

# CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND

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*Established 1981*

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## **Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide Represent a Culture of Abandonment**

- Excerpts from UK lecture by Wesley Smith

As more and more states are considering Physician Assisted Suicide, Wesley Smith, an attorney for the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide (<http://www.internationaltaskforce.org/>) shared some interesting facts in a recent lecture in the United Kingdom.

- It is ironic that the euthanasia and assisted suicide are being promoted at a time in history when palliative care is highly advanced.
- The anti-euthanasia activism of disability rights campaigners gives the lie to the accusation that the anti-euthanasia campaign is really a religious agenda. (*The Californians Against Assisted Suicide coalition is comprised not only of "Right to Life" organizations and religious groups, but also a preponderance of members of the disability community. See <http://www.ca-aas.com/> for a list of member organizations.*)
- Euthanasia and assisted suicide represent "a culture of abandonment" (*Much like abortion is a sign that we as a society have not met the needs of women, physician assisted suicide is a sign we are not meeting the needs of the sick and elderly among us.*)
- It is noticeable that there are fewer suicide prevention hotlines.
- Wesley Smith cited pro-euthanasia broadcaster Jenni Murray who is reported to have said that she "does not want to look after her sick and aging mother"; Mr. Smith labeled this an example of today's "abandonment society."
- Most of the people whose suicide was assisted by Jack Kevorkian had no physical ailment.

- There is "suicide tourism to Switzerland"
- Doctors who agree to assist suicide generally don't care if patient can be treated.
- The film *Million Dollar Baby* sends a message that people like Daniel James were right to kill themselves, a message of abandonment. (*See March 2004 newsletter <http://www.calright2life.org/march04news.pdf> for a review of movie. If you would like to borrow our library copy of the DVD, contact our office.*)
- The concept of a right to choose the time, manner and place of one's death is ideological, not a real human or civil right

**Abortion is a reflection that  
we have not met the needs  
of women.**

**- Feminists for Life**

**Euthanasia and assisted  
suicide represent "a culture  
of abandonment."**

**- Wesley Smith**

- The two premises of euthanasia and physician assisted suicide are (1) radical individualism and (2) killing is an acceptable answer to human suffering
- There is "doctor-shopping" and "Kevorkianism" in Oregon
- The Hemlock Society facilitates 70%-80% of assisted suicides in Oregon.

- The supposed safeguards on the assisted suicide law in Oregon are violated with impunity, and the safeguards are in reality all smoke-and-mirrors
- There are 900 cases of euthanasia without request or consent in the Netherlands every year, plus 80-90 cases of infanticide (eight percent of all deaths of born children)

*(Comments in italics are those of California Right to Life Educational Fund)*

## **"Brain Death" is Life, Not Death: Neurologists, Philosophers, Neonatologists, Jurists, and Bioethicists Unanimous at Conference**

If a patient is able to process oxygen from the lungs into the bloodstream, maintain a normal body temperature, digest food and expel waste, grow to normal adult size from the age of four to twenty, and even carry a child to term, can he or she be considered dead? Can a person who is "dead" wake up and go on later to finish a university degree? Can a corpse get out of bed, go home and go fishing? Can he get married and have children?

These are among the real-life stories of patients declared "brain dead" presented by medical experts at the "Signs of Life" conference on "brain death" criteria held near the Vatican in Rome the end of February. Ten speakers, who are among the world's most eminent in their fields, sounded a ringing rebuke to the continued support among medical professionals and ethicists for "brain death" as an accepted criterion for organ removal.

Dr. Paul Byrne, the conference organizer, was delighted with the success of the conference, surprised but very pleased with the crowd of over 170 for the one-day event, that he hopes will bring the message that "brain death is not death" inside the walls of the Vatican where support for "brain death" criteria is still strong.

Dr. Byrne, a neonatologist and clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of Toledo, compared the struggle against "brain death" criteria with another battle: "I'm sure that slavery was at one time well-accepted in the United States, and that people saw big benefits to slavery. And yes, it was difficult to go away from that but it was absolutely essential."

"Slavery was doing evil things to persons. This issue of 'brain death' was invented to get beating hearts for transplantation. And there is no way that this can go on. It must get stopped."

Conflicting voices on "brain death" criteria are still battling in the Church. In February 2005, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (PAS) refused to

publish the findings of its own conference after the speakers roundly denounced "brain death" as a cynical invention to further the monetary interests of organ transplanters. The speakers said that using "brain death" for the purpose of organ harvesting results in the death of helpless patients. The PAS convened a second conference in 2007 with different speakers who, with only two dissenting, supported "brain death" for organ transplants. Papers from the 2005 conference that opposed "brain death" were excluded without explanation to their authors.

During a Vatican-sponsored conference last November on organ transplantation, at which not a single speaker raised their voice against "brain death," Pope Benedict XVI warned in an address that, "the removal of organs is allowed only in the presence of actual death." But on the Monday following the Friday organ transplant conference, only the PAS conference report in favor of "brain death" was posted to the Vatican website and not the Pope's warning.

***"The removal of organs  
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presence of actual  
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- Pope Benedict XVI***

Dr. Byrne said that a major function of the Signs of Life conference was "to support Pope Benedict," whose address in November, he said, had started to turn the Church against "brain death."

"It's here to demonstrate clearly that 'brain death' never was true death. What we're trying to do is come back to the truth and protect and preserve the life that comes from God.

"When there are attacks on life, then we, as physicians, defend it and that is what this conference is for."

The Signs of Life conference, sponsored privately by various pro-life organizations, including American Life, stood in opposition to the second PAS (Pontifical Academy of Sciences) conference, which was titled, "The Signs of Death."

*Excerpt from article by Hilary White - Rome correspondent*

*<http://www.lifesitenews.com/ldn/2009/feb/09022604.html>*

## **Abortion-Breast Cancer Link is Real, Pregnancy Reduces Risk**

Joel Brind, Ph.D. professor at Baruch College and renowned researcher, is one of the world's leading experts on the link between abortion and breast cancer. He has stated that the link between the two is real and that studies back up his assertion that carrying a pregnancy to term reduces the risk.

Brind explains how having an abortion can lead to a higher risk of contracting breast cancer. "The reason for the link is obvious...once a woman gets pregnant, her breasts start growing within days or a week or so after getting pregnant. The number of those Type 1 and Type 2 lobules where breast cancer can form are multiplying and so there are more places where cancer can start as the pregnancy proceeds."

"Once 32 weeks pass, all those Type 1 and Type 2 lobules become Type 3 and Type 4 lobules so you actually have fewer places for cancer to form than before the pregnancy started. But if a pregnancy is aborted before the 32-week mark, the risk for breast cancer goes way up from where it would have been even if a woman hadn't gotten pregnant in the first place," he said.

While much of the focus of the debate is on the abortion side of the breast cancer issue, Brind says there is little controversy about the fact that pregnancy helps women. "No one argues with the fact that when a woman has a full-term pregnancy, breast cancer risk goes down," Brind comments.

"When you look at the medical literature there is acknowledgement that a woman has a lowered risk of breast cancer from a full-term pregnancy and that the same lowered risk of breast cancer is not afforded a woman who has had an aborted pregnancy," he said.

The professor also talked about recall bias -- something abortion advocates have used to try to criticize the studies Brind and others have conducted showing the link.

He said places where there is more accurate medical data about women who had abortions make it easier to draw accurate conclusions. And, in those cases, the conclusion is clear.

"When a woman gets an abortion in New York State she has to file a fetal death certificate, which is medical record-based, not recall-based.

It's not based on a woman remembering whether or not she had an abortion. And guess what? There was a 90 percent increase in breast cancer and this data was published in 1989," he said.

"I did a complete review of a decade's worth of studies like that which was published in the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons in 2005," Brind added, saying the overall analysis showed the abortion-breast cancer link exists.

A lot of Brind's work has been looking into the science behind the studies others conduct and determining if they are valid.

"My career in this particular area over the last 10 plus years has not been so much studying the abortion/breast cancer connection as it has been studying the papers which cover it up," he said.

"The abortion/breast cancer link is something that's real, so a study done well would support the link. So I'm usually pretty confident I

can find out why the abortion/breast cancer link doesn't show [in a study] when it's there," he added.

The cover up extends to some governmental and professional groups such as the National Cancer Institute, that have issued politicized opinions claiming no abortion-breast cancer link exists. Brind talked about that meeting as well.

"In 2003 there was a scientific 'workshop' of 100 invited scientists from around the world that was basically held to throw me and my findings under the bus and to prove that there is this scientific consensus dismissing the link between breast cancer and abortion. But there's nothing scientific about a consensus. That's an oxymoron," Brind concluded.

"The official position [of NCI and such groups] is that there is no link between abortion and breast cancer, but of course there is," he said.

**Does abortion  
increase the risk of  
breast cancer beyond  
not getting pregnant  
in the first place?**

**"The answer is yes,"  
Brind says.**

For more information on the abortion-breast cancer link, visit the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute's web site at <http://www.BCPInstitute.org>

*Excerpt from <http://www.lifenews.com/state3885.html>*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*For the latest information, see [www.calendarforlife.org](http://www.calendarforlife.org)*

**Mall Table** – The first Saturday of the month from 10AM-4PM we have an information table at Sunvalley Mall in Concord. If you would like to join us, or are interested in starting a table in your area, contact our office at 925-944-5351 or e-mail [callife@calright2life.org](mailto:callife@calright2life.org). Experienced volunteers will be there to guide you until you feel comfortable being the “lead volunteer.” Students – do you need service hours? A couple of hours at a mall table may be the way to get those much-needed service hours.

**Abortion Mill Vigils** – as we complete another inspirational 40-Days-for-Life, many of the sites will be continuing to gather several times a week. See <http://www.40daysforlife.com/location.cfm> for a listing of recent 40-day sites and contacts. Also [www.calendarforlife.org](http://www.calendarforlife.org) lists ongoing prayer vigils at the end of the calendar by day of the week. If you know of any pro-life events that should be in the Calendar For Life, send a brief description via email to [calendarforlife@ureach.com](mailto:calendarforlife@ureach.com).

### WHO IS CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE?

This is the newsletter of **California Right to Life Education Fund**, a 501-c-3 organization established to educate the public about pro-life issues. Donations to the EDUCATION FUND are **tax-deductible** and can be sent to P.O. Box 4343, Walnut Creek, CA 94596-0343.

California Right to Life **Committee, Inc.** is a 501-c-4 organization providing information on legislative issues affecting the right to life, and pro-life political advocacy. **CRLC, Inc. is not permitted**, under IRS regulations, to offer a tax deduction for donations. \$24.99 annually is requested for a subscription to the CRLC legislative email updates list and can be sent to 1920 Monument Blvd #309, Concord, CA 94520.

Both are affiliates of American Life League, headed by Judie Brown, and share the same “no-exceptions, no excuses” beliefs and the same dedication to promoting the Culture of Life, respecting all innocent human life from the single-cell stage to natural death.