

## Nothing ethical about aborting girls to get boy

The U.S. House has killed, for now, at least, a bill to prohibit the “sex-selective” abortion of girls.

And if this bill can’t pass in the conservative House, it is going nowhere with the Democrat-controlled Senate or the Obama White House.

This seems odd, since it’s difficult to make a case that there is a moral or ethical right to “select” children by doing away with all the girl fetuses.

Most conservatives wouldn’t give it a second thought. But the average liberal should be conflicted, at best, because this is not about a woman’s supposed right to choose whether to have a child.

It’s about how society as a whole values women, who remain in many ways second-class citizens: paid less, promoted less, less valuable to many parents – and less valued as offspring.

The issue has not risen to epidemic proportions in the U.S., which may explain the lack of traction the bill had in the House. There’s no evidence of a great number of abortions designed to select out female children. Not yet.

The procedure is vastly more common in parts of Asia, where parents value boys over girls because of culture, law and custom. Male offspring are simply more valuable. Witness the flood of Asian girls given up for adoption here and in Europe.

The fact that American couples take and cherish these children says a lot about our values as a whole. But some studies suggest the anti-girl thinking has at least a foothold here.

Sex-selective abortions are said to be on the rise among Asian immigrant populations.

Worldwide, social service agencies work to avoid this kind of discrimination, by abortion, abandonment or whatever means. They are not winning the battle.

People disagree on abortion. Some churches view it as totally out of the question, except perhaps to save the life of the mother or for other valid medical reasons. Others skirt the issue. Women’s groups traditionally push a right to choice.

But in this case, we are not talking about choosing whether or not to bear a child, but merely discarding fetuses until the coin comes up heads.

There just can’t be much moral or ethical justification for the practice. We all should speak out against it.

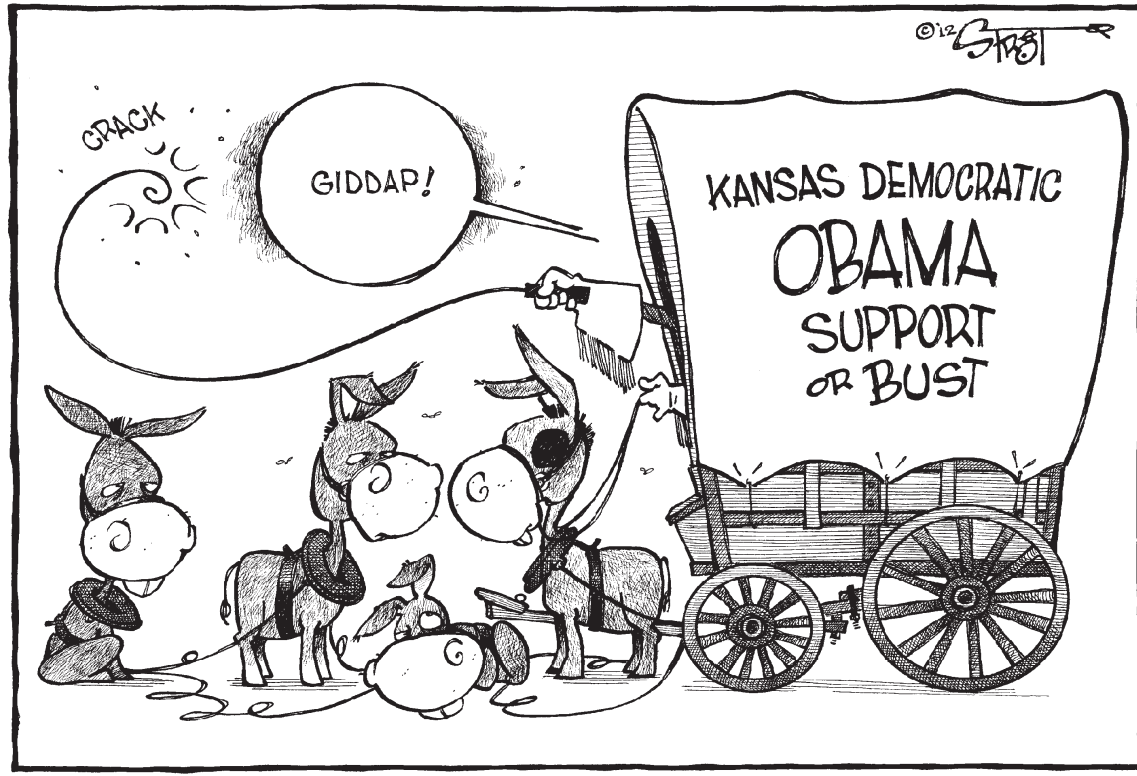
But does it need to be against the law?

Many would say yes. Others would say that, while society as a whole views this as wrong, it’s an issue of conscience. Members of most major religions, and certainly most Christians, should view interfering with God’s decisions this way as wrong. The church can and should fight any movement for selective abortion.

But in the end, it comes down to the meeting between each of us and our Judge. At that point, we believe, He will make clear who was right and who was wrong. It will make no difference what the rest of us say or believe. There is no higher court, no further appeal.

Support the elimination of little girls? We think not.

— Steve Haynes



## Wrong time to pick cherries

It’s cherry-pickin’ time – and they couldn’t have picked a worse time to decide to ripen.

This is my month to host club, and every woman who’s ever had club at her house knows this is the one time you want to devote solely to getting the place ready.

I was already behind the eight ball, because for at least the last two months, my dining room had been the holding area for everything we didn’t know what to do with while we installed the hardwood floors. You know, of course, when I say, “we,” I actually mean “Jim.” I cannot take any of the credit for the installation except for shouting encouragement to my man.

“Way to go, honey! You can do it! They look great! Almost there!”

I told him several months ago that I was “having club” in June. We both work better with a little pressure. Anyway, here it is the week of club, and even though we moved everything out of the dining room, it looks like a bomb went off in the rest of the house.



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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“Stuff” from the dining room has been compartmentalized by its final destination.

Tools going back to the garage are positioned by the back door. Materials on their way to the wood shop are stacked by the front door. Some furniture needing a little repair before it makes a one-way trip to Mexico is standing by in what will some day be the library. And then, there’s always the inevitable “stuff” we have no idea what to do with. That seems to have found its way to the kitchen.

Which brings me back to the cherries. This is not the week I want to make cherry pies, cherry jam or

cherry jelly. I don’t even want to mess with them. But, there they are setting on my kitchen counter waiting to be pitted. I can almost hear my mother saying, “Waste not – want not.”

I really can hear my husband saying, “Boy, cherry pie sure sounds good. I can almost taste it. Sweetie, you make the best cherry pie. Just as good as Mom used to make.”

OK, OK. Guess I’ll be making cherry pie. Might as well make several while I’m at it and serve it at club. Takes the guesswork out of what to serve for refreshments, doesn’t it?

## It was an explosive service

We went to church in Milwaukee on Sunday, at a parish called Old St. Mary’s downtown. It turned out a little different than we expected.

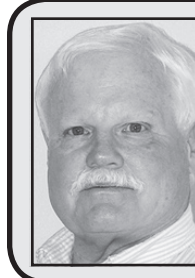
We’d spent the night, and we always like to find a church when we’re away from home on Sunday. It’s what you’re supposed to do, of course, but it’s also kind of a hobby with us. We see different churches, many of them quite beautiful, and different customs.

When we walked into Old St. Mary’s, we were struck by the intricate and ornate decoration, just a little fancier, a little more gilded, a little more grand than most. And by the little knot of people gathered in the left front of the sanctuary, some of them pointing to the ceiling, some gathered around a woman lying on her back on a pew.

A woman next to us explained that a light bulb in the ceiling, 50 or 60 feet above, had exploded, showering glass shards on the people below. The one woman apparently had been not only startled, but cut by the glass.

Nine o’clock came and went. Finally, Father decided to let the parishioners clean up and get the rest of us to pray. He started a Rosary with the congregation while we waited for the firemen and paramedics to arrive.

Someone pulled switches until the overhead spotlights went out, then turned all of them back on except the bank where the rogue bulb



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
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had exploded. Then they turned them all off just in case.

Pretty soon, a fire engine pulled up out front. Red lights reflected off the altar and windows. A company of four fire fighters and a couple of paramedics came up and tended to the woman, checked her vitals, then helped her into a wheel chair and out to the waiting ambulance.

She appeared to be an older lady, accompanied by two middle-aged daughters who went with her to the hospital. As she left, they passed the word that Joan was OK and her blood pressure – which apparently had spiked – was back down.

A team of volunteers and altar boys attacked the glass shards with a vacuum cleaner, paper towels and a broom while the organist played a few hymns. As soon as they were done, the priest and his retinue retired to the back of the church and began their procession.

The service proceeded apace through the readings and Gospel, with a circle of empty seats where the glass had fallen, then Father

came down the aisle.

“I looked down and realized it was already 20 ‘til 10,” he said with a sly grin. “I know I can talk a long time. At least I’m told I do. But I think I can summarize my homily in five words today.”

And he held up his hand. That drew a round of applause.

“Just five words: Trust in the Lord, always.”

And he sat down for the intercessions. It was the shortest sermon I’d heard in a long, long time.

It still was nearly 10 when communion was being passed out, however. We slipped quietly out the door. We had a train to catch, and a long way to go before we got home.

Cynthia wondered how they’d change that broken bulb way up on the vaulted ceiling. It’s normally done with a long pole with a device on the end to grip the bulb, but this time, she pointed out, there wouldn’t be much left to grab.

We couldn’t stay to see. But we came away with a story to tell.

So how was it up north?  
Hot.

We went to the annual summer meeting of the National Newspaper Association, since Steve is on the board, and it’s always fun to visit new and interesting places.

The national president gets to pick where the summer meeting will be held. This year, the president is from Minnesota, so he picked Duluth.

(When Steve was president, we went to Santa Fe, N.M. OK, so it’s not in Kansas. It was 75 degrees in Santa Fe and 95 in Wichita. Where would you go?)

Anyway, we figured that early summer on Lake Superior would be pretty cool. We checked the forecast and packed long-sleeved shirts, long pants and jackets. We also packed some short-sleeved items for during the day.

And sure enough, the temperature got down to 60 or 70 every night and rose to the mid-80s every day. We were fine. We had brought enough warm-weather clothes to get us by and we used the long-sleeved items on the train, where it was well air conditioned both going and coming.

Duluth is an old shipping town. Lake and salt-water freighters still ply the waters there, picking up grain, iron ore and coal, among other things.

They say the town stays warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer than the surrounding countryside, and that’s probably right. It was 64 when we started home, and by the time we had gone 10 miles



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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inland the temperature had gone up 10 degrees. A few more miles, it was 87, and it topped out around 91. We were driving through the famous north woods in a heat wave.

We started out in McCook on the train. Transferred to another train in Chicago. Landed in Milwaukee, where we spent the night and rented a car to drive to Duluth, a 6 1/2 hour trip from one corner of Wisconsin to the other. It was sort of like driving from Pittsburg on the Missouri border to St. Francis – and then back a few days later.

It was a long trip, and I got sort of tired of Wisconsin despite the lovely scenery and the car’s good air conditioning. We took the long way down, through some National Forests lands, but didn’t stop much other than for lunch.

And lunch was interesting. The volunteer firemen in one tiny town were having a hot dog-and-brat roast. For \$3, you could get a hot dog or brat, chips and a drink, just like at home. We got our lunch and heard all about the fire trucks lined up to advertise the fund-raiser, getting the story from a volunteer with a thick north-woods accent.

We passed Ashland, on the south shore of Lake Superior. It had an old pier once used to load iron ore onto lake boats and looked like a tough place to spend the winter, right in the face of the cold north wind. We passed through Stevens Point and by Lake Winnebago, through Fond du Lac and Waukesha on the way in to Milwaukee.

We saw a lot of bogs along the way and signs for wild rice and cranberries. I didn’t even know they grew cranberries in Wisconsin. We didn’t, however, see any moose, just one deer which ran across the road right in front of us. That made us feel right at home.

But it was a good trip. We visited an aquarium, a railroad museum and a retired freighter in Duluth. Steve had walleye for lunch and supper, and we got to see a lot of old friends from all over the country.

Next year, the president will be from Colorado, and he’s looking to have his summer meeting in Estes Park. Maybe it will be cooler. It certainly will be closer, but we’ve been there lots of times, and it’s always fun to see new places and make some new friends.

## Researcher needs war memories

To the Editor:

For many of us, it is hard to imagine what life was like in the United States during World War II. Virtually every person in the nation was affected by the war every day. Scrap drives, bond sales, patriotic displays, rationing books and shortages of food staples, gasoline and

### Letter to the Editor

rubber, all were a part of daily life on the home front.

Much has been written about the lives of our nation’s men and women during that time. There are few among us who do not know about the experiences of G.I. Joe and Rosie the Riveter.

One group whose experiences have been largely overlooked in historical accounts of World War II is American children. Certainly, their lives were as greatly affected as those of adults. While those who were babies and preschoolers had little, if any, recollection from that time, people who were school-age children surely have stories to tell about life as a child during this pivotal time in history.

As a master’s student at Washburn University, I hope to fill some of that gap in historical accounts with my final thesis project. “At Home on the Range: Childhood in Kansas

During World War II.” My goal is to survey adults who were children living in Kansas during World War II to collect their childhood stories and memories.

If you are aged 75-85 and are willing to participate, I invite you to contact me. Once I’ve heard from you, I will send you a questionnaire. You may reach me by e-mail at donna.clark@washburn.edu or by note or postcard sent to Donna Clark, in care of World War II Research Project, Washburn University, 1700 SW College Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66621.

I look forward to hearing from a large variety of Kansans – men, women, people of all races and ethnicities, rural or urban, and pacifists as well as those who supported the war. It is time to record this group’s experiences in history.

Donna Clark  
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