

Saints and sinners: We need to balance science and morality

An attractive women once suggested to George Bernard Shaw that they have a baby together. "With my body and your brains," she said, "imagine what an extraordinary child it would be."

"Yes," replied the Irish wit, "but what if the child should have my body and your brains?" We don't have to kid about such things any more. That day is already here when genes and embryos are being manipulated in ways that could reshape the human race.

It's called by such names as genetic engineering, cloning and stem-cell research.

According to the New England Journal of Medicine, researchers in the Netherlands have experimented with "preventive mastectomies," the removal of healthy breasts to forestall breast

cancer.

The subject of breastless women first came up in Vance Packard's 1977 book "The People Shapers." Packard said he heard the idea advanced at a conference on medical ethics. More than 50 scientists, physicians and philosophers were present — both men and women.

The medical doctor proposing the idea pointed out that millions of women are or will be victims of breast cancer. Enormous sums of money are being spent on research and treatment of the disease.

He said the whole problem could be eliminated simply by nipping off a bit of breast tissue at birth. The operation would be as uncomplicated as circumcision on baby boys.

He went on to say that for modern women,



george plagenz

• saints & sinners

breasts are often a hindrance on the job — "certainly if they are foresters, jockeys, soldiers and mechanics. And they are also an encumbrance in sports."

Packard suggests that, "as far as breasts to attract men are concerned, padded bras and synthetic breasts held in place by suction could perhaps be substituted until the world got used

to women without breasts."

Packard even goes on to say that a poll of women on the subject of breastlessness might find a substantial number responding with "a resistant yes" — but only on the condition that all women are breastless!

While the debate over genetic engineering heats up, others are worried that our rudderless culture is careening dangerously off course. Road rage and air rage are only two examples of social behavior run amok and defended on the grounds that the First Amendment allows us to do and say what we want.

It was the thesis of the late B.F. Skinner, the behavioral psychologist at Harvard, outlined in his book "Beyond freedom and dignity," that we must give up our "outmoded ideas of freedom

and dignity and build a society in which humanity's behavior will be controlled for our own good."

Skinner admitted that the concept of freedom "has played a vital role in the past in men's efforts to overcome tyrants who had denied them certain basic rights."

But he believed those days are gone forever, and that freedom has come to stand for unbridled permissiveness — exactly what we are witnessing in our society today.

The problems facing humanity today are moral and ethical rather than practical and political. That being the case, maybe we ought to be paying more attention to the words of the pope than we are to what the scientists and the politicians are saying.

Slaying of daughter inspires man to counsel to hardened prison inmates

By Bruce Schreiner

Associated Press Writer

EDDYVILLE, Ky. — The heavy iron bars clang open, and 80-year-old Paul Stevens strolls calmly into the midst of Kentucky's condemned killers.

Word of his arrival spreads quickly among the death-row prisoners, mingling in an exercise area that surrounds their cramped cells. The prisoners stop whatever they're doing, preparing for a weekly reunion with a man from the outside who is accepted as an insider.

Smiling, Stevens offers hugs and encouragement, and his affection is returned with hearty embraces. "This man, he is genuine," said death row inmate David Matthews. "He has nothing but love in his heart for everyone."

For 15 years, Stevens has counseled inmates as a Roman Catholic lay minister at the Kentucky State Penitentiary. He chats with anyone, but he says some

of his closest relationships within the prison walls are with convicted murderers, with whom Stevens shares a history of violence and tragedy.

With each prison visit, Stevens carries the memory of his own daughter, Cindy, who was stabbed to death in Evansville, Ind., in 1969. Stevens carries a faded black-and-white picture of Cindy that he sometimes shows to inmates. Her rosary beads remain at the prison and are passed among prisoners, gaining iconic status for men seeking solace.

Warden Philip Parker says prisoners and staff alike marvel at Stevens' ability to channel his grief into something constructive.

"His strength and his character are just admired," Parker said. "How can you not admire someone who comes into a prison and counsels to people who did the same thing that happened to his

own daughter?"

Inmates say Stevens treats them as human beings and offers a moral compass to guide them through prison and beyond, if they're released.

"We messed up in life and hurt a lot of people, but we're still human," said Larry Hansen, who is serving two life sentences for murder.

Stevens and his wife, Ruth, have seven children. Stevens says his relationship with Cindy was very close. As a teen-ager, she would stay up at night, waiting for Stevens to come home from work at Whirlpool so they could talk.

But Cindy was slain at age 20 by a man for whom she was baby-sitting, and it was Stevens who found her body in a pool of blood. Her killer, Jack E. Gatewood, had passed out a few feet away, the bloody knife nearby.

Stevens said he was filled with hatred for the man and wanted revenge. He

pushed for the death penalty. Instead, Gatewood was convicted of second-degree murder and paroled in 1978.

Afterward, Stevens pulled away from his Catholic faith. His bitterness boiled for years, until he found a new inner peace while attending a religious retreat in Owensboro.

With his faith renewed, he became an outspoken opponent of the death penalty. Still, there was something missing, he said.

That void was filled, he said, when he became a spiritual adviser at the maximum-security prison in far western Kentucky. Stevens said his wife fully supports his work and sometimes accompanies him to the prison. His children have mixed feelings about his avocation; some are fully supportive, others are lukewarm.

But Stevens credits his prison work with helping him find happiness.

"This has completed my healing," Stevens said in an office next to the prison's small chapel, converted from an old cell block.

Stevens believes that God led him to the prison to counsel inmates. Others agree that a greater power is at work.

"I know this man is God-inspired," said Cameron Smith, who is serving a life sentence for rape and other crimes. "I'm grateful for him every day."

Stevens never asks about the circumstances that led to a man's imprisonment. Nor does he push his own religious beliefs on inmates. He counsels prisoners to follow their own hearts. "I don't believe in these jailhouse conversions because they don't last," he said.

Stevens often informs inmates of deaths in their families. When a prisoner is in deep despair, he'll ask the staff to keep a closer eye on him. He stood with one inmate during his wedding last year.

And when Stevens turned 80 in June, inmates celebrated with him at a party in the chapel. It actually turned into two celebrations, one attended by death-row inmates, the other for the general inmate population.

Stevens' pace has slowed slightly over the years. He used to visit twice a week from his home in Dawson Springs, about 30 miles away, but has since cut back to once each week. But his impact on the inmates is still strongly felt.

Parker, the warden, said Stevens' quiet power was most evident in 1997 when Harold McQueen was executed at the prison.

Stevens and McQueen had long been close. Stevens visited daily with McQueen in his final 10 days of life, and they shared a final prayer moments before McQueen's death. McQueen carried Cindy Stevens' rosary beads with him to the electric chair.

Bible Baptist Church

Pastor: Don Crutcher
Fifth & Broadway
899-7368

Sunday: Sunday School: 9 am
Worship Service: 10 am
Evening Service: 6:30 pm

Wednesday: Evening Bible Study: 7 pm

Calvary Gospel Church

Pastor: Rev. Steve Rains

Fourth & College • 899-3605

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:15 am
Morning Worship: 10:30 am
Evening Worship: 6:30 pm

Wednesday: Family Night: 7 pm
Adult Bible Study and Youth Group
Saturday: Prayer Meeting: 5-7 pm

If you would like to receive a free newsletter, please call the church office.

Church of Christ

401 Caldwell
899-6185

Sunday: Bible Study: 9:45 am
Worship Service: 10:45 am
Evening Service: 6 pm
Wednesday: Bible Study: 7 pm

Church of the Nazarene

Pastor: Matthew Delp
Third & Caldwell
899-2080 or 899-3797

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:45 am
Worship Service: 10:50 am
Evening Service: 6 pm
Wednesday: Evening Service: 7 pm

First Baptist Church

Pastor: Bud Chester
Fifth & Center • 899-3450

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:15 am
Morning Worship: 10:30 am
Evening Worship: 6:30 pm
Tuesday: Mens' Prayer Group: 6:00 am
Thursday: Night Bible Study: 7:00 pm

Seventh Day Adventist Church

1160 Cattletrail

Pastor: Bobby Potter • 332-3956
Saturday: Sabbath School: 9:30 am
Worship Service: 11 am

First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

Pastor: Loren Strait

Eighth & Arcade • 899-5233

Sunday: Worship Service: 9 am

Activities: Junior High & High School Youth Groups,
Adult Bible Study, Choir, Men's and Women's Groups,
Devotions Study, Monthly Fellowship

Special Notice: Handicap Accessible, Hearing
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First United Methodist Church

1116 Sherman
899-3631

Pastor: Rev. Carol Moore-Ramey
Sunday: Sunday School: 9:15 am
Worship Service: 10:30 am

Sonrise Christian Church

Ninth & Caldwell • 899-5398

Minister: Tony Kafka

Youth Minister: Doug Bean

Sunday: Worship Service: 9:30 am
Sunday School: 10:45 am

Wednesday:

Junior/Senior High Meeting: 7 pm
Adult & Children's Classes: 7 pm

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

13th & Sherman • 899-6161

Pastor: Scott Grimshaw

Sunday: Sunday School: 8:45 am
Worship Service: 10 am
Wednesday: Confirmation: 6 pm

Kanorado

United Methodist Church

Pastor: Leonard Cox
399-2468

Sunday: Sunday School: 9 am
Worship Service: 10:15 am

Goodland Bible Church

109 Willow Road • 899-6400

Pastor:

Sunday: Sunday School: 9:45 am
Morning Worship: 11 am
Evening Worship: 6 pm
Wednesday: Call for location

Grace Fellowship Church

104 E. Hwy 24 • 899-6423

Pastor: Bob Snyder • Residence: 899-0134
Sunday: Sunday School: 10 am
Worship Service: 11 am

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

13th & Center

899-2115 or Rectory 899-2114

Priest: Father Charles Schneider

Deacon: Gretchen Talitha

Adult Forum: Sunday : 8:30 am

Morning Prayer: 9:30 am 1st & 5th Sundays

Holy Eucharist: 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Sundays: 9:30
Sr. Warden for emergencies during the week 899-2067

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

1200 15th Street • Burlington, CO • (970) 664-2470

Sacrament Meeting: 9:30 am

Sunday School: 10:45 am

Priesthood/Relief Society: 11:30 am

Word of Life Foursquare Church

223 E. 10th
899-5250

Pastor: John Coumerilh

Sunday: Worship Celebration &
Kids' Church: 10:30 am

United Methodist Church

Brewster:

Pastor:

Worship Service: 10:45 am CST

Sunday School: 9:45 am CST

Winona:

Minister: Rev. Bob Winters

Worship Service: 9 am CST

Sunday School: 10:15 am CST

Iglesia Del Dios Vivo

La Luz Del Mundo

Spanish Speaking Church

Minister: Esteban Ortiz B.

1601 Texas • 899-5275

Daily Prayer: Sunday thru

Saturday: 5 am & 6 pm

Sunday: Sunday School: 10 am

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Pastor: Father Daryl Olmstead

307 W. 13th • 899-7205

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

4:30-5 pm Saturday or by appointment

Mass Schedule:

Saturday: 6 pm

Sunday: 8 am and 9:30 am

Spanish Mass:

1st & 3rd Sunday: 2 pm

Pleasant Home Church

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899-5784

Sunday: Worship Service: 9 am

Sunday School: 10 am

Evening Service: 6 pm

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