people with eating disorders supposedly are women. In consequence, some people believe that academic programs of so-called "women's studies" should begin to include an emphasis on eating disorders. (Source material supplied by Doug Mouncey.)

*Between April 1979 and December 1982, there was an "epidemic" of deaths related to heroin use in the District of Columbia, amounting to an annual rate of almost 1 death per 5000 population. A research study (Science, 5/10/84) concluded that the likely cause was the more casual use of heroin in conjunction with alcohol intake, and excessive intake of quinine, which is used as a dilutant for heroin.

*One-third of the 4200 students at the University of Wisconsin who used their campus health insurance scheme used it for psychiatric treatment. As a result, the insurance company lost a fortune and did not renew its policy with the University (Syracuse Herald Journal, 16/8/84).

*At the Training Institute, we use prodigious amounts of White-out to cover up our (typing) mistakes. We now learn that an increasing number of teenagers are becoming hooked on the stuff--not to correct their school papers but sniffing it. It gives a very cheap but also very toxic high, and is very easily stolen because of its small size.

*As we have said before, the human service system needs clients as its food, and will manufacture them if necessary. This is underlined by the current scramble of hospitals to fill their beds even though there are more hospital beds in the US than are really needed (e.g., Atlanta Journal, 30/5/84; source item supplied by Jacquelyn Mincey Cone).

*Even though steroid drugs which athletes believe to be body-builders are banned in international competition because they can have profound negative impacts upon health, American athletes apparently use these drugs massively, and US Olympic officials are closing their eyes to this. Even when tests show that athletes have taken these forbidden drugs, the athletes have been permitted to compete, as in the recent PanAmerican games in Venezuela (New York Times, 8/83),

Health Hazards & Safety Issues

*If the current food additives trend continues, fewer and fewer people will be able to eat anything. The latest horror story recently discovered was that people who are allergic to certain antibiotics may have life-threatening reactions to meat from animals that were fed these antibiotics, which many animals are now fed routinely in order to maximize their growth (Healthwise, 1/85).

*Citrus fruit from Florida had very high concentrations of the pesticide EDB which has recently been identified as very dangerous. Many areas of Florida have been so saturated with the poison that it is now in the soil and in the water. For the time being, one may be safer switching from Floridian to Californian agricultural products (Science, 3/2/84).

*It is hard to get food anymore that does not come in plastic, or has been in contact with it. Yet plastics contain traces of chemicals that are known to cause cancer, and that can be transferred from the plastic to the food (EA, 10/84).

*Cancer is the only major killing disease in the industrialized world whose rates have been sharply increasing. In the US, about 1 in 3 persons is getting cancer, and 1 in 4 dies from it (EA, Winter 1984). Industry which is very culpable with its pollution as a major contributor to cancer has been denying these trends. Hardly any societal money is going toward prevention, while billions are going toward efforts at treating and curing cancer.

*At one time, the US Environmental Protection Agency used to step in and regulate environmental hazards when the risk of cancer was 1 in a million. In a recent incident, it even refused to act when the risk of dying from cancer was 1 in a thousand (Science, 9/9/84).

*Medical scientists are entertaining the possibility that a larger proportion of the population may be getting senile earlier (in their faulty language, there may be an increase in Alzheimer's Disease). If this hypothesis is confirmed, then there is considerable likelihood that it may be the result of increased environmental pollution. One of the suspected culprits is aluminum. Aluminum used to be so difficult to process that hardly any aluminum products existed until the 20th century. But particularly since WW II, there has been a dramatic proliferation of aluminum products, including many that are used in the processing of food and that are even applied to the body, insofar as aluminum has been a major ingredient of anti-perspirants. The time may not be far off when we will have to discard all of our aluminum cooking and eating utensils.

*Many of us must eat crow. It was primarily fanatics and lunatics who opposed the fluoridation of the drinking water, but most of us sane people may now have to eat some crow--perhaps even fluoridated crow. Evidence is beginning to flow in from the mainstream of medical research that the dividing line between a healthy and a toxic level of fluoride intake is mighty thin. Generally, one part of fluoride per million of water is added in the US, but this may turn out to have been too much, perhaps by double. Furthermore, one is astonished to learn that the fluoridation of toothpaste rests on an extremely fragile research base that is now about 30 years old and has received hardly any credible cross-validation since. Furthermore, a family-sized tube of fluoridated toothpaste has enough fluoride to kill a small child. One problem is that in contrast to former times, there is now enough fluoride in various products that an adult may now ingest vastly more than what is good for the teeth and bones (Environmental Action, No. 2, 1984).

*Liberté, égalité, mortalité. According to a new theory, the reason women live on the average about 7.5 years longer than men may be due entirely to the higher smoking rate in men. This gap may be closing: because of increasing equality for women, more women have taken up smoking. Soon, they will be equally as dead as men (Science, 9/9/83).

*A controversy has broken out in response to the finding that when pregnant women smoke or drink alcohol, chances are relatively high that they are doing damage to their unborn baby. One proposal has been that pregnant women who smoke should be prosecuted for child abuse. Commentators have pointed out that insofar as the Supreme Court has declared that the unborn are not persons and can be killed on whim by their mothers, pregnant women cannot possibly be sued for child abuse if they smoke, since the unborn have no rights.

The city of New York passed a bill according to which bars, restaurants, and liquor stores had to put up a sign warning pregnant women that alcohol can damage the health of their unborn children. The American Civil Liberties Union and the National Organization of Women protested that this bill "protected the unborn at the expense of women's freedom," and may thus constitute an illegal sex discrimination. A spokesperson also said that a pregnant woman who was drinking soda with lime in a bar would end up being stared at and having nasty comments made about her (The Human (5), 1984).

*Female alcoholism has risen so much that fetal alcohol syndrome may now be the third ranking known cause of prenatal mental retardation (Canada's Mental Health, 6/83).

*Seventy foreign governments have approved the drug Depo-Provera as safe enough for broad use. The drug can be used as an injectable contraceptive, and to treat certain types of cancer. Yet an expert review panel appointed by the US Food and Drug Administration has managed to pick apart as "seriously flawed" virtually every research study which has cleared the drug as safe. Such studies used inappropriate or inadequate controls, failed to conduct long enough follow-ups, did not take into account a subject's particular risk level, and even failed to record data systematically. The report labeled this research "haphazard." In some cases, minor variations in the design would have put the study on a solid foundation. Despite this weak research base, at least 11 million women have used this product, some for 10 years or longer. The panel concluded that FDA should not sanction contraceptive uses of the drug--but one of its members recommended that it be approved for women who are mentally retarded or addicted to drugs! (Science, 23/11/84).

*It is now believed possible that women who become pregnant soon after going off oral contraceptives have a higher likelihood of bearing damaged offspring (Healthwise, 9/83).

*Ethylene oxide is a gas that is used to sterilize things such as instruments in medical settings. There is now evidence that even at low levels of exposure, it can cause leukemia, chromosomal changes and spontaneous abortions. One group that is therefore particularly at risk is nurses and similar personnel that sterilize medical instruments (Science, 25/1/85).

*In the US, there are approximately 300,000 non-prescription drugs that can be bought across the counter. Among them, these contain actually fewer than 1000 ingredients. Of these, only 71% have proven efficacy for their intended uses, and 32% lack sufficient evidence of their safety. Some products contain drugs that are believed by some authorities to be not only ineffective but also dangerous, such as Solarcaine. An organization that has been trying to do something about this is Public Citizen Inc., one of the arms of the Ralph Nader conglomerate.

*Researchers now believe that it may take as little as a single exposure to amphetamine drugs in order to produce permanent changes in some brain cells, with the nature of these changes still being poorly understood. One of the effects may be "reversed tolerance" or "behavioral sensitization," which means that each subsequent dose of amphetamine may produce greater and greater behavioral effects. This would be the reverse action of most psycho-active drugs which require successively higher doses to induce the same behavioral results.

Another possibility now being considered is that amphetamines increase the likelihood that a person will develop symptoms of Parkinson's disease and paranoid schizophrenia. In fact, clinicians have begun to speak of an "amphetamine psychosis" which is almost impossible to distinguish from paranoid schizophrenia (APA Monitor, 3/84, p. 16).

All these findings are frightening when one considers that amphetamines have been used on hundreds of thousands of children in order to control their home or classroom behavior, vast numbers of obese people have used them to try to control their appetites, and many people have used them to stay awake, such as Air Force pilots and truck drivers.

*A St. Louis drug firm (O'Neal, Jones & Feldman) introduced a new intravenous vitamin E supplement for premature babies. Presumably on the assumption that vitamin E was not a new drug, the firm failed to file papers for approval with the US Federal Drug Administration. At least 17 babies who were given the supplement at three hospitals became ill, and 12 died as a result of it. Even then, the drug firm still denied that it should have filed the papers, but it did recall the product (AP, in the Buffalo News, 13/4/84).

*Pain killers that are effective must be assumed to have some effect on nerve tissue. Accordingly, it is not too surprising that they should be able to affect the brain, especially in people who take very high doses of pain-killers for prolonged periods. Effects may include inability to concentrate, memory loss and personality changes. When these things occur in elderly people, they may be attributed to "senility" rather than to the drugs that the victims were taking (Healthwise, 6/83).

*As evidence of the ignorance and confusion that prevails in as highly a scientificated and regulated area as drugs, Healthwise (8/83) found that not only distributors but even manufacturers of zinc supplement tablets did not know how much zinc their tablets contained. Only when the periodical challenged the manufacturer did they put some of their people to work to conduct the research, and it took them 10 days to be able to tell how much zinc their different types of tablets or capsules contained.

*Just about every time a human being or an animal in the world is given an antibiotic, the resistance of microorganisms to the antibiotic is increased through a process of natural selection (i.e., evolution) in which the more resistant members of an organism family survive and procreate while the less resistant ones die. Amazingly, it was discovered in 1982 that animal and human bacteria share genetic material that codes for drug resistance, and furthermore, there is a distinct possibility that this genetic material can be transferred from one bacterium to another so that even bacteria that have not been exposed previously to an antibiotic may become more resistant to it.

All of this is extremely relevant to the disastrous agricultural practice of putting antibiotics into cattle feed on a routine basis as a growth promoter, beginning in the 1950s. In 1979, 70% of beef cattle and 90% of calves and swine had been reared on feed mixed with antibiotics. Even worse, these antibiotics have largely been those that are also used on humans (e.g., penicillin and tetracycline), rather than those developed and used only on animals, as many scientists had demanded for decades.

Research (Science, 24/2/84) has found that the salmonella organism (which can cause fatal food poisoning) has become increasingly resistive to the antibiotic drugs that have been used with people. Researchers are debating whether this is due to increased use of the anti-microbial drugs, or whether it is due to the very widespread routine use of antibacterial drugs in the feed of farm animals. The latter practice has been sharply criticized, and could indeed have disastrous effects over time--another example of the pursuit of short-term gains at the cost of long-time disasters. A major study by the US Food and Drug Administration concluded that one out of every four chickens is contaminated by bacteria, including salmonella. As a result, it estimated that $\frac{1}{2}$ of all cases of diarrhea in some areas are caused by the consumption of contaminated chicken. Food raised on manure, such as fresh mushrooms, is often similarly contaminated. Similar contamination can soon be expected in other meat products (Science, 16/11/84). One theory is that the microorganisms survive slaughter and get into the human food through which they infect humans, who in turn will then derive less benefit from antibiotics. Another theory is that humans are losing some of their resistance to certain organisms, much as many plants are becoming more susceptible to all sorts of pests because they are being weakened by environmental pollutants.

In September 1984, almost 10% of the Ontario Provincial police force showed symptoms of food poisoning after having done duty in providing security for the visit of Pope John Paul. Apparently, they contracted salmonella poisoning as a result of eating contaminated box lunches (possibly chicken). However, one sector of the population particularly at risk of salmonella infection are medically fragile people, such as the elderly, some handicapped people, and people in congregate institutional settings. There, salmonella has already had an upswing and begun to claim lives.

The problem is instructive from the perspective of the philosophy of science, in that it falls into that category of knowledge that may be in the so-called transempirical range. This means that a phenomenon is lawful, but may never be compellingly provable through formal research. This presents yet another problem: the drug industry and agribusiness have resisted the demands to terminate the use of antibiotic feeding of animals raised for food, stating that no negative impact has been proven. Of course, the negative impact is very likely never provable and at best only strongly inferable. Once more, this points out that decisions should be made on the basis of decision theory, and not only on the basis of proven fact.

It is possible that as a result of the recent salmonella breakouts, Congress will finally act, having previously been too afraid of the above lobbies to do so. In 1983, about \$270 million of antibiotics were fed to animals in the US!

The Idolatry of Medicine & Health Service Technologies

*Our society has made an idol out of science and technology, and one subdomain of this is modern medicine. People look to idols for "salvation," but idols characteristically end up controlling their human creators.

*Once reputable scientists began to claim that science could make humans immortal as well as eternally youthful--and all this yet in this generation--charlatans quickly capitalized upon this scientific fraud. There now exists a Life Extension Foundation with a very popular hot line, and a book on life extension sold a million copies in less than two years. A growing number of physicians have begun to practice longevity programs. Life extension seminars are also very popular. A large proportion of the fans of all this are also members of the retirement communities of southern California and Florida. Some high-income young professionals are spending up to \$150 a month on so-called life extension products. The authors of the book Life Extension have made 300 TV appearances and claim that soon, the only causes of death will be suicide, murder or accident (Newsweek, 26/3/84).

*Scientists now claim that they can store frozen embryos for "billions of years" (Edmonton Journal, 27/1/85), yet half of the frozen embryos thawed out after even relatively short periods are "unusable."

*A classic example of our society's preference for gadgetry and "hard" rather than social and "soft" solutions to problems has been the profound resistance of family planning agencies to natural family planning methods, such as the Billings method. Because the method requires affectional intimacy between couples, good communication, and a modest amount of self-control, it is almost anathema to a mentality that wants to turn a spigot, perform an operation, pop a pill, and so on. The method also involves the kind of knowledge that has been termed "fertility awareness," that teaches women to know when they are fertile during their menstrual cycles. Poor women in Third World countries have learned the Billings method faster and followed it more accurately than women in a number of First World countries, reportedly because the latter no longer listen to the language of their bodies even though they love them narcissistically (The Human, (6), 1984).

*The 3/3/85 CBS investigative news program, "60 Minutes," carried an interesting coverage of some of the perversions in the heart bypass operation field. It noted this type of operation has been performed for about 20 years on about 1 million people, and despite extravagant claims of its effectiveness, only 1 major effectiveness study has been conducted, and that relatively recently, and it indicated that the operation is only very selectively effective. Only about 11% of patients experienced prolongation as a result of the operation, and the question was raised whether one of its major benefits might not be for some people who experience less pain. Many patients were found to need repeated operations, and patients are commonly not told of the side effects of the operation, such as brain injury and loss of mental capacity. Conceivably, only 20% of the many people who had the operation should have had it. Observers noted that this type of operation is the 7th or 8th major type of operation that has become popular over the decades, each one being heralded as a major breakthrough, but subsequently discarded--not on the basis of evidence but because a new and more glamorous operation came along. In essence, knowledgeable observers stated that surgery simply expands so as to fully occupy all available surgeons, and that heart bypass operations benefit physicians more than they benefit anyone else.

Medicalization of Human Afflictions

*In essence problems of living have been medicalized in order to enlarge the power of medicine over human life, because people expect salvation from medicine, and in order to support our post-primary production economy that desperately needs to transact paid services in order to "keep the economy thriving."

*It is hard to believe, but Science itself (25/5/84) carried an article in which three behavioral and social scientist researchers claimed yet once more that there may be such a thing as a crime gene--merely because they thought they had found a higher crime rate among the biological parents of adopted children who had also committed crimes. The naiveté about genetics of genetically-inclined scientists is sometimes truly astonishing.

*In an effort to scientificate the so-called Fragile X Syndrome (that some people believe to cause autism, among other things), its fans have given it a most scientific-looking "formula name": Fra(X).

*The recent new Alzheimer cult has gone as far as to posit that the condition is genetic, and that the "Alzheimer's gene" may lie on chromosome 21 (Discover, 2/85).

*Just as we suspected, the latest research suggests that if people with Down Syndrome lead a very active life, they may not get so-called Alzheimer's Disease abnormally early.

*Jan and Tom Doody sent us a hilarious spoof on the tendency of so many biologically-oriented scientists to attribute social and behavioral problems to heredity. This spoof dealt with "the crippling menace of affluenza." There were pictures of the near-fatal form (a couple boozing in the back seat of a chauffeur-driven limousine), mild cases of it (a family living in a middle-class home), and people who are likely carriers, and thereby transmitters of affluenza but who do not show any symptoms themselves, i.e., a bunch of street bums. Voluntary sterilization--if necessary, involuntary--of all street bums might very readily reduce the incidence of affluenza by 50% over several score generations.

*In 1983, there was yet another report (this time from researchers at Harvard Medical School) in an endless list of such reports through the years that the 'real' defect underlying alcoholism (i.e., metabolic disorder) has been discovered. We advise considerable skeptic reserve.

But another medicalized approach to a mental problem is the attempt to treat sex offenders by injecting them once a week with Depo-Provera, ordinarily used as a contraceptive for women. This approach, combined with counseling, has been tried on men with a very diverse list of offenses ranging from exhibitionism through peeping-Tomism to rape, especially of children. Already, grand claims for success are being made, but we need to recall that the history of spectacular treatments has taught us that in order to uphold a claim of effectiveness, it would be necessary to conduct a series of studies which included rigorous controls (i.e., the drug given alone, the counseling given alone, the drug given with the counseling, and counseling given with the injection of a placebo under double blind conditions). Once success was attained, one would still have to do new cross-validation studies. Yet apparently without these rigorous approaches, already such spectacular successes are claimed that these involved practitioners no longer even keep outcome statistics because they consider the procedure no longer experimental.

*The pain-in-the-butt test for mental depression. In some sectors of human service, especially the mental business, all sorts of normative responses to the realities of life, and sometimes even non-normative craziness, gets interpreted as physical diseases. A good example of that is "depression." A researcher at the US National Institute of Mental Health now has devised a test for depression which is about as reductionistic as a test for high blood sugar. In this test, a tiny piece of skin is removed from a person's buttocks and placed in a nutrient solution. After several weeks of growth, tests are performed to determine the number of acetylcholine receptors. The greater the number, the greater the likelihood the person "has depression." If you weren't sure whether you "had depression," you may soon be able to find out. There is also a possibility that this test may eventually be commercially produced. (Source item furnished by John Morris)

Venereal Disease

*Newsweek (4/2/85) is one of the many media that have begun to draw attention to an incredible proliferation of a wide variety of venereal diseases. About 25 diseases are known to spread through sexual contact, and it is estimated that 25% of Americans between ages 15 - 55 will acquire at least one of these diseases in their life. 27,000 new cases are contracted every day. Many of them are incurable, some of them are lethal. Unknown to many people is that the most common venereal disease is also one of the least known ones, namely Chlamydia. Maybe the old-fashioned moral codes that promoted abstinence and monogamy had a point after all.

*Touching tenderness. Infertility among married American women in the most fertile age group has jumped 177% from only 1965 to 1982, and major causes are believed to be the consequences of venereal disease, some forms of contraception, and abortion. Women have been more apt to suffer genital infections as a result of sexual promiscuity even when the condition did not involve one of the classic venereal diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhea, and more recently herpes. Further, women have become more athletic, which keeps down their body fat, which in turn reduces the production of critical hormones. Relatedly, a liberated life is apparently more rather than less stressful than whatever the opposite of a liberated life is, and stress in women can suppress ovulation. Women executives reportedly often miss several consecutive menstrual periods (Time, 10/9/84). One response of couples has been one or the other form of artificial insemination. We found it hilarious that one clinic that does this requests that the husband be present talking to his wife while the wife is being inseminated--and not necessarily with his own semen.

*According to an article in the 21/2/85 Herald-Chronicle (Halifax, Nova Scotia), there are approximately 400,000 people in the US who have been diagnosed as having AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). The US is spending approximately \$500 million this year in research and treatment of affected persons, which is probably the most massive research campaign ever mounted in terms of (a) dollars spent per afflicted person, and (b) speed of response to a new disease. There are literally scores of diseases that strike that many or more people each year of whom we hear nothing, for whom there are no advocacy groups and for whom no extraordinary research is being undertaken. An example is toxic shock that can affect menstruating women. Not so with AIDS. As money in the hundreds of millions is beginning to flow for research on the condition, there have been parades that include hundreds of thousands of people demanding that "someone stop AIDS."

*There is no doubt about the fact that people respond to AIDS the way they once did to leprosy. Police and emergency personnel no longer want to give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, morticians have refused to handle the bodies of AIDS victims, their bodies are put in pouches that one might use for plague victims, there is a demand that funerals take place immediately rather than after 3 to 7 days, medical personnel are requesting to use what amounts to antiseptic body armor when examining AIDS victims, etc. In our history workshops, we teach compellingly how mentally afflicted people had largely inherited the stigma formerly attached first to lepers and then to victims of the plague. If all this keeps up, there is a reasonable likelihood that some of the stigma attached in the last few centuries to mentally handicapped people will be reduced because the public has found an alternate successor for its horror of dread contagious disease.

In New York City, Mayor Koch proclaimed the last week in June 1983, "Gay and Lesbian Pride Week"--and quickly left the city on a vacation.

*In July 1983, there were new reports of people catching AIDS by receiving transfusions of blood tainted with AIDS. Sixteen victims were people suffering from hemophilia, and the National Hemophilia Foundation demanded a recall of any blood product found to have come from an actual or suspected AIDS victim. However, there has been considerable opposition to this from a federal advisory committee consisting mostly of university medical people (Washington Post, 23/7/83).

*In New York, a man handed a bank teller a deposit slip that said "I have AIDS. I have less than 30 days to live. Give me all your money." The teller was so startled that instead of following standard operating procedures, she handed over the loot. Since the ploy worked so well, the robber tried it again right away at three more banks. Twice more it worked, but the fourth time, the teller showed the note to a colleague and both laughed out loud, whereupon the bandit grumbled, "It's no joke," and fled. The whole thing is so funny that it's almost worth the \$5000 that the bandit extracted from the three banks.

Miscellaneous Health News & Discoveries

*The human eye is completely formed by the 10th week of pregnancy, and thus is well ahead of many other organs and body parts (Science Digest, 10/83).

*Some day, it may be possible to perform pre-natal surgery for neural tube defects, such as spina bifida, but so far, such work has only been done with monkeys. If surgery is performed before a certain stage of gestation, nervous tissue is still so unspecialized and adaptive that injury to, and loss of, such tissue may not result in functional impairment.

*Researchers have developed a number of substances in the antibody category that bind only to certain specific types of brain cells. This opens the possibility of distinguishing among various types of brain cells and identifying certain ones, which has been very difficult to do in the past and which would be a tremendous boost to research, especially where the binding is accomplished in connection with color staining of the target type cell. One possibility would be the easier identification of diseases which destroy only certain types of brain cells while leaving matrix of other cells intact (Science, 2/3/84).

*Techniques are being developed which reveal whether DNA has been damaged by mutagenic or carcinogenic agents. For instance, certain patterns of damage may have elicited attempts at repair by the body, which leaves a tell-tale trace. These tell-tale signs have been named "adducts." In time, it may even be possible to identify what the level of risk of a particular person is, given evidence of previous exposure, and to even identify what the culprit agent was. If this line of research holds up, certain industries and government regulators will have a hard time continuing to deny the harm they are doing or allowing (Science, 7/12/84).

*An article in Science (25/5/84) reported that rats born to alcoholic mothers (i.e., mother rats) suffered severely from "lack of sexual dimorphism," i.e., the females were masculinized and the males were feminized.

*Every year, an estimated 700,000 Americans are treated for head injuries, and 100,000 die from head trauma. Close to another 100,000 suffer severe handicap as a result of head injury, and 10-20% of these are institutionalized for life. Even concussions that were once thought to be relatively harmless leave their sequaelae. Amazingly, the single biggest contribution to head injury appears to be motor vehicle accidents of young males between the ages of 16 and 24, and most of these occur weekends rather than as part of business, and drugs and alcohol play a large role.

*It had been thought that unconsciousness following a concussion results from physical trauma to the brain, but there is now at least some evidence to suggest that it is not the shaking of the brain that directly causes the unconsciousness, but the sudden release of certain chemicals in response to a sudden blow to the head (Science, 20/1/84).

*One can now obtain plastic cylinders called "vials of life" into which one inserts one's medical history, emergency telephone numbers and medical emergency information about oneself. One then puts the vial in the refrigerator and puts a large decal on the refrigerator that lets people know that the vial is inside. Should one then have a medical emergency, others can quickly find this information and use it. (Source information provided by Joe Osburn)

*For almost 100 years, physicians claimed that Lydia Pinkham's vegetable compound that was particularly popular among women was just one of many worthless tonics whose appeal lay mostly in its high alcohol content. However, in the 1940s, scientists found that the compound contained certain estrogen-like components, and others that had diuretic properties. All of these may in fact have diminished symptoms of what is now called the pre-menstrual syndrome, thus validating at least some of the claims that had been made for it (Smithsonian, 7/84).

*There are still about 12 million people in the world with the ancient dread disease of leprosy (detoxified as "Hansen's disease," though Hansen never had it), about 1/3 of these in India alone, and half of India is at risk of lepra infection.

*A 42-year old graduate student of mathematics at Cambridge University was stricken with a progressive neurological disease. By age 42, he was confined to a motorized wheelchair and totally dependent on his wife and a team of nurses. Even though his speech had become virtually unintelligible, his mind continued to soar as he formulated some ingenious theories in physics, doing all his calculations in his head (6/84 St. Anthony Messenger: provided by Pamela Behrens).

*Good news for people whose jaws have been wired shut: there is now a Fractured Jaw Cookbook out to help people make the most of this temporarily inconvenient situation.

*It's a gas. Scientists claim that they can prevent people who eat beans from having flatulence, by first irradiating the beans. This breaks down some of the complex sugars within them that usually cause the flatulence (Science 84, 5/84; source item supplied by Karl Williams).

Cratio Funeris in Laude Blatti

One often hears of, or meets, people of whom it is said that "everyone likes them" and "they have no enemies." Virtually all such people I have ever met were wretched creatures who wanted to be liked so much that they would compromise away any principle, especially when things got tough. Particularly in a world in moral confusion, and at a time when almost anything is up for grabs, how can one possibly be liked by everyone unless one is not taking stands on important issues?

However, there has been one exception to the above experience in my life, and that was Burton Blatt who died January 20th. On the one hand, he was indeed liked by virtually everyone and seemed to have no or few enemies, and on the other hand, he was quite capable and willing to take unequivocal and explicated stands on important issues, and to make tough and unpleasant decisions. How did he do it? Different people may have somewhat different answers to this. I think it has something to do with two relationship strategies he was able to extend to others. To all people he dealt with, he was able to extend an attentive ear. To most of them, he extended love and kindness. At the least, he extended a meticulous courtesy and even gentleness that avoided, or at least minimized, acrimony when conflict was unavoidable.

There are so many things one could say about Burton Blatt that only a few can be said here. Also, most people will be constrained in what they say about him because only those very, very closest to him knew the whole man. Burton literally did sometimes not let the left hand know what the right hand was doing, being involved in so many endeavors, efforts, relationships, and good deeds that sometimes those who thought they knew what he was up to would again and again be surprised when they learned of yet another thing he had been doing. How he did it all, maintained his positive way of living, and still seemed to have all sorts of time on his hands has always been a mystery to me.

I personally know that Burt continued to grow as a spiritual person in the last years of his life. He came to gain a deep insight into the interrelationships among different kinds of deathmaking and evil. For about a year prior to his death, he, myself and four others had been meeting regularly to discuss deathmaking in our society. Unlike many of our academic colleagues, Burton had become progressively more adamant in his rejection of abortion, and during the last few months of his life, he had begun to speak out boldly against it and other forms of deathmaking, knowing full well that on the point of abortion, many people might not forgive him, and that he was risking his tremendous reputation and credibility in the eyes of many. His passing away is, among other things, a terrible blow to opponents of deathmaking for whom Burt was about to become one of the leading spokespersons.

According to Jewish custom, Burton was buried the day after his death. It was one of the coldest days of the year, and his grave was on the side of a hill exposed to the wind. He was interred on the spot, the mourners letting the plain coffin into the ground and immediately covering it with earth, the old-fashioned way. But having known him as so vivacious only recently, and now seeing him being covered with such terribly cold earth only one day after his death sharply brought to mind the fragility of our human existence and the reality of our mortality. During the days and weeks that followed, one of the best terms I could find to describe my feelings about his death was that I felt orphaned.

Ultimately, Burt's character, personality, relationships and moral stances were intimately tied to his faith. He did not often invoke the name of God, perhaps from a certain Jewish awe of God, but he clearly had what a Christian hymn calls "a close walk with God."

R I P

Another person who died in early March was William Stringfellow. He was a lawyer and an Episcopalian layman who, though not well-known, became in the opinion of some people, including the TIPS editor, one of the leading theologians of our day. In TI retreats conducted from a Judeo-Christian perspective, his name was often mentioned, and his work was cited as having been profoundly influential in shaping the thinking of the TIPS editor. Readers may also recognize him as the person who had given sanctuary to Daniel Berrigan during the Vietnam War when they were fugitives from the law and were eventually tracked down and arrested at his home. Furthermore, he was the lawyer who defended the ordination of the first women to the Episcopal priesthood before an Episcopalian ecclesiastical court. The TIPS editor finished reading Stringfellow's latest book only hours before learning of his death.

The Deathmaking Scene

An interesting phenomenon is that, stirred by our Sanctity of Life workshops and related publications, people have been writing poetic pieces and songs on the topic. One such was recently sent to us by Patti Gesualdo. It covers the gamut from

"The killing starts with life unborn,
Your heinous acts, you would adorn"
to "When sight grows dim and hair turns gray
No questions asked, they're locked away"
and "You can bury remorse
In linguistic divorce
Of truth from connotation.
Hide your genocidal deeds
in verbal detoxification ."

Abortion

*In October 1984, 65 US physicians, led by Dr. Joseph Stanton of Tufts Medical School in Boston, signed a Sanctity of Life statement which affirmed that human life begins at conception and should be respected. Once more, good news is also bad news, in that there are tens of thousands of physicians, but only 65 signed this statement.

*In Europe, Denmark has the highest abortion rate, Italy being second with 405 abortions for every 1000 live births (The Interim, 2/85). According to Newsweek (14/1/85), three abortions are performed every minute in the US. That is one every 20 seconds. 13,000 abortions after the 20th week of gestation are performed each year in the US.

*The Canadian province of Prince Edward Island may be the area in which abortion has made less inroads than anywhere else in North America. In 1978, there were 60 abortions, but this dropped to 26 in 1982, and 0 since (The Interim, 2/85). Another step forward was taken in Saskatchewan where 2/3 of the abortions done at the University Hospital in Saskatoon involved women more than 12 weeks pregnant, and where no other hospitals were performing abortions that late. In January 1985, the hospital announced that it would no longer perform abortions after the 12th week of pregnancy (The Interim, 2/85).

*1985 will probably be the year of the large-scale introduction of an abortion pill through many countries of the world. We may see particularly widespread use thereof in China and India. This pill will prevent the implantation of a fertilized ovum. It thus should not be confused with a contraceptive, though it will be called that. (Source item submitted by Ray Lemay.)

*More and more, the news media are using the word "procedure" to refer both to abortion and to capital punishment by means of lethal injection. A good example is the extensive coverage of the abortion controversy in the 14/1/85 issue of Newsweek, where the word "procedure" was used repeatedly as a euphemism for abortion.

*Recent publicity about Dr. Josef Mengele, who sorted people arriving at Auschwitz into those who were to die right away and those who were to die later, has brought forth the disclosure that after fleeing to Argentina, he became for a while the leading abortionist in Buenos Aires (CP, in Edmonton Journal, 27/1/85).

*A physician in Edmonton promoted free-standing abortion clinics in preference to abortions being performed in hospitals because this would "decrease the stress on nursing staff asked to help with abortion patients. In a free-standing clinic, all...women requiring an abortion would be cared for only by compassionate, trained, caring staff who believe in a woman's right to choice in this issue" (Edmonton Sunday Sun, 27/1/85).

*An incredible juxtaposition took place in Ms. magazine of April 1984 where, in the midst of an article of how a woman decided to abort her child who was found by amniocentesis to have Down Syndrome, there was an ad for T-shirts with the pictures of whales on them, and the inscription "Save the Humans!"

*In Maryland, a severely retarded woman in an institution became pregnant, and her mother tried to get legal permission to authorize an abortion. Medical witnesses testified that tests indicated the unborn baby was perfectly normal, opened and closed ~~its~~ eyes, responded to pain and other stimuli, had normal body functions, and if born even then would have a good chance of surviving. Nonetheless, the US Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that granted the mother authority to have the daughter aborted, which is what happened.

*A New York State appellate court ruled that for a resident of a state facility who is unable to furnish an informed consent for an abortion, the parent can furnish such a consent (Quality of Care, Fall 84).

*A long litany of incidences of experiments on aborted fetuses (live and dead) was carried in The Interim of 1/85. Experiments on live aborted fetuses were conducted as early as in the 1960s in England (The Interim, 1/85).

*The TIPS editor has been struck by how brazenly and universally advocates for abortion claim that the unborn have never been considered human. This false claim is made so brazenly that even opponents of abortion have accepted it as a fact and are therefore trying to draw the line on some other issues.

*A government-appointed commission in the Australian state of Victoria recommended that the creation of embryos in vitro, i.e., by fertilization of ova with human sperm outside the womb, should be selectively legalized for research purposes. So-called "excess embryos" are discarded, i.e., killed, but the terminology used by the commission was that "storage of frozen embryos ceases."

*Planned Parenthood of Syracuse, where about 1500 abortions a year are being performed reportedly has flushed remains of the aborted babies down the sewer. One day their sewage pipes got blocked by the remains, so they installed wider pipes. A Utica physician reportedly threw the remains of aborted babies into a garbage dumpster, and when neighbors complained about the stench, he installed a garbage disposal that ground them up (Daily Orange, 31/1/85).

*There has been a dramatic decline in opposition to abortion among Catholics, not only the laity, but also people in religious orders. In 1984, 97 Catholics, most of them in orders, and many in prominent positions (including university teaching and recruitment for their orders) signed a statement that clearly implied that abortion was a moral option for Catholics. Further, in a dramatic reversal of ethical standards of the early Christian church that forbade benefitting from forbidden practices, the Catholic archdiocese in Toronto made it permissible in 1984 for Catholics to receive a measles vaccine developed from the lung tissue of an aborted fetus. According to The Interim (1/85), research on aborted babies has even been conducted at Notre Dame University in Indiana, and some theologians rationalize the research on the grounds that the babies were already dead when the research was conducted.

*The National Coalition of American Nuns said that Catholic women can be simultaneously pro-choice and pro-life. Among other things, it pointed to history as showing that it is women who preserve and nurture life while "it is men who declare wars and who, far more than women, desert their children," and "we reject the attitude which denies personhood to the woman and bestows it on the fetus." This is the kind of irrational men-hating rhetoric one expects to come from the extreme wing of feminism that almost seems to promote abortion as a way of punishing men.

*According to one survey, three of every five US Catholic theologians give at least partial support to abortion, and more so if they are women or members of the laity (NCR, 15/2/85).

*The heavily eugenic nature of the current abortion movement was underlined by a 1984 survey of women who were leaders in the abortion movement. They were found to be middle-aged, educated, married to a professional and employed, with two children and a family income of \$50,000. In contrast, people who are getting abortions are predominantly younger, less skilled, less educated and with a less stable family situation. Thus, we are seeing the privileged advocating for a reduction in reproduction by the less privileged.

*The premier abortionist of Canada is Henry Morgentaler who once was an unwanted human being in the Auschwitz concentration camp. He has described his own survival as "celebration of life"--but he has been involved in 20,000 abortions. As a trial in Toronto revealed, Morgentaler and his partner have owned an abortion company, and at at least one of their clinics, abortions were scheduled at a rate of 14 a day, sometimes one every 15 minutes. The aborting physician received \$75 per abortion, Morgentaler received \$50 for consultation, and \$175 went to his holding company. At an average 14 abortions a day, the physician, working only part-time, would be earning \$5250 per week, and Morgentaler \$3500 for doing virtually nothing--even when out of town. Annually, this amounts to \$263,500 for the physician, \$175,000 for Morgentaler, and his holding company would receive \$547,500 after paying its personnel! (The Interim, 1/85).

It is estimated that there are 100,000 abortions a year in Canada, 60,000 of them in hospitals (The Interim, 1/85, p. 2).

*A DC physician, Dr. Vuitch, was one of the first ones to win an important pro-abortion legal victory, viz., in 1971. In 1984, he had to close his clinic because it had long been in violation of all sorts of health codes, there had been deaths (of mothers) during abortions, and a number of patients had won malpractice suits. The issue is relevant because of the pro-abortion argument that legal abortions eliminate abortion malpractice and risk to mothers.

*A great many people, including those people opposed to abortion, are up in arms about the bombing of abortion clinics. Yet hardly anywhere in this uproar have people pointed out that what has been at issue here, so far, is only the destruction of property and not violence against lives. We disapprove of equating destruction of property with the concept of social violence, by which we would ordinarily mean (physical) violence against people. One only needs to consider that if someone had blown up a bridge in Germany that would have prevented trains from taking Jews to Auschwitz for extermination, almost everyone opposed to the bombing of abortion clinics would have applauded. Thus, one of the dynamics at work here may very well be the idolatrous valuation of property in our society, and its equation with life, or even exaltation above it.

*According to the Planned Parenthood agency in Syracuse, such agencies, if they are receiving federal grants, must apprise all pregnant women clients of their options to have an abortion.

Infanticide

*How intimately abortion is tied to infanticide became very apparent in the 1984 US Congress when efforts were made to pass some kind of legislation that would discourage infanticide of handicapped newborns. Those who voted against such a measure were largely the very same people who had consistently supported a so-called pro-choice legislative stance on abortion. One of the many things this underlines is that the abortion argument does not really hinge on the issue of when human life begins, but when people are willing to grant citizenship status to a person or, as some would put it, "personhood." That this issue applies also to the other end of the life continuum was further underlined by the argument of a Supreme Court judge in Nassau County, New York State, that a comatose man with a terminal illness had "no more claim to personhood than a fetus" (NCR, 6/4/84).

*On the Public Broadcast Service television of 8/1/85, "Frontline" carried a program addressing the so-called Baby Doe issue. The program was rather blatantly pro-"euthanasia." For instance, the commentators referred to Right-to-Life advocates as "right-to-lifers"; they repeatedly made reference to the high costs of taking care of the damaged infants; they repeatedly implied that federal regulations require that the lives of babies should be "saved at all costs"; they described the future lives of handicapped infants as "bleak"; they implied that government intervention, as by means of regulations, were a new thing, and that previously, physicians and parents could do as they pleased; they asked "Does anyone have the right to make that judgment?" by which they meant the judgment to treat the child rather than not treat the child; and they referred to the federal Baby Doe rules as "rigid". Throughout the program, both the commentators, others, parents and experts emphasized the "quality of life" argument, and when reference was made to the new 1984 federal law that transferred responsibility for these cases to state child protection agencies, it mourned that the law "eliminated the quality of life criterion." The program carried a number of family and case vignettes. One father of a damaged child referred to his baby as "terminally deformed." A mother was sympathetically presented who said about her handicapped newborn, "What does the world need another retarded child for?" Yet the program

did reveal that even though the child had been 11 weeks premature and had a "brain bleed," the parental desire for the child's death was not carried out and the child amazed everyone by turning out not to be retarded and to have only mild cerebral palsy, underlining what any sophisticated person should know, namely that there is only moderate correlation between early brain damage and later functional impairment. This was borne out by a case where one newborn child with spina bifida and hydrocephaly was shown by x-ray to have hardly any brain, and a neurosurgeon proclaimed that she had "no prognosis at all," but she turned out to be developing amazingly well. Another positive vignette showed a couple providing very loving foster care to four profoundly handicapped children, including one blind and deaf retarded child that the parents had given up as too much for them, at \$1000 a month each. The program concluded with a horror show of scenes of New York State institutions, with a narrator asking, "Must life be saved if only for this?" This is of course an old strategy: brutalize the unwanted, and then claim that they would be better off dead than brutalized.

*The presidents of the American Pediatric Association, the Society for Pediatric Research, and the Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairmen argued in Science (1984, 225, p. 980) that life and death decisions on handicapped infants should be made "case by case." This type of argument sounds very attractive to a lot of people who do not recognize that it is a mechanism for spreading moral confusion and chaos, for denying that there are overarching rules or principles, and for substituting a rule of personal whimsy for a rule of principle--not even to mention a rule of law.

*As we have reported before, after their failure to be able to use the Rehabilitation Act to protect the lives of handicapped infants, pro-life forces succeeded in passing an amendment to federal laws that laid the responsibility to protect such infants on state protective service agencies. We mentioned before that contrary to the euphoria of pro-life advocates, we do not believe that this measure can be expected to solve the problem. In this connection, we should note that the regulations of the act define child abuse as "the withholding of medically indicated treatment (including nutrition, hydration, and medication)." In other words, if no such "treatment" was "deemed necessary" by physicians, and received even modest support from other physicians, then no child abuse has taken place. If states fail to comply, they risk losing federal subsidies for their other child abuse programs, but the federal agencies that would make such a decision are known to be highly susceptible to political pressures, as via the congressional representatives of the states, and they may thus not even be able to exercise this authority. There are a number of other potential weak spots in the bill or its regulations that could be exploited in the service of deathmaking.

One possibility to be envisioned is that infanticide may decline or at least not increase for a short period of time, perhaps for the duration of President Reagan's second term, and then resume its growth rate, especially if a less conservative government is elected.

Miscellaneous Other Deathmaking

*Forty years ago, in April 1945, German resistance collapsed on all fronts, and on the 8th of May, Germany surrendered. All sorts of observances are being planned of the events associated with this episode, including many commemorations of the end of the Holocaust. This anniversary also brings back many memories to the TIPS editor who, at the age of 10, resided in a locale which briefly was the front line and who saw the front roll over it. As TIPS readers may have noted, one of our concerns is that we do not now act toward the new holocaust (Holocaust II?) in our society the way both Germany and the world at large did at the beginning of

Holocaust I in Europe. It is imperative that we not merely remember Holocaust I as seen retrospectively in 1945 and later, but that we see it as seen before its outbreak in 1941, before the relocation of the Jews in 1938. We must remember how it was not recognized by most people--not even by most of its victims--even after its full-fledged onset.

*Contemplate the following statement: "A creation of nature, apparently completely similar biologically to the human with hands, feet, and a sort of brain, with eyes and mouth, which is, however, completely different, a horrible creature who is only an attempt at being human...". This kind of statement was often made throughout antiquity and until about 1900 in reference to "monsters," "wildmen," "changelings," and certain primates such as orangutans. It is made today in reference to severely impaired infants and occasionally to people who had a health calamity and are now comatose or on life supports. In fact, the above statement was issued by the main office of the Nazi SS (Hofer, 1957, p. 280-281) in reference to--non-Aryans. Aryans were the only true humans; non-Aryans were subhuman, ranging between Aryan humans and chimpanzees. The Jews were closer to the chimpanzees than the Slavs, etc., all of which goes to prove that each generation of each society has its "deathmakeable" members, and each merely substitutes into a universal human algorithm its own definition of who is non-human and therefore deathmakeable.

*A Jew who worked in the ghetto at Lodz in Poland told how they were put to work sorting clothes and shoes that were delivered to them by the truck-load day after day. Often, the clothes were bloody. Yet despite all this, he said "I never knew where the clothes came from. We couldn't figure it out," even though "sometimes, we would find notes in the clothing saying 'We are all being killed.'" All of this shows how easy it is to avoid the truth if one has a mind that does not easily deal with unpleasant realities (Edmonton Journal, 27/1/85).

*Lives devoid of value. In the 6/83 TIPS issue, we mentioned that the state of Israel has assumed the identity of a Nazi power of our days. This we concluded with great agony, and commented on it again in the 8/83 issue. This development is highly relevant to people in human services because it reveals a universal dynamic of oppression which is very much a part of human services as well. This dynamic is that all of us have the capacity for great devaluation and violence within us, and that it is often only circumstances which determine whether we are oppressors or victims. If we learned our lesson, we would bend over backward to try to avoid being oppressors, but this is not a lesson learned easily or by many, and has apparently not been learned by any of the powers and forces that experienced World War II.

One of the facts about the Holocaust is that it evolved out of the killing of handicapped people. It is because people did not stop the killing of the handicapped that commenced in 1939 that the idea of genocide, and particularly genocide of people whose lives were considered "devoid of value," gathered enough momentum so that it was extended to the Jews, among other groups (some authorities claim that proportionately, more Gypsies were killed than Jews). Yet today, we can witness the phenomenon of a Jewish physician in Edmonton administering a fatal morphine dose to a 15-hour old infant that had suffered brain damage from lack of oxygen before or during birth. This killing even took place before it was clear how much damage the child had suffered or how the child was recovering. When an investigation was ordered, the physician fled to Israel where he is now permitted, apparently without censure, to practice medicine. At a press interview in Israel, he declared that infanticide was "an accepted medical practice in Canada." This is probably true, as it is in the US, and it seems underlined by the comment of a representative of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, who called the physician's act of infanticide as "lacking malice," and being "euthanasia with compassion," which are exactly the very same rationales that were invoked by the eugenicists and later the Nazis in killing 300,000 handicapped people before they started killing Jews, Gypsies, and others.

All this then raises the question whether the Jewish state now approves of the killing of handicapped people because they are of low or no value, or because it is considered meritorious to put them out of their misery. One thing after another is happening that leads us to ask how the Jewish state is different from the Nazi one--not the Nazi state of 1943 or 1945, but the Nazi state of between 1935 and 1939. Furthermore, will we look upon phenomena such as these as isolated and perhaps even meaningless events, or will we perceive them for what they are: patterns which reveal universals in human identity and behavior, as well as portents of the future?

*Over the Christmas weekend of 1982, 20 people froze to death in Atlanta alone (Sojourners, 1/85).

*One bitter cold night of January 1985, over 19,000 homeless people sought refuge in New York City shelters, which is the most since the Depression. Nor did this number comprise all the homeless, since many did not seek shelter.

*According to a state-wide poll in California in 1983, 95% of the population approved of active euthanasia. Apparently, physicians in the Netherlands may administer a lethal drug to a dying person who requests it. The practice is not based on legislation but on a Dutch Supreme Court decision of November 1984. In West Germany, suicide assistance is no longer a criminal offense, and a physician may advise a patient about suicide methods and furnish the means. However, some physicians have gone further and actually administer lethal medication (San Francisco Chronicle, 15/2/85; source item supplied by Sandra Meucci).

*In February, the TIPS editor and Susan Thomas conducted a Social Role Valorization workshop in St. John, New Brunswick. The event was reported in an article headlined "Normalization Guru Packs Hospital Hall," and that was continued on the obituary page of the local newspaper.

*One thing most people have not well understood is that when right wing governments slaughter their peasants, then they soon run out of food and will have to go to food-exporting countries to beg for food. This is exactly what has been happening in El Salvador where the US now supports the government with about \$330 million a year, a good portion of it in food. Those who kill their peasants should either learn to till the soil themselves or to go hungry.

Upcoming Workshops & Conferences

*There will be a "Faith and Sharing" retreat animated by Jean Vanier, August 5-10, 1985 at Rockhurst College, Kansas City, Missouri. US \$140. For flyers or more information, write or call Norma Schlick, 920 Summit Street, Lenexa, KS 66215; 913/888-3043.

Employment Exchange

We have previously announced in TIPS that Steve Tullman, a long-time friend of the TI, directs a community residential program for mentally retarded people in Louisville, KY, and is always on the look-out for committed workers who want to do some good work and be supported in doing so. He has a definite staff opening at present. For specific information, contact him at Community Living, 1347 South 3rd Street, Louisville, KY 40208, 502/637-6545. People who are looking for a positive service "home," and who have a calling to residential service with the handicapped, will hardly find a more supportive director.

Resources

*There is a new association with its own journal, called Alternative Living Managers' Association, headquartered in Suite 100, 1642 North Winchester Avenue, Chicago, IL 60622. However, the organization looks somewhat imperial and faddish to us, with its Spring '84 newsletter prominently endorsing "canine companions" and emphasizing other things that have to do with being successful within the imperial human service context.

*Expanding Horizons is a literary journal started in 1977 that features the prose and poetry writings of older people, and that is aimed primarily at older people. Many of the contributions have to do with reminiscences, the experiences of the elderly, protests against such things as devaluation and nursing homes, etc. For reasons which will be much more intelligible to TIPS subscribers than to others, the magazine is printed by the handicapped people served by a United Cerebral Palsy chapter. It comes out twice a year, and subscribers are requested to contribute at least \$6 per year. One of its logos is a crossed-out rocking chair. Some of the material is good in a down-to-earth way. The Summer 1984 issue featured a story about a man who was engaged for 33 years, waiting for his aged mother to die--but he died first at age 50 in the arms of his mother.

*Not nodding this time! Rehab. Literature (No. 1, 1984) reported that the National Organization on Disability (NOD) has begun to distribute a series of posters that emphasize the achievements of handicapped people. One of these posters shows a paralyzed truck driver hoisting himself from his wheelchair into his giant tractor trailer cab--which he drives as owner and operator.

*People who seek out a psychotherapist often spend many sessions and a great deal of money before they realize that the therapist is not the right one for them. This is particularly a problem in Washington, DC which has more shrinks and more crazy people than perhaps any other place in the world. A woman has now begun to make half-hour videotape interviews of a good number of psychotherapists in which the therapists are asked all kinds of questions about their techniques, anxiety, intimacy, love, sarcasm, sex therapy and so on. She then makes these interviews available to potential clients at \$50 per hour. Since psychotherapists in DC typically charge \$85 an hour, finding the right one can save a great deal of money. However, the medical and psychotherapeutic professions have been up in arms about this.

*We are told that the Physicians' Desk Reference is the third best selling non-fiction book. This book provides information about drugs on the commercial market, and its popularity thus says a great deal about our drug-crazed society. (Source item supplied by David Schwartz)

*There is a new travel guide for Europe and North America aimed at the handicapped traveler. For details, see the May/June 1984 issue of Rehabilitation Literature.

*Project Interdependence in California is a most unusual enterprise established in 1981. It is a quasi-public corporation in which the state of California participates with private parties in order to conduct projects which bring handicapped and non-handicapped youth together in a way that promotes integration and fosters positive attitudes while also promoting the development of these youth in various other ways. For instance, one of the projects has been a 6-day wilderness camp. It has also sponsored literary-artistic contests among high school students related to the goal of the project. There are not many projects in existence that primarily aim at attitude change and that have any kind of continuity. The project is headed by Dr. William Bronston, and interested parties may write to him at 830 K Street, Suite 221, Sacramento, CA 95814.

"HOUSEKEEPING ANNOUNCEMENTS"

TIPS Editorial Policy. TIPS comes out every other month, and contains articles, news, insights, reviews and viewpoints that relate to the interests and mission of the Training Institute. At the present, this mission has to do with reading "the signs of the times," and interpreting their meaning for human services. While TIPS is mostly concerned with phenomena and developments that have to do with human services, reading and telling the "signs of the times" necessitates that TIPS also address some of the larger issues which affect our society and the quality of life on earth, as well as the ways in which decisions are made in our society, because these higher-order phenomena will eventually express themselves in human services in various ways, including in human service values and funding. Usually, each TIPS issue will focus primarily on one specific theme. TIPS addresses relevant developments whenever and wherever they occur, so disclosures of adaptive or horrific developments promoted by a particular political party or government should not be taken as partisan political statements. We assume that subscribers are people who lead hard lives struggling against great odds, and are aware of many shortcomings in human services. Thus, we try to inject levity into TIPS so as to make subscribers' lives more bearable (or less unbearable, as the case may be), even if not deliriously joyful. In fact, the "signs of the times" are depressing, and thus some TIPS content is in need of occasional levitation. TIPS tries to report developments truthfully, but since it gets many items from other sources, it cannot be responsible for errors contained in original sources. Specific items from TIPS may be reproduced without permission as long as the full TIPS reference is cited/acknowledged, and as long as only small portions of a TIPS issue are so reproduced.

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Invitation to Submit Items for Publication. We invite submissions of any items suitable for TIPS. These may include "raw" clippings, "evidence," reviews of publications or human service "products," human service dreams (or nightmares), service vignettes, aphorisms or apothegms, relevant poetry, satires, or brief original articles. We particularly welcome items telling of positive developments since bad news is so frequent as to be the norm. Send only material you don't need back, because you won't get it back. If we don't goof, and if the submitter does not object, submissions that are used will be credited.

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