

POINTS OF VIEW

# Absolutes disappear in war over abortion

When George Bush ran against Ronald Reagan in 1978, Bush called Reagan's monetary platform "voodoo economics." When Bush became vice president, he changed his mind. Reaganomics suddenly became viable and no one heard the word "voodoo" leave George's lips for the next 12 years.

Some said that was two-faced hypocrisy in action. Others said it was politically astute on George's part. The latter argument prevailed and for the next 12 years it was acceptable to say any old damn thing, so long as you didn't mean it — and could instantly, if comered, reverse field.

Lynn Mills, a Livonia pro-life abortionist, is an organizer of protests at abortion clinics. Her group is against abortion. In

other states, group members operating under the same name — Operation Rescue — have let their own children lie down in the street to prevent patients from keeping appointments at abortion clinics.

Locally, Operation Rescue, under Mills' guidance, has used protest tactics ranging from ringing clinics to block traffic in and out, to forcing police to carry limp demonstrators from clinic doorways.

They hold parking lot prayer sessions, do their best to shame clinic patients by plastering their names on placards and carrying them in public view, and chant about the "murderers" inside the clinic who, in their opinion, kill for money. Maybe they do; maybe they don't. We're not going to settle that here.



PHILIP SHERMAN

However, calling someone a "murderer" is an irreversible absolute. Even those in the law enforcement business are careful with that label because they know the weight and one-way stigma it carries.

Yet Mills' supporters had no problem running around with signs pro-

claiming doctors were murderers because they performed abortions. Sometimes, they even took their protests to the foot of the driveways of the doctors' homes in West Bloomfield, Bloomfield Township and Farmington Hills.

Last week, things changed. A man in his early 30s walked into a Florida abortion clinic. He shot and killed the doctor, walked out of the clinic and surrendered to the first police officer he saw.

The gunman told police the only way to save the unborn was by killing the doctor. All of a sudden, Mills and Operation Rescue members are worried about being labeled "murderers." They say that's a terrible thing to call someone.

Somehow, Mills and her followers haven't had a problem labeling others,

but they've become deeply upset when others label them.

Likewise, picketing a private home in a neighborhood was fair game for Operation Rescue, but when pickets ringed Mills' home, she became very unsettled.

I do not think for a moment Mills condones the gunman's actions. It's interesting, though, to watch Mills' reaction when her own weapons are turned against her.

Perhaps in the future, Mills and the Operation Rescue members will use the foundation of their beliefs — compassion — to resist doing unto others as they would not like to be done unto themselves.

Philip Sherman is the editor of the West Bloomfield/Lakes Eclectic Newspaper. His telephone number is 644-1100, ext. 264.

LETTERS

Great teacher

What a delight to see in the March 11 Observer that Richard Cardecia was named Teacher-of-the-Year.

Twenty-some years ago I spent my eighth grade year at Post Junior High in Detroit. It was the worst year of my educational life.

However, there is one bright memory of that year — a very enthusiastic and demanding violin teacher named Richard Cardecia. I'm glad quality is recognized — and a belated thank you to Mr. Cardecia.

Dr. A. Church, Farmington Hills

She's misinformed

I feel that I must reply to Janet Good's letter in the Feb. 26 Observer. The letter does not accurately represent the Farmington Hills Police Officers Association's (FHPOA) efforts in fund raising and public relations.

Good may have been misinformed by the chief's office because our association does in fact use donations from

Farmington Hills residents and businesses to publish a drug abuse awareness booklet and to support various local charities.

In 1992 the FHPOA made contributions in excess of \$7,600 to such causes as the Salvation Army's Cops for Christmas Program; the National Burn Institute; Students Against Drunk Driving and the Gill School Playground Project, to name just a few.

During the past several years the FHPOA has distributed more than 3,000 booklets to assorted community groups and schools, free, to help combat drug abuse. We are giving away an additional 2,000 books to groups or individuals interested in becoming more informed about the drug abuse problem.

The FHPOA does support local candidates for elected office but has spent less than \$900 per year in doing so. This is a small percentage compared to our public relations efforts.

The fund-raiser employed by the FHPOA makes approximately 60,000 calls per year and is required to tape each call. These tapes are held for three months in case a complaint is made.

I have received fewer than two dozen complaints, and after review found no misrepresentation or "bullying" by the fund-raiser. No threats, implied or explicit, will be tolerated by the association.

The Farmington Hills Police Officers Association remains committed to improving public relations as well as presenting a positive visible presence within this community.

Wayne Beechwer, president, FHPOA

All mean well

As an active member of the 125th Committee and as one of those "gym shoe wearing ladies walking around town," I have spoken out against the proposed brick clock tower by the Masonic Temple from the very beginning.

I am pleased that you have come around to our side of the issue. I was not pleased to read your feature article in Thursday's Observer. The point of your article was to har-

ness the energy of the anti-clock. I am all for that. Everyone in town helped plan the streetscape years ago when the DDA began. The DDA should have brought residents in on the planning of the Masonic Temple plaza early.

The design changes that have been made so far in response to residents' suggestions have been good ones. We could come up with a really good, fresh idea for that corner, given the chance.

Your article pretends to show ways that the "power brokers" and "those who wear blue jeans and walking shoes and sweatshirts" could work together to brainstorm ideas to boost downtown.

Your suggestions may be good ones but they are phrased in a way to push people apart, not draw them together. I am ashamed of my friends who refer to the proposed clock tower as "Shirley's Temple." I am appalled that you would repeat that slander in your article.

I try very hard to judge issues on their merits and not on the personalities involved. It disturbs me when the group I am working with tries to build solidarity by ridiculing the opposition. Whether it be Shirley Richardson,

Joanne LaFleur, or Richard DeVries, I remember that they care very deeply about what they are doing and believe they are right. There may be a germ of wisdom in what they are saying even if I don't like the way they are saying it.

Let's not forget that the people supporting both sides of this issue are well-meaning, caring citizens. The anti-clock people probably have more in common with the members of the DDA than with much of the population of Farmington.

When choosing sides, I prefer to divide people into those who care about what is happening in their community and are willing to work for what they believe and those who either don't know or don't care what's going on.

Laura Myers, Farmington

Opinions are to be shared: We welcome your ideas, as do your neighbors. That's why we offer this space on a weekly basis for opinions in your own words. We will help by editing for clarity. To assure authenticity, we ask that you sign your letter and provide a contact telephone number.

Letters should be mailed to: Editor, The Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336.

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**START TIMES**  
Registration: 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.  
5K Run/Racewalk/Walk: 9:00 a.m.  
1 Mile Fun Walk: 9:10 a.m.

**RACE PACKETS**  
Are mailed to all registered runners the week before the race; packets include race number, T-shirt coupon, course map and directions.

**TIMING & RESULTS**  
The 5K events will be conducted by Detroit's premier running club, the Motor City Striders. Computer scoring by Burns Computer Services. Entrants will be subject to IAAF Rule 144.

**AWARDS & AGE GROUPS**  
In the 5K Race and racewalk, awards will be presented to the overall female winner (not eligible for age group award) and the top three female runners in each five-year age group, from 15 to 70+. Men are invited to participate, but will not be eligible for awards.

**ENTRY FORMS**  
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