

The Civil Rights Movement - not enough

Some of you may recall the "Speaking Of" question from the first *Pendulum* of this semester. If you have forgot, it was simply this, "Do you think that the civil rights movement was a success?"

Well, that's an easy question. Of course it was a success. What else could we call it?

Then I stopped myself and took off my rose colored glasses. How could I for a moment think that the civil rights movement was a success? We may have an "integrated" society, but we certainly do not have an integrated society.

Yes, in America all races get along. In America every man is your brother and every woman is your sister. In America, everyone is equal and everyone is happy. Ah. Isn't that some of the sweetest bullshit you've ever read?

America is a powder keg of racial tension waiting for the right spark to cause it to explode.

How dare we say that there is no race problem in the United States

of America? How can we call ourselves "integrated" when there are still people killing one another because of racial motivations and when organizations fueled by hate, like the Klu Klux Klan, still exist?

I should probably justify myself right now. As a white man, what

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gives me the right to talk about America's race problem? How can I, a guy who grew up in an all white, middle-class neighborhood, possibly have anything to say about racism? Here comes my reasoning: I am a racist.

Racist is probably too strong a word, but since it is only one that even close to fits, I'll use it.

I don't want to be considered a racist, but I can't help that society has made me aware of color differ-

ences. Society (read that as our parents and grandparents) hasn't always taught us the right thing, to embrace and celebrate the differences between races. It has handed down the chains that has been forging for the last 400 years. As a result, and it causes me so much pain to admit it, if I see a black man, I see a color before I see a person.

However, I know with absolute certainty that I am not alone. There is a racist living in every home on every street corner in the country. That's just the way it is. Everybody sees color differences, it's just a question of how sharply they see the contrast. I personally consider myself to be racist "lite." I have loved black men and women as passionately as I have

love white ones.

It is hard to talk about a subject like this. To try to squeeze issues of this size into words is near impossible. I don't want to offend anyone with what I'm saying, but I am going to write what I think is true - I don't think that the civil rights movement was a success.

The civil rights movement accomplished much. The work of Martin Luther King Jr., Marcus Garvey and Thurgood Marshall will not be soon forgotten.

I do think that it was not enough. With the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., Malcom X and Medgar Evers, the most prolific of the civil rights leaders, along with both John and Robert Kennedy, the civil rights movement seemed to fade from focus.

With its head cut off, in the history books, it just seemed to die. True, the NAACP keep the fires burning, but the truth of the matter is we have grown complacent. We have accepted that the problem was

solved. How can that be true when we saw L.A. burning after the acquittal of the officers responsible for the Rodney King beating.

The truth is this: The American black man has been tortured, raped and beaten down for the last four centuries. If we expected that gaping scar to have healed in years since we put the Band-aid on it in 1965, we are fooling ourselves.

Time heals all wounds, but that doesn't mean we should sit back and wait for racial harmony. We must never stop trying to force issues into the light, no matter how disturbing or unpleasant.

I want my children to love all people, whatever color or race.

"Raw, naked truth exchanged between the black man and the white man is what a whole lot more of is needed in this country-to clear the air of the racial mirages, cliches, and lies that this country's very atmosphere has been filled with for four hundred years."

- Malcom X

Abortion: murder of the unborn, holocaust of the soul

Despite that I am yet to have my own, I like to believe that there is a facet of having children that I can understand. I speak of the hope that most parents have for their children: that each child can have a life that is better, however much so, than the parents did. And though many of us are not parents yet, we have an obligation to meet for the generations that follow: we must leave them a world that is better than ours.

Part of that legacy — its foundation, even — is the reverence bestowed upon the human soul. Especially in America, we have held the soul in sacred honor.

Accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, Mother Teresa said, "the greatest destroyer of peace is abortion, because if a mother can kill her own child, what is left for me to kill you and you to kill me? There is nothing between." Years later, she added that abortion caused a "blindness" that prevented people from seeing the loss of the soul.

Thinking on what Mother Teresa said, and about what's happened in the short time I've lived in this beautiful world, I cannot but believe that there is truth in those words. In recent years we've heard of students gunning down classmates in schools, teenagers throwing their newborn babes into trashcans, mothers killing their own children for any number of insane reasons... I could go on, but I like to

think that I'm a man of good cheer.

How can this happen in America, where we claim to cherish human life? These are things that used to shock us, and now... has our soul been diminished to this depth?

I believe that if America, and the world, is to have *any* value for human life, it cannot do so while allowing for the abortion of the unborn. Any less robs from the worth of the soul.

What is the soul?

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It cannot be created by man, nor studied by his instruments. It is without size, mass, or weight.

But it's there: the living essence of you and me. The soul is the most precious thing we have. It is not only the spark of life, but it hints at something bigger than man. The soul is a gift from God.

America has long prospered because of this belief in something higher than man. It has provided the concrete foundations for our morality. Reverence for the soul has borne our fortitude and lust for justice. Without the respect for something larger than ourselves, the rule of law can no longer stand: law collapses, entirely without real value.

What happens when the soul becomes cheapened by a society that permits the killing of unborn innocents? Since *Roe v. Wade*, 37 million have perished from abortion. Compare that to 12 million who died in the Holocaust. Start talking about numbers that big, and your conscience *will* feel deadened... it is *very* hard to conceive of that kind of scope and not be affected.

Is it fair to compare abortion to the Holocaust? Hitler murdered millions in the name of "racial purity." Abortion has murdered millions out of "choice" and "privacy."

However the rationale gets dressed, at its core lies an argument for "convenience." Hitler saw the Jews, the crippled, and others as inconvenient to the society he madly envisioned. So to is a fetus now portrayed as an inconvenience to what we are told is a "modern life." Both "inconveniences" were provided for — legally, no less — by the death of innocent lives. Both the unborn and the victims of the Holocaust have been called something less than human: whether "tissue mass" or "degenerate" or any number of things... anything that would make the task of removing them all the more toler-

able.

There are more comparisons. Saline-injection, used today to kill a fetus by burning it alive inside the womb, was developed by Nazi doctors in the concentration camps. Margaret Sanger — founder of Planned Parenthood, the largest abortion provider in the U.S. — was a believer in "Aryan purity" and saw abortion as one means by which racial minorities, which she believed were "inferior," could be gradually eliminated from American society. Look at Sanger's writings, and you can see where abortion in this country grew out of Nazi-style eugenics.

Ethnic purity isn't the reason why abortion is fought for today. It's about power... and money. Abortion is a \$500 million a year business. With that kind of profit, there comes a lot of influence to keep the "mills" running.

What has been the ultimate cost of abortion? These are *human lives* we're dealing with, with beating hearts and brain activity. That's why the argument that a fetus is a "non-viable tissue mass" is wrong: That an abortion should be no different from an appendectomy. Sorry, but I've never met an appendix that could cure AIDS or break McGwire's homerun record... all of that and more is the potential in an unborn child.

Our culture is making decisions on who lives and who dies,

based on the convenience of those who can speak out. When that happens, the sanctity of life is destroyed. The soul becomes lessened in holiness, and it becomes injured to what once impinged upon its conscience. Ever since abortion became legal, we have become used to what once was abomination: skyrocketing promiscuity and drug use, rape, murder... all of these and more have increased terrifically since 1973 and the *Roe* decision.

Diminish the value of the soul, and our culture diminishes as well.

Abortion will one day be abolished, and that's not said without reason. There was another evil in this country once, and it too was brought to an end. Violence will not end abortion though, as it did slavery and as some believe and even try, unfortunately. Instead, abortion will be overcome by changing people's hearts in a spirit of love and humility. Here in America, we should be thankful that God has given us the chance to decide for ourselves what it is that we must do... in addition to the chance to act upon it.

Until then, America is losing possession of its national soul, through callous disregard of human life. And if we cannot have the same regard for the lives of unborn children, we stand little chance of respecting the lives of those we see every day.