

Anthology of Right-to-Life Literature: Establishing the Canonical Maturity of a Vibrant Social Force

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ABSTRACT: This paper argues that there is an urgent need to anthologize major pro-life works which have shaped the right-to-life movement. After reviewing the methodology for locating and obtaining such works, the paper examines various problems in determining which works merit being included in such an anthology. The author establishes four criteria by which hundreds of pro-life works have been evaluated for inclusion: they must have been published since the 1960s, they must have been written or translated into English, the authors must be either life-affirming themselves or approach standard pro-life views on the essential three life issues, and the works must have obtained a level of commercial success such that their impact either on the pro-life community or on the larger culture is profound. The paper then discusses twenty-four works, highlighting their major contributions to the pro-life movement. The paper ends with future research and recommendations.

I. The Need for a Right-to-Life Anthology

Very much of the literature [...] is unknown to the general reading public and little known even to students of American literature. Before any meaningful debate can take place on conflicting critical approaches and interpretations and on analyses of distinctive forms, structures, images, and themes, the literature itself will have to become better known. All too often, and for far too long, it has been a spurned or neglected part of our literary heritage.¹

¹ Abraham Chapman, ed. *Black Voices: An Anthology of African-American Literature* (New York NY: NAL, 1968), p. 25.

These words of Abraham Chapman apply to the pro-life movement in 2013 as much as they did to the 1968 audience reading his introduction of an anthology of African-American literature.² After forty years, the common span of nearly two generations, the right-to-life movement can boast of a body of literature that covers all of the major genres and addresses significant aspects within the three life issues of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia. Whether argumentative, didactic, or literary, life-affirming authors have produced works not only for the sake of the political aims of the movement to restore legal protection for the first civil right, but also to re-affirm some of the foundational points of Western civilization, three of which are that human life is of inestimable value, that life is worth living, and that records of human experiences often qualify as great literature. This last purpose may be an attempt to satisfy the perception, as valid in the ancient world as it is in today's technologically advanced culture, that literature achieves a sense of permanence like that attained by other human activities such as art and music.

The ferment of the last forty years on the life issues matches and in many cases supersedes the enthusiasm of other social movements. For example, before it was hijacked by anti-life activists in the 1960s, the feminist movement could boast of a substantial history of life-affirming activism in the United States, calculating mid-nineteenth-century work by life-affirming women such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton as the beginning of a century-long effort to recognize civil rights for women. Latino activists could argue that the effort to secure rights for persons of Hispanic origin may have begun as soon as the European invasion of the Americas; if not pre-Columbus, then certainly the chronology begins when the United States secured the Mexican annexation by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, thus making

² The omitted words can now be revealed: "created by black American writers in the twentieth century" (p. 25). Life-affirming academics would, of course, universalize the category, not restrict it to African-American writers, and expand the chronology to include the twenty-first century.

the Latino rights movement as historically lengthy as the first-wave feminist movement. Efforts to secure civil rights for African Americans parallel the post-1848 efforts of Hispanic persons, although the basis for this movement in the Anglo world has its historical root in the eighteenth century. Finally, gay and lesbian activists have much in common with pro-life activists in terms of history, if not ideology; both movements began in the 1960s and are still functioning as champions of their respective causes today.

There are, however, vast differences that make other social movements pale in contrast to that of the pro-life movement. For example, feminist and gay activists could always point to a consistently activist academic, judicial, and media establishment to advocate their goals. Pro-life advocates, however, had to fight from the ground up. This populist aspect of pro-life activism permeates the literature of the last forty years. While the pro-life movement can count numerous scholars and key political figures in its ranks, many other works have been published by ordinary individuals who wanted to address some aspect of the pro-life movement.

Political challenges in reaching their goals aside, all other social movements have recognized the importance of anthologizing works by representatives within their communities, the anthologies forming the bases of academic study, so that younger generations would be able to understand and advocate the goals of those movements. For example, African Americans can point to several anthologies of their works, ranging from Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)³ to Abraham Chapman's *Black Voices: An Anthology of African-American Literature* (1968).⁴ Native American anthologists created two recent anthologies of note: Duane Niatum's *Carriers of the Dream Wheel* (1975)⁵ and Harper's *Anthology of 20th Century Native American*

³ W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches*, 3rd ed. (Chicago IL: A. C. McClurg, 1903).

⁴ Abraham Chapman, ed. *Black Voices: An Anthology of African-American Literature* (New York NY: NAL, 1968).

⁵ Duane Niatum, ed. *Carriers of the Dream Wheel: Contemporary Native American Poetry* (New York NY: Harper & Row, 1975).

Poetry (1988, an amplification of his earlier work).⁶ Similarly, Latino activists built on earlier anthologies of works by Hispanic authors, “Hispanic” being what was then the politically-correct term. The existence of these earlier anthologies has culminated in the premiere collection of Latino literature, *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature* (2011).⁷

Certainly, some anthologies of pro-life literature exist, but they focus on specific aspects of the movement. One thinks, for example, of *Death, Dying, and Euthanasia*, edited by Dennis Horan and David Mall (1980),⁸ whose focus is on the third life issue of euthanasia, or *Pro-Life Feminism: Different Voices*, edited by Gail Grenier Sweet (1985),⁹ whose feminist focus is evident in the title. There is, however, no compendium of major works in the movement to date.¹⁰ Relying on anti-life versions of right-to-life history or tepid or non-existent anti-life critical commentary of major works is obviously untenable. Moreover, given the culture’s lack of knowledge of significant trends in history and social movements, let alone the decreasing pool of common knowledge reported by scholars since the 1980s, the vast knowledge created by pro-life authors over the past four decades may be lost. Thus, it is time for pro-lifers to create their own anthology.

II. Problems in Researching Material for an Anthology

The first task of any anthologist is to locate works that would meet the general parameters for a collection of pro-life literature. The methodology for this study has been relatively simple, though

⁶ Duane Niatum, ed. *Harper’s Anthology of 20th Century Native American Poetry* (New York NY: Harper San Francisco, 1988).

⁷ *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature*, ed. Ilan Stavans (New York NY: W. W. Norton, 2011).

⁸ *Death, Dying, and Euthanasia*, ed. Dennis Horan and David Mall (Frederick MD: Univ. Publ. of America, 1980).

⁹ *Pro-Life Feminism: Different Voices*, ed. Gail Grenier Sweet (Toronto ON: Life Cycle Books, 1985).

¹⁰ Dolores Orr’s *Annotated Guide to Pro-Life Literature* (n.p.: n.pub., 1978) is an early effort to address this gap in the literature. WorldCat notes that this sixteen-page work was a “course paper prepared for Bibliography 250, University of California, Berkeley, Library School.”

time-consuming. Although email communications through various sources (e.g., LinkedIn discussion groups and special interest listservs, including University Faculty for Life's listserv) and calls to specialized libraries (such as the Dr. Joseph R. Stanton Human Life Issues Library and Resource Center, coordinated by the Sisters of Life) yielded few results, the bibliographic resources of WorldCat proved invaluable.¹¹ Discounting titles that used the keywords for other areas of academic and research analysis, searches for "abortion," "infanticide," and "euthanasia" titles produced in book format and written in English yielded an impressive 57,000 bibliographic records. Proceeding in chunks of one year at a time, these search results were sifted so that only titles produced by pro-life authors could be examined for original date of publication and number of holding libraries. An Excel file was created to collate these materials, following MLA format as closely as possible, and to record additional notes.¹²

The task of locating titles now concluded, determining which literary works merit inclusion in any anthology is the next challenging task. Does the researcher consider works that obtained commercial but not critical success as an indicator of anthology status? Should works that aim for deep philosophical perspectives yet low sales be included? Are works by those who do not support but whose contents argue for life-affirming principles meritorious? Does one rely on the impact that works have on the larger culture, or does one evaluate works that affected only the pro-life community? Does one include international works or those produced only within the American English-speaking world, North America, or the entire English-speaking world? An earlier anthologist's summary position regarding Native American

¹¹ WorldCat.org, the online public catalog which provides bibliographic data created by librarians at OCLC, Inc., has proven indispensable in determining the copyright or estimated date of publication for many publications, especially from the seventies when either ISBN or LC numbers were not regularly provided in many pro-life publications.

¹² A copy of this Excel file is available for other researchers. Please send your request to DrJeffKoloze@att.net.

literature helped resolve some of these questions. Niatum addresses the Americanizing perspective of anthology construction thus:

Because of the restrictions on space, there had to be the inevitable exclusions. I regret that I have not been able to include many other qualified poets. I also greatly regret my decision to limit the work to Native Americans north of the border with Mexico. But to have included writers from a broader geographic area would have created a different book.¹³

Since the right-to-life movement is an essentially American response to the attack on the first civil right, the North American bias in this effort to create a pro-life anthology will become evident.

Once these tactical questions are answered, another set of philosophical questions arises. Although anthologizing literature is a fascinating activity, unlike the work required for an encyclopedia, the steps required to anthologize material necessarily involve not only accessing primary works but also being able to critically evaluate those works for the express purpose of deciding whether they are essential in the formation of a canon.

Several problems have an impact on each portion of the previous sentence in this effort to create an anthology of pro-life works. Many pro-life titles have had subsequent editions, none more notoriously than the Willke's *Handbook on Abortion*.¹⁴ Often obtaining the original publications of titles that have undergone subsequent editions is difficult. Fortunately, access to online catalogs such as OhioLink¹⁵ and WorldCat can enable a researcher to obtain a first edition from libraries throughout the United States. First editions are the optimum standard, since any change in pro-life thought can be easily traced from an original source.

¹³ Niatum, p. xi.

¹⁴ [Dr. and Mrs.] J. C. [Jack and Barbara] Willke, *Handbook on Abortion* (Cincinnati OH: Hiltz, 1971).

¹⁵ OhioLink is a consortium of academic and public libraries throughout Ohio, an indispensable tool for a researcher who wishes to obtain materials quickly (usually within a week through interlibrary loan) held by a library in another part of the state.

On the matter of critically evaluating titles, the life-affirming subjectivity of the anthologist, necessarily a partisan in any movement (as feminist and Latino literature compilers have manifested) must be tempered by the need to be objective. Thus, while any anthologist appreciates the recommendations from colleagues and friends that their works “must” be included in any anthology, collegiality and friendship must surrender not only to publishing reality, but to a general consensus about the impact of any pro-life work.

The realities of publication lead to the final criterion of a work being essential in the formation of a canon. The force of a work can be evaluated in terms of financial or philosophical impact, often suggested by mere publication numbers (copies in print, copies sold, etc.). Using this standard, however, can squelch the claim that a work is essential. If it has no wide circulation, then how can its influence be substantial? Conversely, if a work has wide dissemination in the culture (whether stimulating more pro-life activity or stirring anti-life hostility), then its characterization as an essential item is secure. My aim has been to balance these competing factors by considering the profundity of the works, thus enabling me to include not only commercially successful titles, but also those which achieved popular success without necessarily meeting a simplistic (if not tawdry) “best seller” status. The criterion of commercial success can alter the discussion dramatically; not everything that is popular is profound, although this criterion could be useful in determining a work’s entertainment value. An equally troublesome criterion is a subset of popularity: the number of libraries owning a particular title. If this criterion is used, then a resulting list of the essential works would look radically different.

III. Criteria for the Anthology

Despite the combinations of responses to the above questions (many of which seem irreconcilable), it has been possible to derive a set of standards by which pro-life works can be evaluated for inclusion in this study. Some anthologists accept a work if it has achieved at

least one standard in a set of objective criteria,¹⁶ and in the case of criteria for graphic fiction, Ivan Brunetti affirms that his admittedly subjective “criteria were simple: these are comics that I savor and often revisit.”¹⁷

Although the number of criteria enumerated below may change as years progress, fine points of language are altered, and further pro-life research warrants, this effort towards anthologizing right-to-life works proceeds on the following four essential criteria:

(1) The works must have been produced within the time of the first contemporary assaults on the right to life (thus, for historical convenience, since the 1960s). As every educated person knows, attacks on life (whether unborn, newborn, or elderly) have an ancient history, whether it is abortion in ancient Egypt, infanticide in ancient Rome, or twentieth-century Nazi barbarism. The protection of human life, however, is the paramount human rights activity of this moment in history, this moment spanning only half a century.

(2) The works must have been written or translated into English. This criterion reflects the reality that anti-life activism and the pro-life response is a particularly American (i.e., United States) social movement and that English is the common language in which the life issues are argued, with accommodations for British spellings in some works.¹⁸

¹⁶ Adam Bradley and Andrew Dubois, the editors of *The Anthology of Rap* (New Haven CT: Yale Univ. Press, 2010), affirm that the lyrics included in their collection only “had to meet at least one” of three standards (p. xli).

¹⁷ To his credit, the balance of the introductory material suggests that a chronological ordering is the general frame for the collection, although such an ordering is not strictly followed if it interferes with the “visual and thematic connections between stories.” Ivan Brunetti, *An Anthology of Graphic Fiction, Cartoons, & True Stories* (New Haven CT: Yale Univ. Press, 2006), p. 10.

¹⁸ It is fortunate that the rise of the anti-life philosophy was restricted (at least in the early decades) to the United States, thus eliminating a challenge experienced by anthologists of Chinese literature like Cyril Birch, who wrote in *Anthology of Chinese Literature: From Early Times to the Fourteenth Century* (New York NY: Grove Press, 1965): “In our work of selection we have tried to avoid translations, whether or not previously published, which are marred either by lifeless English or by uninformed scholarship. We have regretfully jettisoned fine translations of decades ago whose English style has

(3) The authors must be either life-affirming themselves or approach standard pro-life views on the essential three life issues (abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia). That is, the authors' perspectives must either investigate or support respect for the unborn child and his or her mother, the handicapped newborn, and the elderly.

(4) The works must have obtained a level of commercial success such that their impact either on the pro-life community or on the larger culture is profound. While commercial success could be determined by publishing facts such as Amazon's "best sellers rank" feature, I have relied on the number of WorldCat holding libraries as the criterion to show the stability of the work as deemed by librarians who must constantly judge the merits of items in their collections.¹⁹

IV. Discussion of the Anthologized Works

Having considered some introductory matters about anthologies in general, having addressed some problems attendant on creating anthologies, and having determined criteria by which this sort of anthology is to be established, what remains are merely two questions about the ordering of content.

First, merely listing the essential works to be included in any pro-life anthology is first a question of organization. Is it possible to reduce the huge number of pro-life books to a master list of essentials? Certainly, while a list of "the top ten" most important books from the pro-life movement can be generated, doing so not only would achieve a salutary goal of advancing a quick marketing tool consistent with other top ten lists but would also exclude important elements of the literature. At the other extreme, recognizing every one of the hundreds, if not thousands, of pro-life books, editions, ebooks, and study materials published over the past forty years would amount to a comprehensive annotated bibliography, not an anthology highlighting the master works.

[sic] dated, and scholarly translations of pieces whose merits could be glimpsed only through a thick fog of footnotes" (p. xxv).

¹⁹ These numbers are conservative, since WorldCat records the libraries owning a title, not necessarily the number of branches within a public library system that will purchase individual copies.

Second, if merely listing items is accepted as the organizing principle of this anthology, then what subdivision should be followed? Should alphabetical listing (either by author or by title) control or should the listing follow chronological order? The rationale for chronological ordering seems self-evident, even though one can argue that another ordering scheme would have greater value in specific disciplines. For example, an ordering by genre would aid a researcher focusing on legal or religious works. Should the items be listed according to genre, and then, if this criterion is adopted, alphabetical or chronological listing within that genre? The simplest method to adopt for purposes of this paper is to consider the items chronologically, not only for ease of presentation, but also to establish the continuity of ideas generated from one major work to another.²⁰

All questions about anthology criteria and ordering now having been settled, what follows is a discussion of essential items which should be included in a pro-life anthology. The 56,944 possible entries in WorldCat have been reduced to an Excel file containing 319 bibliographic records, these titles being held in 60,580 holding libraries.²¹ From these statistics, I have isolated the following as essential works for any right-to-life anthology:

1. Noonan's *The Morality of Abortion: Legal and Historical Perspectives* (1970)
2. Willke's *Handbook on Abortion* (1971)
3. *Abortion and Social Justice* (1972)
4. Summerhill's *The Story of Birthright: The Alternative to Abortion* (1973)
5. Lamerton's *Care of the Dying* (1973)
6. Garton's *Who Broke the Baby?* (1979)

²⁰ One anthologist's commentary about chronological ordering applies to pro-life writers as much as it does to his effort to categorize Chinese literature. Stephen Owen writes: "This anthology is organized to represent the literary tradition, not as a static arrangement of 'monuments' in chronological order but as a family of texts that achieve their identity and distinctness in relation to one another. As in any interesting family, not all the voices sing in harmony." Stephen Owens, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911* (New York NY: W. W. Norton, 1996), p. xli.

²¹ Here and throughout, all numbers of WorldCat holding libraries are as of 9-30-13.

7. Nathanson's *Aborting America* (1979)
8. Schaeffer and Koop's *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (1979)
9. Death, Dying, and *Euthanasia* (1980)
10. Brennan's *The Abortion Holocaust: Today's Final Solution* (1983)
11. Nathanson's *The Abortion Papers: Inside the Abortion Mentality* (1983)
12. Reagan's *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation* (1984)
13. *The Silent Scream* (film 1984, book 1985)
14. Willke's *Slavery and Abortion: History Repeats* (1984)
15. *Pro-Life Feminism: Different Voices* (1985)
16. Scheidler's *Closed: 99 Ways to Stop Abortion* (1985)
17. Friend's *God's Children* (1987)
18. Percy's *The Thanatos Syndrome* (1987)
19. Reardon's *Aborted Women: Silent No More* (1987)
20. Terry's *Operation Rescue* (1988)
21. Andrews's *You Reject Them, You Reject Me: The Prison Letters of Joan Andrews* (1988)
22. Mosher's *A Mother's Ordeal: One Woman's Fight Against China's One-Child Policy* (1993)
23. *Bella* (2006, book 2008)
24. Abby Johnson's *Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of a Former Planned Parenthood Leader's Eye-Opening Journey Across the Life Line* (2010)

Other works will be interpolated in the discussion of these twenty-four essentials.

A. Five Foundational Works from the Early Seventies

Five works from the early seventies are foundational for right-to-life literature. While the focus of Noonan's *The Morality of Abortion: Legal and Historical Perspectives* (1970)²² is on legal aspects, *Abortion and Social Justice*, edited by Thomas W. Hilgers and Dennis J. Horan (1972),²³ Richard Lamerton's *Care of the Dying* (1973),²⁴ Louise Summerhill's *The Story of Birthright: The Alternative*

²² John Thomas Noonan, *The Morality of Abortion: Legal and Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1970).

²³ *Abortion and Social Justice*, ed. Thomas W. Hilgers and Dennis J. Horan (New York NY: Sheed & Ward, 1972).

²⁴ Richard Lamerton, *Care of the Dying* (Santa Ana CA: R. L. Sassone, 1973).

to *Abortion* (1973),²⁵ and the Willke's *Handbook on Abortion* deserve substantial commentary as major works in the early decade of the pro-life movement.

John T. Noonan's *The Morality of Abortion: Legal and Historical Perspectives* (1970) must be designated as the first foundational work from the seventies. While the work certainly qualifies as a commercial success (WorldCat notes that, nearly forty years after its original publication, 1,090 libraries own the title), the legal focus of the work is meant to forestall the overturning of protective legislation then current in the various states. Although legal activity on the life issues has greatly affected abortion law in the United States since 1970, Noonan's historical approach to the first life issue began a significant output of other studies aiming to correct the distortion of abortion history that anti-lifers generated – a key concern for Noonan, whose legal expertise knows the importance of history in legal precedents. Moreover, although his work has been amplified by sectarian and social commentators or superseded by other legal histories throughout the past four decades, the veracity of his work has never been challenged. Some later histories include John Connery's *Abortion: the Development of the Roman Catholic Perspective* (1977),²⁶ J. C. Willke's *Slavery and Abortion: History Repeats* (1984),²⁷ Marvin N. Olasky's *The Press and Abortion, 1838-1966* (1988),²⁸ George Grant's *Third Time Around: A History of the Pro-Life Movement from the First Century to the Present* (1991),²⁹ Marvin Olasky's *Abortion Rites:*

²⁵ Louise Summerhill, *The Story of Birthright: The Alternative to Abortion* (Kenosha WI: Prow Books, 1973).

²⁶ John Connery, *Abortion: the Development of the Roman Catholic Perspective* (Chicago IL: Loyola Univ. Press, 1977).

²⁷ J. C. Willke, *Slavery and Abortion: History Repeats* (Cincinnati OH: Hayes, 1984).

²⁸ Marvin N. Olasky, *The Press and Abortion, 1838-1966* (Hillsdale NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1988).

²⁹ George Grant, *Third Time Around: A History of the Pro-Life Movement from the First Century to the Present* (Brentwood TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1991).

A Social History of Abortion in America (1992),³⁰ Joseph W. Dellapenna's *Dispelling the Myths of Abortion History* (2005),³¹ Ian Robert Dowbiggin's *A Concise History of Euthanasia: Life, Death, God, and Medicine* (2005),³² Frederick N. Dyer's *The Physicians' Crusade Against Abortion* (2005),³³ and the most recent contribution to the historical genre, Justin Buckley Dyer's *Slavery, Abortion, and the Politics of Constitutional Meaning* (2013).³⁴

The second foundational work from the seventies, Jack and Barbara Willke's *Handbook on Abortion* (1971), has a substantial publishing history; WorldCat reports that the twenty-eight editions of this title are owned by 593 libraries. The success of the work can probably be attributed to the seminal ideas which the authors advanced as essential for pro-life theory, ideas which will be not only repeated in its numerous editions, but also found in subsequent pro-life literature.

The opening paragraph of the foreword, for example, comments on two staples of then-contemporary thought about right-to-lifers, incorrect nomenclature and anti-Catholic bias, encapsulated in one sentence: "those whose deep-felt convictions are pro-life," they write, "have been labeled 'anti' (abortion) and have been dismissed as traditional religionists and often, by inference, either Roman Catholic or influenced by that church's teaching."³⁵

The foreword indicates the essential reason for having published the book: media bias foreclosing any opportunity for pro-lifers "to counter this wave of propaganda" to liberalize abortion laws in the sixties and early seventies. Moreover, the book identifies three other

³⁰ Marvin N. Olasky, *Abortion Rites: A Social History of Abortion in America* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1992).

³¹ Joseph W. Dellapenna, *Dispelling the Myths of Abortion History* (Durham NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005).

³² Ian Robert Dowbiggin, *A Concise History of Euthanasia: Life, Death, God, and Medicine* (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

³³ Frederick N. Dyer, *The Physicians' Crusade Against Abortion* (Sagamore Beach MA: Science History Publications, 2005).

³⁴ Justin Buckley Dyer. *Slavery, Abortion, and the Politics of Constitutional Meaning* (New York NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2013).

³⁵ Willke, *Handbook*, p. 1.

elements that have endured through four decades: first, an ignorant public (“the average citizen [...] will demonstrate an almost total lack of factual knowledge about the subject”); second, support for some reasons to support legalizing abortion “stemming from the often false and misleading pro-abortion propaganda which has filled the public media”; and, finally, a brief mention of “swing voters” – an idea that would be more fully developed in sociological work by Ray Adamek and political commentators in the Reagan era.

Recognizing that “those committed to a pro-life philosophy have produced several excellent (and expensive) books,” the explicit publishing purpose of the *Handbook*, however, is to provide the movement with an educational tool that “is small, concise, and inexpensive enough to be useful, without sacrificing too much detail.” On these bases and on its success throughout the past forty years as an educational tool, it is thus proper to consider this work as the bible of the pro-life movement.

Abortion and Social Justice, edited by Thomas W. Hilgers and Dennis J. Horan (1972),³⁶ is the third foundational work from the early seventies. It is a significant effort to anthologize key essays for the early pro-life movement. It retains its influence in the movement, with 761 WorldCat holding libraries owning the title. George H. Williams, then chairman of Americans United for Life, collects these ideas in his foreword, “The Democratization of a Near Constant in History.” The title is a phrase that he cites from Noonan’s work mentioned above.

The first idea that Williams discusses is that a life-affirming stance can be argued without reference to religious beliefs. As the Willkes argued in their work, perhaps this was a tactic designed to prevent any charge that being against abortion and affirming the right-to-life of the unborn was essentially a Catholic position. The repetition of this idea was later justified, since, as all now know from Bernard Nathanson’s work (see below), anti-Catholic bigotry was a

³⁶ Although there is an Epilogue to the volume that is clearly written after the *Roe v. Wade* decision, this work must be considered a pre-*Roe* work since the copyright is expressly 1972. Moreover, the majority of the essays were all written to counter arguments that legalizing abortion would constitute good public policy.

crucial strategy of anti-life forces; if the reduction of all opposition to abortion could be labeled as a merely Catholic effort, then disenfranchising a significant number of elected officials and their constituents would further advance the anti-life cause by removing two millennia of Catholic argumentation from the debate. On this religious point, Williams writes:

Not a single essay or paper among the nineteen is theological or programmatically religious, although undoubtedly a religious conviction informs many of the writers thereof. The arguments against abortion as public policy can be cogently stated without resort to religious, ecclesiastical, or theological sanctions. And in a secular society, where state and church are constitutionally separated, it is entirely proper that we argue in the public domain against abortion in terms acceptable to humanists and theists alike.³⁷

Williams's second idea is that legalized abortion is not a "right [but] in fact a grave retrogression."³⁸ The third idea is perhaps the most important foundational principle of the entire pro-life movement. Elaborating John Noonan's idea that opposition to abortion is a "near constant in history," Williams writes:

This near constant, the opposition to abortion however defined, has been largely articulated by professional people. Today we are involved in the laicization of this insight of the religious community and in the democratization of this conviction [...]. What has been within the competence and concern of the professional elites as indeed a near constant in Western history is becoming in our time the concern of the laity in general, speaking from the point of the Church, with Catholic doctors and lawyers, for example, carrying the charge formerly in the custody of the episcopal magisterium; and, the concern of the people at large, banded together in voluntary associations, to exert influence upon legislatures, hospitals, and the media.³⁹

Williams mentions four other seemingly minor foundational ideas of the early pro-life movement that later would become significant factors. Focusing on the legal profession, which seemed most able to

³⁷ Williams, p. ix.

³⁸ Williams, p. ix.

³⁹ Williams, p. xiii.

assist the pro-life movement, he suggests a purpose of the anthology when he states: “To this end, we recognize that both law and education must complement each other, hence the stress in the collected essays of this volume.”⁴⁰ Casually mentioned is a second idea that Clardy will elaborate in her essay (that the Founding Fathers were “color-blind in the sense that they did not see the personhood of people of color”⁴¹). Williams then connects this episode of historical denial of African-American civil rights with those who “do not yet perceive the civil rights of the fetus, so much taken up are they by their understandable concern for the rights of women.” The third idea acknowledges the new field of scientific endeavor, fetology: “Yet genetics and fetology make so clear to us what for our forefathers could only be gropingly surmised.”⁴² Finally, while he acknowledges and (with the one word “alas”) bemoans that “much of the Protestant theological, ethical, ministerial, and organizational leadership has, alas, temporarily I judge, joined the other side,” Williams still expresses the hope – to be enunciated more clearly in Schaeffer and Koop’s *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (1979)⁴³ – that he does “not believe that among faithful Protestant Christians as distinguished from some of the more articulate clerical leadership there is any substantial shift in the inherited repugnance to abortion.”⁴⁴

Grouped into three main categories, essays by prominent activists consider the medical, legal, and social aspects of abortion. The essayists contribute not only their expertise obtained in the research of the issue, but also their perspectives from what may at times seem contradictory backgrounds. Thus, while Fred E. Mecklenburg is listed

⁴⁰ Williams, p. xiv.

⁴¹ Williams, p. xv.

⁴² Williams, pp. xv-xvi.

⁴³ Francis A. Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (Old Tappan NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1979).

⁴⁴ Williams, p. xvi. He may have been ahead of his time in mentioning another idea. “A reverence for life within the womb is ultimately one with a reverent sense of responsibility and accountability for our global environment in the ecological concern of our time” (p. xviii). Citing the ecology movement of the 1970s is an idea not enunciated in pro-life literature until decades later as a response to ecofeminist misuse of the idea as a basis for abortion.

as a member of the American Association of Planned Parenthood Physicians, his essay (“The Indications for Induced Abortion”) presents evidence against one of Planned Parenthood's highest goals, the permanent legalization of abortion. The collection introduces several important ideas to the abortion repertoire. Thomas W. Hilgers cites the “medical hazards” of legal abortion in his essay. Arthur J. Dyck analyzes the argument whether abortion is necessary to control over-population. Erma Clardy Craven discusses how abortion is used by some as a method of African-American (her term being “Black”) genocide. The book has an additional advantage of a glossary of medical terms, and contributors have provided ample references and footnotes – research components that show the progression from the Willke’s *Handbook* (where sources are given in-text in appositional and attributional expressions) to a more scholarly examination to be used by pro-life activists.

Finally, Williams offers an opinion that was probably universal in the late sixties and pre-*Roe* seventies. The optimism evident in “Happily, the tide seems to have begun to turn again in our favor” and “we dare now to express some confidence that the worst that we feared may not come to pass and that some of the worst developments – for example, in New York – can be rectified”⁴⁵ are painful to read, not only after millions of abortions have been performed, but also after it is evident that infanticide and euthanasia have even firmer grips on American life.

The fourth foundational work from the seventies is Louise Summerhill’s *The Story of Birthright: The Alternative to Abortion* (1973). Like other social activists who pioneered social service organizations, Louise Summerhill’s collaboration in the establishment of Birthright with other interested Canadian pro-life activists rivals Margaret Sanger’s creation of Planned Parenthood, an organization that began as a birth control promoter but that is known more for the abortion clinics that it controls. Like Sanger, whose biographical work traces the history of the organization that she founded (as well as

⁴⁵ Williams, p. xi.

justify its establishment),⁴⁶ Summerhill's *The Story of Birthright: The Alternative to Abortion* (1973)⁴⁷ is a judicious mix of biography and history. In fact, the biographical elements demonstrate that this genre has become worthy enough to match the argumentation of either the Willke's *Handbook* or the Hilgers and Horan anthology.

Summerhill would become famous with her work in helping women faced with untimely pregnancies. When Canadian society in the late 1960s was pressuring women into believing that abortion was the only choice available to them, Summerhill responded by establishing in 1968 the first pregnancy service in the world.⁴⁸ This service would have as its motto "It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born" – a clear repudiation of Margaret Sanger's proclamation in her 1938 autobiography that it is first right of child to be wanted.⁴⁹

What is more impressive about this work is the cumulative effect of various statements that testify not only to Summerhill's faith (the basis for her work in an arduous and unglamorous area of the pro-life movement) but also the pro-woman (if not feminist) approach of the philosophy of the organization that she founded. Summerhill's philosophy can be encapsulated in several tenets that should be memorable for future generations. "Clearly, as God's possessions,

⁴⁶ Margaret Sanger, *Margaret Sanger, an Autobiography* (New York NY: Norton, 1938).

⁴⁷ In an "Author's Update" found in the eighth printing of this work, Summerhill mentions that she wrote *The Story of Birthright* in 1972 (p. x). Since the copyright is 1973 in all original publications and electronic bibliographic records, I follow that date.

⁴⁸ Summerhill explained the history of the organization in a 1988 interview: "I founded Birthright in 1968 after working in a pro-life organization for three years, the Emergency Organization for the Defense of the Unborn. We were a small group, but we worked hard, wrote letters to MPs, collected 80,000 signatures on a petition across Canada, and presented a brief to the Committee of Health and Welfare in the fall of 1967." Summerhill, "Offer Greater Help for Mother, Child," *Catholic Register* (10 September 1988), unnumbered page.

⁴⁹ Sanger, p. 194.

children have a right to be born – a birthright”⁵⁰ ineluctably leads to an affirmation that “Women have always been capable of loving and giving to the point of heroic sacrifice, for sacrifice is an integral part of woman's existence. We women are the givers, the nurturers, of life, and no nation can rise above the level of its women.”⁵¹

Starting from these positions, the philosophy of Birthright is evident: “The essence of the Birthright service is love. We should not underestimate the power of love. We do not need professional training in order to listen, to understand, to love.”⁵² It is this love that culminates not in any educational effort presented to mothers coming to the organization, as would be the case in a Right-to-Life group, but in service: “When a girl calls Birthright she is reminded, gently, of these facts [of fetal development], if she seems set on abortion, and when she comes to our office, she may be shown pictures of the different stages of development of her baby, and, often this brings home to her that this is a little human being who has a right to live. (We do not show pictures of aborted babies).”⁵³ Two other statements combine to summarize the essential philosophy of the organization:

The fact is that we pledge complete secrecy to the girls and we cannot break this pledge for any reason or no matter how young the girl. This is of the greatest importance for the image of Birthright, as well as the protection of the girls, who always come first.... To uphold, at all times, that any pregnant girl or woman has the right to whatever help she may need to carry her child to term, and to foster respect for human life at all stages of development. This is the creed and philosophy of Birthright.⁵⁴

One of the two foundational works published in 1973, it is fitting that the fifth foundational work from the seventies, Richard Lamerton's *Care of the Dying* (1973) should be placed here, if only because the topic concerns end-of-life issues, thus completing the areas of concern to the pro-life movement. Moreover, with 493

⁵⁰ Summerhill, p. viii (italics in original).

⁵¹ Summerhill, p. ix.

⁵² Summerhill, p. 9.

⁵³ Summerhill, p. 32.

⁵⁴ Summerhill, pp. 65, 69.

holding libraries in WorldCat, *Care of the Dying* occupies as important a place in contemporary death studies as it did in early pro-life literature.

The purpose of the work is simply stated in the Introduction. Citing a correspondent who noted that “Dr. Lamerton suggests we use our pens to press for [techniques which would alleviate pain] rather than for euthanasia,” Lamerton’s life-affirming response is simple: “This book is the result of taking up the challenge.”⁵⁵ Chapter eight (“The Euthanasia Debate”) contains arguments so cogently expressed for euthanasia that the reader may think that he or she has stumbled on a pro-euthanasia tract. Lamerton, however, dismisses the reasons for euthanasia with a summary statement that “it is nonsense in my opinion”⁵⁶ and then proceeds to counter the arguments on legal, medical, social, and finally moral considerations.

The importance of this work cannot be underestimated. If pro-lifers thought that the right-to-life movement only concerned abortion, then this work by the British Lamerton made it clear to American audiences that attacks on human beings at the end of life needed as much attention as those who are at the beginning of life. This book can be credited with encouraging pro-lifers to argue for care of those with terminally-ill conditions while introducing new concepts to the pro-life vocabulary such as “extraordinary care,” “hospice,” “ordinary care,” and “palliative care” to counter anti-life agitation for euthanasia. The trend of Lamerton’s work continues with *Care for the Dying and the Bereaved*, edited by Ian Gentles (1982),⁵⁷ William F. May’s *Testing the Medical Covenant: Active Euthanasia and Health Care Reform* (1996),⁵⁸ and Rita Marker’s *Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide*

⁵⁵ Lamerton, p. 11.

⁵⁶ Lamerton, p. 93.

⁵⁷ Ian Gentles, ed., *Care for the Dying and the Bereaved* (Toronto ON: Anglican Book Centre, 1982).

⁵⁸ William F. May, *Testing the Medical Covenant: Active Euthanasia and Health Care Reform* (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996).

& *Health Care Decisions: Protecting Yourself and Your Family* (2006).⁵⁹

B. 1979, A Banner Year for Pro-Life Literature

Just as the above five titles were foundational for pro-life literature, 1979 saw the publication of three more works that ended the first full decade of pro-life activism with substantial contributions to the literature: Jean Staker Garton's *Who Broke the Baby?* (1979),⁶⁰ Bernard N. Nathanson's *Aborting America* (1979),⁶¹ and Francis A. Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop's *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (1979). Each of these titles is iconoclastic for several reasons.

Although Donald P. Shoemaker's *Abortion, the Bible, and the Christian* (1976)⁶² precedes her work by three years, Jean Staker Garton's *Who Broke the Baby?* (1979) is the first apologetic work written from a Christian denomination other than Catholicism that made traction in the pro-life publishing world. Its role as a harbinger of great things to come not only from Protestant Christianity but also later from the Evangelical community cannot be underestimated. Where activists on both sides of the abortion issue may have thought throughout the 1970s that abortion was a "Catholic issue," Garton's book testified to a refreshing perspective, that of Lutheran Christianity's strong opposition to abortion. Furthermore, Garton's work is perhaps the first in Protestantism devoted to a rhetorical analysis of anti-life slogans. As Summerhill used biography in her work, Garton writes:

The same catchy abortion slogans which I once employed continue to manipulate the feelings and thoughts of many others. The inaccurate ideas

⁵⁹ Rita Marker, *Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide & Health Care Decisions: Protecting Yourself and Your Family* (Steubenville OH: International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide, 2006).

⁶⁰ Jean Staker Garton, *Who Broke the Baby?* (Minneapolis MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1979).

⁶¹ Bernard N. Nathanson, with Richard N. Ostling, *Aborting America* (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1979).

⁶² Donald P. Shoemaker, *Abortion, the Bible, and the Christian* (Cincinnati OH: Hayes, 1976).

fostered by the abortion rhetoric escape the notice of the less critical. Language is an agent for change and when language lies, when words are warped and twisted perversely, they are eventually emptied of their true meaning.⁶³

That the work is owned by 345 WorldCat libraries further testifies to the book's historical and rhetorical value. Garton's rhetorical methodology continues in such works as *When Life and Choice Collide: Essays on Rhetoric and Abortion*, edited by David Mall (1994),⁶⁴ and William Brennan's *Dehumanizing the Vulnerable: When Word Games Take Lives* (1995).⁶⁵

With 894 holding libraries, Bernard Nathanson's *Aborting America* (1979) is an account of anti-life intrigue in the effort to legalize abortion that reads like a mystery novel gone horribly wrong, where the bad guys succeed in achieving their bigoted goal of subjugating an entire class of believers (Roman Catholics) so that others would be more likely to support legalized abortion. Nathanson's exposé of the political maneuvers of the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (NARAL) is not only a biographical account of how the author became involved in abortion procedures and politics but also a scathing account of NARAL's anti-Catholic bigotry as a tactical weapon in the fight to legalize abortion.

Common Internet searches for reaction to the book's claims about the deception and bigotry used to legalize abortion yield many items from pro-life quarters but little from anti-life ones. It is tempting to say that the silence is deafening, but such a pun should be saved for another Nathanson effort to expose abortion, the film *The Silent Scream*, which debuted in 1984. Sufficient now is the fact that

⁶³ Garton, unnumbered pages.

⁶⁴ *When Life and Choice Collide: Essays on Rhetoric and Abortion*, Vol. 1: *To Set the Dawn Free*, ed. David Mall (Libertyville IL: Kairos Books, 1994).

⁶⁵ William Brennan, *Dehumanizing the Vulnerable: When Word Games Take Lives* (Chicago IL: Loyola Univ. Press, 1995).

NARAL's website has no reference to someone who had been one of its premier activists.⁶⁶

When Francis A. Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop's *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (1979) was first published, few could have known the effect that it would have on the American Evangelical Christian community. That 662 WorldCat libraries own the title may be a testament to its publishing power. The effect on the Evangelical community, moreover, seems to be permanent, as evidenced by R. Albert Mohler's epideictic on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the book's publication:

Whatever Happened to the Human Race? awakened American evangelicals to the anti-human technologies and ideologies that then threatened human dignity. Most urgently, the project put abortion unquestionably on the front burner of evangelical concern. The tenor of the times is seen in the fact that Schaeffer and Koop had to argue to evangelicals in the late 1970s that abortion was not just a "Catholic" issue. They taught many evangelicals a new and urgently needed vocabulary about embryo ethics, euthanasia, and infanticide. They knew they were running out of time.⁶⁷

C. Ferment of the Eighties

Every year in the decade of the eighties saw the publication of, if not all major works, significant material that has informed the vocabulary of the pro-life movement and, in one important case, altered the perception of a common phrase ("silent scream").⁶⁸ Two

⁶⁶ Lawrence Lader, Nathanson's associate in the pre-legalization years, appears in two documents available on the NARAL website. Nathanson, however, who played such a crucial role in the formation of the organization, is absent (search conducted 23 September 2013).

⁶⁷ R. Albert Mohler, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* 25th Anniversary edition, AlbertMohler.com, 26 Jan. 2004, accessed 30 Sept. 2013.

⁶⁸ As of September 2013, the publication of titles in the eighties reached 31% of the total number of 321 works catalogued in the comprehensive listing. While publication of pro-life titles in the first decade of the twenty-first century reached a percentage of 17% of the total, further research may increase that number slightly.

works – *Reagan's Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation* (1984)⁶⁹ and the 1984 film and 1985 monograph of *The Silent Scream*⁷⁰ – tower above the others. Four works develop the historical bases of the pro-life movement (for example, connecting slavery and abortion). Two works concern post-abortion syndrome and the feminist movement. Two works address activism regarding abortion clinics. Finally, three other works use fiction and epistolary writing as the means to address the pro-life issues.⁷¹

The Two Most Significant Works of the Decade

Whether authored by a White House speechwriter or by the president himself, Ronald Reagan's brief essay contained within the volume *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation* (1984) stands as a political milestone in right-to-life literature as the first full-length work by a sitting U.S. president that dared to discuss abortion as a national tragedy. The publication of the essay could have backfired against Reagan. The year 1984 was an election year, and, popularity aside, there was no guarantee that proclaiming his pro-life beliefs would endear him to a population recovering from the 1982 recession. That the essay proper is only twenty-three pages could diminish its importance were it not for these facts. Moreover, that 1,080 WorldCat

⁶⁹ Ronald Reagan, *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation* (Nashville TN: Thomas Nelson, 1984).

⁷⁰ *The Silent Scream: The Complete Text of the Documentary Film with an Authoritative Response to the Critics*, edited by Donald S. Smith and Don Tanner (Anaheim CA: American Portrait Films Books, 1985).

⁷¹ Works on infanticide were especially pronounced in the early eighties, including Effie A. Quay's *And Now Infanticide* (Thaxton VA: Sun Life, 1980), Joseph R. Stanton's *Infanticide* (Chicago IL: Americans United for Life, 1981), Dennis J. Horan and Melinda Delahoyde's *Infanticide and the Handicapped Newborn* (Provo UT: Brigham Young Univ. Press, 1982), James Manney and John C. Blattner's *Death in the Nursery: The Secret Crime of Infanticide* (Ann Arbor MI: Servant Books, 1984), and Melinda Delahoyde's *Fighting for Life: Defending the Newborn's Right to Live* (Ann Arbor MI: Servant Books, 1984). After the death of Baby Doe in Bloomington, Indiana in 1982, works on the subject were subsumed within larger monographs.

libraries own the item makes this book one of only ten pro-life works held by over a thousand libraries.

Like the presidential document, perhaps no other work in the eighties achieved such commercial and popular success as the second most significant work, the film *The Silent Scream* (1984) and its companion book, *Silent Scream: The Complete Text of the Documentary Film with an Authoritative Response to the Critics*, edited by Donald S. Smith and Don Tanner (1985). Media attention became riveted to the ultrasound abortion, and anti-life commentators were placed in an uncomfortable defensive strategy. Vituperation against the film aside, the film accomplished two goals that seemed impossible given American media and entertainment bias against the movement. First, the film advanced the personalization of the unborn child and showed him or her as a victim of abortion. Secondly, the film ushered in a new era of pro-life education, where video format of essential messages quickly became the rule for popular education. If WorldCat statistics are an indication, the number of libraries holding the film version is nearly six times those owning the monograph (152 holding libraries for the film, 27 for the book).

Development of Historical Bases

Four works from the early years of the eighties addressed the historical bases of the pro-life movement.

Death, Dying, and Euthanasia, edited by Dennis Horan and David Mall (1980), examines the subjects of death, the dying process, definitions of euthanasia, and the euthanasia movement in the United States. The book includes significant contributions to the above subject areas from both pro-euthanasia supporters (e.g., Joseph Fletcher) and anti-euthanasia supporters (e.g., Paul Ramsey) and collates seminal works from the time before abortion agitation (for example, Leo Alexander's essay "Medical Science Under Dictatorship," which was first published in 1949). Thirty years after publication, the work continues to hold an important place in pro-life literature, with 981 WorldCat libraries owning the item.

The book's seven sections include the following representative essays to illustrate current topics facing pro-lifers at the beginning of the decade: "A Statutory Definition of the Standards for Determining

Human Death: an Appraisal and a Proposal” by Alexander Morgan Capron and Leon R. Kass; “Moral and Ethical Dilemmas in the Special-Care Nursery” by Raymond S. Duff and A.G.M. Campbell; “Involuntary Euthanasia of Defective Newborns: A Legal Analysis” by John A. Robertson; “The Prolongation of Life: An Address of Pope Pius XII to an International Congress of Anesthesiologists” by Pope Pius XII; “Editor’s Comment on the Living Will” by Dennis J. Horan; “Some Non-Religious Views Against Proposed ‘Mercy-Killing’ Legislation by Yale Kamisar; “Opinion of the New Jersey Supreme Court in the Karen Quinlan Case” by Chief Justice Richard Hughes; “How Hospices Cope” by Richard Lamerton; “Medical Science Under Dictatorship” by Leo Alexander; and “Suicide and Euthanasia” by Germain Grisez.

William Brennan’s *The Abortion Holocaust: Today’s Final Solution* (1983)⁷² must be recognized as bold for expanding a controversial area of the life issues, the comparison of abortion to genocide. While Erma Clardy Craven specifically connected abortion with African-American genocide, the link to a topic normally associated with the Jewish Holocaust had not been discussed in such detail before. Thus, Brennan’s work is a milestone in the sequence of pro-life ideas.

Bernard N. Nathanson’s *The Abortion Papers: Inside the Abortion Mentality* (1983)⁷³ analyzes how the opposition to the right to life first manifested itself through the use of the media. He urges pro-lifers to use scientific advances in fetology to assert their cause. Nathanson also remarks on how the anti-life movement used anti-Catholic bigotry to obtain its first goal of legalizing abortion and how such a strategy is continued to keep abortion legal.

J. C. Willke’s *Slavery and Abortion: History Repeats* (1984) compares the African-American civil rights movement with the right-to-life movement. The numerous points of similarity between the fight against slavery and the fight for the first civil right to life are

⁷² William Brennan, *The Abortion Holocaust: Today’s Final Solution* (St. Louis MO: Landmark Press, 1983).

⁷³ Bernard N. Nathanson, *The Abortion Papers: Inside the Abortion Mentality* (New York NY: Frederick Fell, 1983).

striking. In twenty short chapters, Willke documents the similarities between slavery and abortion instantaneously; thus, shifting from dehumanizing assaults on African slaves in the nineteenth century to abortion in the twentieth helps the reader to understand the parallels between the two issues. Willke's discussion of the African-American situation is amplified by Alveda C. King in two works, *How Can the Dream Survive If We Murder the Children?: Abortion Is Not a Civil Right!* (2008)⁷⁴ and *Life at All Costs: An Anthology of Voices from 21st Century Black Pro-life Leaders* (2012).⁷⁵

Feminism and Post-Abortion Syndrome

Two works from the second half of the eighties deserve recognition in the effort to bring post-abortion syndrome to the attention of the public. *Pro-Life Feminism: Different Voices*, edited by Gail Grenier Sweet (1985), is the first edition of an anthology devoted to establishing the connection between historical, nineteenth-century feminist activists, to demonstrating twentieth-century differences between pro-life feminists and leaders of anti-life organizations such as the National Organization of Women, and to affirming what should be done to advance women's rights from a life-affirming perspective.

David C. Reardon's *Aborted Women: Silent No More* (1987)⁷⁶ introduced the topic of Post-Abortion Syndrome to the reading public. Commercially successful (778 WorldCat libraries own the work), Reardon's analysis of the psychological complications following abortion generated intense debate in the psychological establishment. Although Reardon's work amplifies an earlier (1979) study of

⁷⁴ Alveda C. King, *How Can the Dream Survive If We Murder the Children?: Abortion Is Not a Civil Right!* (Bloomington IN: AuthorHouse, 2008).

⁷⁵ Williams may have been ahead of his time in mentioning another idea: "A reverence for life within the womb is ultimately one with a reverent sense of responsibility and accountability for our global environment in the ecological concern of our time" (p. xviii). Citing the ecology movement of the 1970s is an idea not enunciated in pro-life literature until decades later as a response to ecofeminist misuse of the idea as a basis for abortion.

⁷⁶ David C. Reardon, *Aborted Women: Silent No More* (Westchester IL: Crossway Books, 1987).

psychological effects of abortion (*Psychological Aspects of Abortion*, edited by David Mall and Walter F. Watts⁷⁷), other works were published to address this new aspect in pro-life activism, including Anne Speckhard's *Psycho-Social Aspects of Stress Following Abortion* (1987),⁷⁸ Theresa Karminski Burke and Barbara Cullen's *Rachel's Vineyard: A Psychological and Spiritual Journey of Post Abortion Healing: A Model for Groups* (1995),⁷⁹ and Elizabeth Ring-Cassidy and Ian Gentles's *Women's Health After Abortion: The Medical and Psychological Evidence* (2nd ed., 2003).⁸⁰

New Activism

Two works from the second half of the decade argue for both legal protest and civil disobedience against abortion clinics and the abortionists who run them. Joseph M. Scheidler's *Closed: 99 Ways to Stop Abortion* (1985)⁸¹ and Randall A. Terry's *Operation Rescue* (1988)⁸² cover a range of methods for pro-life activists to advance the cause. Direct action, Scheidler and Terry argue, would generate more media attention to pro-life claims, persuade people to the pro-life perspective, and, most importantly, save lives.

Both works, however, signal a strong torque in right-to-life political theory by moving away from the gradualist approach of first-generation right-to-life leaders to direct action against abortion clinics and, in Terry's work, to illegal activity for the express purpose

⁷⁷ *Psychological Aspects of Abortion*, David Mall and Walter F. Watts, eds. (Washington, DC: University Publications of America, 1979).

⁷⁸ Anne Speckhard, *Psycho-Social Aspects of Stress Following Abortion* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1987).

⁷⁹ Theresa Karminski Burke and Barbara Cullen, *Rachel's Vineyard: A Psychological and Spiritual Journey of Post Abortion Healing: A Model for Groups* (Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1995).

⁸⁰ Elizabeth Ring-Cassidy and Ian Gentles, *Women's Health After Abortion: The Medical and Psychological Evidence*, 2nd ed. (Toronto, ON: deVeber Institute for Bioethics and Social Research, 2003).

⁸¹ Joseph M. Scheidler, *Closed: 99 Ways to Stop Abortion* (Westchester IL: Crossway Books, 1985).

⁸² Randall A. Terry, *Operation Rescue* (Binghamton NY: Operation Rescue, 1988).

of flooding the courts with civil disobedience claims. If the Reagan and Bush years were successful in having a pro-life president sitting in the White House, they were just as unsuccessful in other respects. No Human Life Amendment had passed, abortion rates in some demographic sectors increased dramatically, and it seemed as though traditional legislative activity – a hallmark of pro-life action since Jack Willke’s leadership of the National Right to Life Committee – would not accomplish the movement’s goals. Terry suggests that the Operation Rescue movement is an effort to “produce the social tension necessary to bring about political change.”⁸³

Fictional and Epistolary Literature

Finally, three works from the decade of the eighties show that, besides didactic or argumentative literature, the genres of fiction and personal narrative could boast of some significant works.⁸⁴

Pro-life fiction made a substantial leap with the publication of Stephen F. Friend’s *God’s Children* (1987).⁸⁵ No other earlier fictional work succeeded in breaking into the world of the reading public as this novel, which is owned by 366 WorldCat libraries.⁸⁶ In terms of narrative substance, Friend’s novel spans 528 pages of a plot concerned ostensibly with the Pennsylvania Abortion Control Act. In

⁸³ Terry, p. 27.

⁸⁴ Ownership by five libraries in the WorldCat system may not qualify Jean Blackwood’s *Beyond Beginning and Other Poems* (Rolla MO: Low-Key Press, 1982) as a title worth mentioning in terms of commercial success. But what the book lacks regarding publishing accomplishments is compensated by being the first book of poetry concerned with abortion. The poem “Generation” is especially important as a challenge to those who schizophrenically advocate certain humanitarian and rights causes yet ignore the first civil right to life. The persona looks at the paradigm presented by his or her own experience of rights and finds that it contrasts against the established view of history.

⁸⁵ Stephen F. Friend, *God’s Children* (New York NY: Beech Tree Books, William Morrow, 1987).

⁸⁶ An earlier fictional effort includes Gail Patrick Brennan’s *Alone... A Story for Children... About Abortion!* (Elm Grove WI: Alone, 1979).

fact, it also provides Mafia characterizations and delves into practices of devout and ambiguous Catholics.

Friend's novel is joined with a work by a more famous author, one not usually associated with the life issues, Walker Percy, whose *The Thanatos Syndrome*⁸⁷ was published in the same year. Percy creates a dystopia which has legalized abortion, infanticide (called "pedeuthanasia" 33), and euthanasia. After a child pornography ring and pedeuthanasia clinic are shut down, Father Simon Smith chastises his audience during a homily by speaking of the "tenderness" that Nazi euthanasia supporters felt towards the people they were killing. Father Smith's chastisement of his audience at Mass culminates the didactic purpose of Percy's work: to safeguard the integrity of the human person against intrusion by the government. Compared with the 366 libraries holding Friend's work, Percy's 1,940 holding libraries demonstrate the power that a major name will have in the success of a novel dealing with controversial issues.

The final literary exemplar from the eighties is devoted to personal narrative in the well-established genre of epistolary writing. Joan Andrews's *You Reject Them, You Reject Me: The Prison Letters of Joan Andrews* (1988)⁸⁸ does not compare in regard to circulation with the more well-known *Letter from Birmingham Jail* by Martin Luther King, Jr. (at least, among Americans aware of their cultural heritage), but its witness is invaluable.⁸⁹ Andrews's letters span two years of her imprisonment for protesting at abortion clinics (1987 and 1988).

It is noticeable, however, that pro-life fiction grew substantially after these publications, including such works as Angela Hunt's *The*

⁸⁷ Walker Percy, *The Thanatos Syndrome* (New York NY: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1987).

⁸⁸ Joan Andrews, *You Reject Them, You Reject Me: The Prison Letters of Joan Andrews*, edited by Richard Cowden Guido (Manassas VA: Trinity Communications, 1988).

⁸⁹ An excerpt from King's letter precedes the first chapter (unnumbered page 25).

Proposal (1996),⁹⁰ Jane St. Clair's *Walk Me to Midnight* (2007),⁹¹ Lisa Samson's *Bella: A Novelization of the Award-Winning Movie* (2008),⁹² and Eric Wilson and Theresa Preston's *October Baby: Every Life Is Beautiful* (2012)⁹³ – all four of which are owned by a combined 888 WorldCat holding libraries.

D. The Nineties: Globalism and the Internet

The nineties saw globalism as a characteristic social trend, and this idea affected the pro-life movement as well. Pro-life activists fought with the anti-life Clinton Administration over the Mexico City policy, which prohibited federal funding for abortions in other countries, and nationalized health care, among other topics. Within right-to-life literature, the global effects of an anti-life philosophy became clear with the publication of Steven W. Mosher's *A Mother's Ordeal: One Woman's Fight Against China's One-Child Policy* (1993),⁹⁴ which sent shockwaves not only in pro-life community but also in the secular media. With 739 WorldCat holding libraries, Mosher's account of forced abortion policies in the People's Republic of China could not be ignored by the secular media. Bringing the controversial issue of forced abortion, which is concerned not only women's rights but also state control of its population policies, to the attention of the U.S. government – at a time when the only media outlets were the traditional and biased major media – is a significant accomplishment that merits attention.

The paucity of materials from the nineties that merit notation as essential items for an anthology can be attributed to a technological development that pro-life activists quickly used to broadcast

⁹⁰ Angela Hunt, *The Proposal* (Wheaton IL: Tyndale House, 1996).

⁹¹ Jane St. Clair, *Walk Me to Midnight* (Waterford VA: Capstone Fiction, 2007).

⁹² Lisa Samson, *Bella: A Novelization of the Award-Winning Movie* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008).

⁹³ Eric Wilson and Theresa Preston, *October Baby: Every Life Is Beautiful* (Nashville TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2012).

⁹⁴ Steven W. Mosher, *A Mother's Ordeal: One Woman's Fight Against China's One-Child Policy* (New York NY: Harcourt Brace, 1993).

information and services. The Internet certainly did not stop hard-copy publication of pro-life monographs or serials, but it did enable the pro-life community to generate activism and to accomplish objectives without relying on a biased media or fearing a lack of funds. Producing hardcopy monographs and serials, in contrast, consumed not only time but also precious and limited resources. The nineties saw the development of numerous pro-life websites that are now standard means of communication, particularly for legislative and political news and action. More research, however, needs to be conducted to evaluate the pro-life movement's use of Internet resources as a supplement to or in lieu of hard-copy production of materials.

E. The Twenty-First Century: Asserting the Right to Life in the Post-9/11 World

Terrorism abroad and eight years of an anti-life presidency (Obama) may have distracted the national sentiment away from the life issues. The pro-life literary output, however, continued to produce numerous works that address all aspects of the pro-life movement. Determining whether the following works merit inclusion in an anthology may be premature without further research.

Non-fiction works continue to dominate pro-life publishing. A difference from works published in the early decades is that newer pro-life titles often achieve publishing success not experienced by their early movement counterparts. Such is the case with Hadley Arkes's *Natural Rights and the Right to Choose* (2002),⁹⁵ owned by 772 libraries; Arthur J. Dyck's *Life's Worth: The Case Against Assisted Suicide* (2002),⁹⁶ owned by 589 libraries; the Schindlers' *A Life That Matters: The Legacy of Terri Schiavo, A Lesson for Us All* (2006),⁹⁷ owned by 463 libraries; Francis Beckwith's *Defending Life: A Moral*

⁹⁵ Hadley Arkes, *Natural Rights and the Right to Choose* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002).

⁹⁶ Arthur J. Dyck, *Life's Worth: The Case Against Assisted Suicide* (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2002).

⁹⁷ Mary and Robert Schindler, with Suzanne and Bobby Schindler, *A Life That Matters: The Legacy of Terri Schiavo, A Lesson for Us All* (n.p.: n.publ., 2006).

and *Legal Case Against Abortion Choice* (2007),⁹⁸ owned by 713 libraries; Abby Johnson's *Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of a Former Planned Parenthood Leader's Eye-Opening Journey Across the Life Line* (2010),⁹⁹ owned by 608 libraries; and Christopher Robert Kaczor's *The Ethics of Abortion: Women's Rights, Human Life, and the Question of Justice* (2011),¹⁰⁰ owned by 717 holding libraries.

Fictional works, however, continue not only to inspire readers with their life-affirming stories but also to challenge literary critics who may not yet seem able to handle narratives that are simultaneously successful and affirm life. An important exception in this new century is *Bella* (film 2006, novelization by Lisa Samson in 2008), whose commercial and critical success surpasses that of *The Silent Screem* in the eighties; 432 WorldCat libraries own the book, but 1,149 WorldCat libraries own the film. While *The Silent Screem* was attacked by anti-lifers and its veracity challenged, the difference now, however, is that *Bella* is judged on aesthetic grounds more than on its life-affirming message.

V. Summary and Recommendations

If the above suggests anything, it is that pro-life literature over the past forty years is substantial and that it covers virtually all issues of concern to the pro-life movement on the three life issues. The companion Excel file should be used in conjunction with this discussion of the major works so that those interested in the literature can understand where they are placed in the larger body of pro-life works.

Since the preceding has focused on monographic works primarily, although some life-affirming films are briefly mentioned, opportunities for more research exist for undeveloped or neglected areas. This study

⁹⁸ Francis Beckwith, *Defending Life: A Moral and Legal Case Against Abortion Choice* (New York NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2007).

⁹⁹ Abby Johnson, with Cindy Lambert, *Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of a Former Planned Parenthood Leader's Eye-Opening Journey across the Life Line* (San Francisco CA: Ignatius Press, 2010).

¹⁰⁰ Christopher Robert Kaczor, *The Ethics of Abortion: Women's Rights, Human Life, and the Question of Justice* (New York NY: Routledge, 2011).

has not included serial publications such as the *Life and Learning* volumes published by University Faculty for Life, or other serials such as *The Human Life Review* or *National Right to Life News*, the official newspaper of the National Right to Life Committee. Similarly, this study has not examined life-affirming art work (such as Mary Cate Carroll's painting/reliquary "American Liberty Upside Down"), music (John Elefante's song "This Time"), or theatre (Malcolm Muggeridge and Alan Thornhill's *Sentenced to Life*¹⁰¹). Finally, although they change with rapidity as needs and information warrants, Internet sites were not discussed, even though most monographic works now have companion websites just as pro-life films are now offered electronically through resources such as YouTube instead of older technology. Again, more research is needed to evaluate which works presented in electronic media or in serial format should be included as masterworks of the pro-life movement.

Even though these opportunities exist for future research, some recommendations can be suggested regarding the monographs already discussed. Three immediately come to mind.

First, libraries with significant holdings of pro-life material should catalog and make bibliographic records of their collections available through Internet access. For example, if the Stanton Library operated by the Sisters of Life has one of the premier collections of pro-life materials in the United States, then every item in that collection should be catalogued and indexed for scholarly use. If costs are a factor, then identifying the library's holdings on WorldCat would be an important step towards disseminating the holdings.

Second, as long as copyright concerns can be satisfied, pro-life materials should be digitized as soon as possible. Many pro-life titles, especially those from the early decades of the movement, are either difficult to obtain or, the fate of all printed materials, becoming fragile (having been printed on low quality paper or destroyed by frequent use). Moreover, as publishing houses merge or cease altogether, the

¹⁰¹ Malcolm Muggeridge and Alan Edward Carlos Thornhill, *Sentenced to Life: A Parable in Three Acts* (Nashville TN: Thomas Nelson, 1983).

opportunity to obtain first editions of primary source material will become more challenging for the researcher.

Finally, a formal anthology of pro-life works should be published. The key items mentioned here must be included in such an anthology so that contemporary and future students will know some of the greatest works of the most important civil rights movement in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It is especially imperative to do this since the first generation of pro-life leaders is getting older, many of them have died (most recently, Nellie Gray and Barbara Willke), and the current generation of pro-life activists, most of whom are young adults, may not be familiar with the standard works that formed the pro-life cultural heritage. Such an anthology would assist in perpetuating the pro-life conversation and activism from generation to generation.