

# Life News

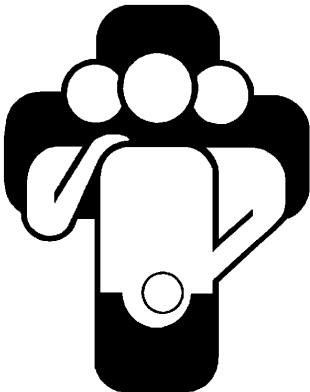
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*Promoting the Sanctity of Life*

August 2013

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## Journeying through Unexpected Pregnancy

*Katrina Haywood*



My story begins about ten years ago. I was 18, at University studying teaching, and had just finished a Certificate of Youth Ministry and was working in a local parish. I also liked to play piano, violin, netball, was a keen runner and enjoyed hanging out with friends. I grew up in a supportive family, and had a happy and full childhood. Despite the appearance of a very full life, I was still wrestling with where my life was going, and who I was. I'm pretty sure I was quite normal for that age, as most late adolescents are found 'sitting on a hill meditating to find oneself'.

Like many of my generation, I was struggling to find my authentic self, amid some very conflicting messages. Society pushes education, boys, friends, money, booze, parties etc. as truth and fulfilment. My religion counters with prayer, helping the needy, vocation and purpose as the path to follow. Drowning in my social and cultural norms and paradoxical Church life, I was struggling to find a sense of purpose and self.

At this time in my life I had big plans. Finish my study, work, travel for a year or two, marry the guy of my dreams, buy a house and eventually have children. During this time I met a boy. He was different from anyone I had ever met. He was interested in me, not what I could do or where I was going. During this time of identity confusion, being

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# Editorial

Who likes suffering? Not me. Give me pleasure any day.

And yet Christians acknowledge that suffering is not something to be avoided at all costs. Jesus prepares us for this future: *'I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world'* (John 16.33). St Paul, too, leads the path into suffering by proclaiming that *'For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak then I am strong'* (2 Corinthians 12.10). It's not even so farfetched to translate St Paul as saying *'for when I am suffering then I am strong'*.

Modern living doesn't always help us live in ways that are open to suffering. Pain seems like such a waste. We have devoted an unprecedented amount of resources to the relief of suffering. Many of us reap the benefits each day of a culture that has deemed suffering pointless and is financially committed to its reduction, if not destruction. But this culture is not without its own ironies. Wesley J. Smith has perceptively written that 'never in human history has suffering been more readily relieved. And yet, paradoxically, we have never been more afraid of suffering'. If our god is health and pleasure, then suffering represents the demonic, an enemy to be feared and defeated at all costs, leading to what Smith calls 'our neurotic fear of suffering'.

But, of course, while health and pleasure are goods, they are not gods. They are not the primary purpose of our existence. When they do take up such a mantle, they make increasingly greater demands of us. In their pursuit of victory over suffering, they also pursue victory over sufferers. While there are times in life when we *cannot* relieve suffering, there are also times in life when we *ought not* relieve suffering. We are not only bodies, but souls too.

In this light, Gilbert Meilaender has drawn attention to a sermon of St Augustine preached in 397 but re-discovered only recently in 1990. In it, Augustine is preaching on the martyrs, the heroes and 'muscular athletes' of the Christian faith, who gave their lives for Christ and His Church. But Augustine attempts to bring this heroism down to the stage of daily life, something closer to the lives of the hearers. 'God has many martyrs in secret', Augustine proclaimed. 'Sometimes you shiver with fever: you are fighting.

You are in bed: it is you who are the athlete'.

What's going on? The Augustinian scholar Peter Brown notes, 'Exquisite pain accompanied much late-Roman medical treatment. Furthermore, everyone, Augustine included, believed that amulets provided by skilled magicians... did indeed protect the sufferer – but at the cost of relying on supernatural powers other than Christ alone. They worked. To neglect them was like neglecting any other form of medicine. But the Christian must not use them. Thus, for Augustine to liken a Christian sickbed to a scene of martyrdom was not a strained comparison'.

In sickbeds across the world today, Christians are again becoming 'martyrs in secret'. In witness to a world which sees suffering only as failure, we must sometimes say 'no' to medical treatments which might save the body, yet forfeit the soul. Indeed, with St Paul, we can even rejoice in our sufferings. For, in Christ, when I am suffering, then I am strong.

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Recently I read a biography of the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. The author, Rupert Shortt, summarised Williams' pro-life position as presented in his book *Lost Icons*:

'The flaw, as Rowan sees it, in pro-abortion arguments is a muddled notion of choice. By discouraging a pregnant woman from smoking or drinking alcohol, we are taking it for granted that she is morally constrained by interests not completely defined by her. Choice, therefore, is not the decisive moral issue, and anyone who treats it as such is reducing ethics to a trial of strength – that is, to "who is able more successfully to defend their interest against others".'

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In this edition of *Life News* we feature the courageous story of Katrina Haywood and her personal journey through an unexpected pregnancy. She spoke to this story at last year's LFL Annual Conference in a very moving and heartening address. The 2013 Conference is fast approaching, and you will not want to miss out on the opportunity, especially if you live in South Australia. See the next page for more details, and put the date in your diary.

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Finally, an apology is in order to Pastor Christian Fandrich whose reflections on Christian Ethics in the last edition did not include his name.

Thomas Pietsch



# For the Least of These

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE



Kimberly Pfeiffer: The Beginning Of Life  
 Selena Ewing: A Life Affirming Meal  
 Pastor Christian Fandrich: A Pastoral Response  
 Matthew Huckel: 'I sound, therefore I am'  
 Music therapy with a man in a  
 persistent vegetative state &  
 the right to life.

OCTOBER 5 2013

9am registration for 9.30am start. Close 3pm.  
 St Peter's Lutheran Church, 521 Main North Road, Elizabeth, SA  
 Registration/cuppas/lunch \$20 (concession \$10)  
 Please email [lutheransforlife@gmail.com](mailto:lutheransforlife@gmail.com) or call 0418 847 385  
 by 21 September to RSVP and to advise of dietary requirements

*You did for me.*

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of  
 the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'  
 Matthew 25:40



[lca.org.au/lutherans-for-life](http://lca.org.au/lutherans-for-life)

## ***Lutherans for Life Branches:***

**Riverland Branch** (Serving the Riverland area of  
 South Australia; established in September 1989)  
 Contact Person : Mrs Lois Rathjen 08 8584 5706

**New Zealand Branch** (Established in June 1991)  
 Contact Person : Dr Petrus Simons 04 476 9398

**Sunshine Coast Branch** (Serving the Sunshine  
 Coast area of QLD; established in Aug 1992)  
 Contact Person : Mr Norm Auricht 07 5443 6849

**Darling Downs Branch** (Serving the Darling Downs  
 area of Queensland; re-established in Oct 2005)  
 Contact Person : Mrs Joy Wurst 07 4613 4189

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## Journeying through Unexpected Pregnancy

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around someone who not only saw who I really was but also liked me for it was completely revolutionary. We had so much fun together and spent most of the time laughing and joking around. We connected straight away and fell for each other quickly. We had a shared faith, and became involved in the young people church scene together. Nine months into our relationship we found out we were pregnant. He was 21 and I was 19.

To say this news was unexpected would be an understatement. I will never forget sitting on the floor in Mark's bedroom, seeing the positive test. I went into shock. I started shaking violently and felt completely numb. Mark cried his eyes out. To us, this was a disaster. Everything we had planned, everything we were working towards was shattered in the moment we saw the positive test. We knew that our parents would be severely disappointed and that mine might actually disown me. We were both from religious families and most of our friends were religious – WE were religious. We felt that all our friends were likely to judge or even not be our friends anymore. I felt God hated me – that he must be so angry with me for getting “knocked up” – that I was a hypocrite and a Pharisee. I was too full of shame or guilt to say much more to him than “sorry sorry sorry”.

We had never felt so alone. We went to a movie to try to take our minds off it, but saw kids everywhere and had to leave. How did this happen you may ask? How could two young people from such close knit families with such strong faiths even become sexually active let alone get pregnant? I think it was a number of factors.

While we had been warned about pregnancy and STIs, like most teenagers these seemed to abstract. “It would never happen to me”. And while we had been taught that sexual relationships outside marriage were wrong, we had no way of balancing the real desires and temptations of the situation. In this sense, we were both naive. We didn't fully grasp that putting ourselves in tempting situation would make abstinence and rational decision making much harder.

Also, despite being “Churchy”, we were also very much subject to cultural and societal pressures. Our religious experiences explicitly forbid sex outside marriage, yet popular culture, media and peer groups portrayed sex as a recreational activity. Our background and religious

upbringings labelled us a “sinners”, yet our immediate cultural influences declared virgins “freaks”. Both sides of the conflict insinuates that the situation is black and white, and do not try to understand that the issue is complex. Neither societal nor religious messages (that I received) had the understanding that decisions and values around sex outside of marriage need to be worked through rather than dictated and propagandised. Understandably, many young people receiving polar opposite messages can be easily confused, and this can result in decision making being impaired.

However, underpinning all the above reasons was the fact that we really did love each other. And as Shakespeare was so fond of saying, “love is blind”.

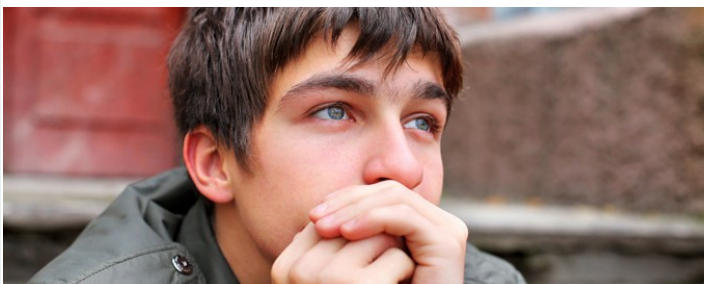
We didn't know what to do. Keeping the baby would mean potential ostracism from our friends and Church community, getting kicked out of home for me, financial poverty, ruined education, no travel, career limitations, shame, public humiliation, judgement – the list goes on. Not having the baby would mean going through with a termination, but escaping all the shame and our lives trotting on as planned (or so we thought at the time).

The first week after holding that positive test was horrendous. Mark panicked and said we should terminate; I was still in shock and couldn't connect two thoughts together. Then he calmed down and said we could manage, but I had unfrozen and said that we couldn't, and abortion was the only answer. During this time, I begged God to make it all go away. I bargained everything under the sun for the situation to end. Even though I still thought God hated me (or on good days just that he was so disappointed in me he could hardly look at me) I began to feel glimmers of God peeking through the darkness. It no longer felt like we were completely alone.

About ten days after the end of the world, we knew we needed some help and support. We went to a family planning clinic in the city (for anonymity), and eventually saw a nurse who confirmed that we were indeed pregnant. Straight away she drew up the abortion referrals and gave them to us to sign. There was no discussion of other alternatives. Luckily we had calmed down by then and insisted on hearing all our options. She gave us the name of a councillor in St Kilda, and we left. All I can say is that thank God we didn't see her five days earlier.

By the time the counselling session rolled around, we had made the tentative decision to continue with the pregnancy. How? We had no idea how we were going to manage. But I knew that unless I decided to stop the pregnancy, it would grow into a little baby and that a new life would result. I felt that I could not knowingly stop this little thing growing, no matter what it did to my life or Mark's. After leaving the clinic in St Kilda we felt relieved, but still we had no support. It was time to tell our families.

Telling our families was the hardest thing I have ever





done. It was such a gut wrenching and traumatic time. After telling our families, we began to tell friends. We ended up losing a lot of friends – most tried to understand, but they were simply too young and the situation too huge. However, during this time God opened his arms and held us tight. We felt him saying that it was OK, that our lives weren't over, to stay strong, that this will pass. I truly believe God sent us Marcia Riordan at the Respect Life Office of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. I was scared to ring her because I thought she would be all "save the babies" – that she would talk to my uterus instead of me, that once we had decided to keep the baby she would be off on a holy crusade to save the next baby in-utero. Nothing could be further from the truth. She was the loving arms we needed. The first thing she said to me was "Congratulations!" She also said we were brave for giving our little child life. It was so refreshing after only hearing that our lives were ruined and that this baby was a disaster.

Mark and I decided to get married. It was a beautiful ceremony and we even had a breakdancing priest in true Mark and Katie style. I truly believe God blessed us that day.

Nine months after the lives we planned ended, a new life began. Our beautiful, healthy and gorgeous daughter came into the world. She was the reason behind all the hardship. She could not have come at any other time – she had to be born, and God made sure she was.

Upon reflection, from my point of view, there are a few things that I felt really impacted on my experience of unexpected pregnancy.

Firstly, we need to make sure that we promote an authentic culture of life. I believe that if we reach out and offer support, love and acceptance to women and men experiencing unexpected pregnancy, then people in that situation will feel they have real choice and hope about their futures. Women (and men!) dealing with unplanned pregnancies (even within marriage) often feel alone, isolated, overburdened, subject to financial strain, etc. If we truly support the parents, then they will have real choice, and not feel like abortion is the only option. However in saying this, there are women who will still go on to have an abortion, and they might need non-judgemental support and love afterwards, and this is another opportunity to be Jesus' hands in the world.

Another great resource is Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body. It is a beautiful account of what it means to be man and women, the true dignity of a person and God's original design for human sexuality. There are many teen study options available online, and I feel that it gives a rich and deep account of the Christian perspective when it comes to love and marriage.

I would have to say, though, that the biggest influence on my decision to continue with the pregnancy was Mark. He constantly reassured me that he would be there for me, and that we could do this together. It is so sad that men are socialised to stand back and go along with "Your body,

your choice". I would encourage men to speak out and offer women the support to have the child. In saying this, it doesn't mean that you have to continue a romantic relationship with the mother. I just know from my experience that I don't know what the outcome would have been if Mark had kept quiet and not said that he would help me.



Also, I didn't realise that "this too shall pass!" Parents and friends may go nuts, but when the baby arrives they usually love it to bits. Our parents are possibly the most doting grandparents ever – they are very supportive and adore their grandchildren. Our siblings are also fantastic aunts and uncles.

Finally, on a practical level, offering hand-me-downs, car seats, prams, gift certificates etc, can really take the financial pressure off. In addition to this, young Mums usually don't know anyone else with children. Invitations to play groups, BBQ's, or even pamphlets about events they might be interested in attending can help a young mum to feel included and less isolated. Deciding to have the baby is only the first step in the really long journey of parenthood. Continued support and love is very much needed!

Also, I would highly recommend any young person that has experienced unexpected pregnancy to seek counselling if needed. Despite ending up with a lovely baby, the whole ordeal can be extremely traumatic. The amount of shame, guilt and judgement can be hard to process on your own. I think it is also important to tell young people (especially those from a Christian background) that God loves them, and that he is bigger than any sin. I truly believe that everyone sins (welcome to the big boat of humanity!), and God gets that. I think that it is what you do after that really can lead to an amazing encounter of God's grace and love.

On that note, just a brief personal update: Mark and I have been married for nine years this year. We have been blessed with three amazing children and a ridiculous toy poodle.

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*Katrina presented a version of this paper at the Lutherans for Life Annual Conference 2012.*

# Snippets

## Dr Rob Pollnitz

### Tasmania's upper house considers abortion bill

Readers may recall that Health Minister Michelle O'Byrne has been promoting an abortion bill similar to that in Victoria, which would allow termination of pregnancy right up to the time of birth at 9 months gestation (after 16 weeks with the consent of two abortion clinic doctors). This bill has passed the lower house by a 13-11 margin, and is now the subject of an inquiry in the upper house. The bill appears unnecessary in that since 2001 Tasmania has had a law allowing abortion at any stage, provided the woman has been counselled about all the risks and has given her informed consent. The new Bill makes no requirement for counselling or that consent be informed, and has harsh provisions to eliminate any dissenting view on abortion. A penalty of \$65,000 and 12 months in jail can be imposed on any person protesting within a 300 metre wide exclusion zone around any abortion clinic. The prohibition includes silent, non-obstructive, non-intimidatory protests, in breach of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Australia is a signatory. Readers who share my concern are encouraged to write to the 15 members of the upper house respectfully asking them not to support this unnecessary bill. ([fava.org.au](http://fava.org.au), [parliament.tas.gov.au](http://parliament.tas.gov.au) includes email addresses)

### SA parliament may provide IVF for the "socially infertile"

Our Labor minister for social inclusion, the openly gay Bill Hunter, has proposed a change to overcome "discrimination" in SA reproductive technology law, which allows access to IVF services only for women deemed to be "medically infertile". He wishes to make IVF available to lesbian couples and to fertile single women. At present these women have to travel interstate to receive IVF treatment. Premier Jay Weatherill supports the move towards "equality" and the bill has already passed in the upper house. Concerns about deliberately creating fatherless babies are being dismissed, and the bill is expected to pass in the lower house by a two vote margin. The writer is old enough to remember when discrimination could imply wisdom or discernment. ([bioedge.org](http://bioedge.org), [fava.org.au](http://fava.org.au))

### US scientists succeed in cloning human embryos

Researchers in Oregon USA claimed in May to have created cloned human embryos using the same technique that created Dolly the cloned sheep, and grown them to the stage where they can be destroyed to extract their embryonic stem cells. This is the first report of cloning human embryos since the fraudulent claims of Korean scientist Hwang Woo-Suk in 2005. The general reaction was dismissive, in that adult stem cells are now proven to be superior at achieving treatments for over 60,000 patients a year around the world. ([bionews.org](http://bionews.org), [lifenews.com](http://lifenews.com))



### Euthanasia bills in Australia

In NSW Green MLC Cate Faehrmann moved to legalise lethal doses on request with a bill adopting the title of the original NT one, the Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill 2013. Those in favour quoted reports claiming that the laws in Holland and Belgium operate well and without risk. HOPE Australia ensured that all MPs received a copy of the Alex Schadenberg book, *Exposing Vulnerable People to Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide*, and several MLCs quoted from this book in their speeches. The bill was defeated in the upper house by 23-13 votes. ([epcc.ca](http://epcc.ca), [noeuthanasia.org.au](http://noeuthanasia.org.au))

Various euthanasia bills in federal and state parliaments appear not to be progressing at the time of writing, although this happy state of affairs may change at any time.

### Federal Sex Discrimination Act passes with amendments

Readers may recall that this Act was originally designed to protect women from workplace discrimination, and was then expanded to include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds for non-discrimination. The bill in this form passed the lower house. In the last week of sitting the bill went to the senate, where the religious exemption for aged care centres was removed. Next morning the amended bill returned to the lower house and was passed. Looking past aged care, what is the agenda here? Anna Brown of the Human Rights Law Centre welcomed "the limitation on discrimination in aged care, an important step in the removal of broad exemptions for religious organisations." It would appear that church schools, church agencies and Catholic hospitals are likely to face threats to their freedom of conscience and belief if this new law is allowed to stand.

([theaustralian.com.au](http://theaustralian.com.au), [newsweekly.com.au](http://newsweekly.com.au))

### Same Sex Marriage around the world

I believe there is general acceptance within the LCA that church members who are living with a homosexual orientation should be welcomed in a warm and pastoral

# Snippets

Dr Rob Pollnitz

manner. There are LCA members who would go further and claim that we should recognise the union of couples who identify as homosexual and who choose to live together in a committed long-term relationship. The writer remains to be convinced that same-sex marriage is a good idea, largely because it will lead to same-sex parenting. After 40 years as a paediatrician

I firmly believe that children flourish best when raised by a Mum and a Dad, whenever that ideal is possible. Given the way our society is moving, probably soon that sentence will be construed as hate speech. Yet I recall the words of G K Chesterton – “This triangle of truisms, of father, mother and child, cannot be destroyed; it can only destroy those civilisations which disregard it.”

**New Zealand** has passed a law to allow same-sex marriage after minimal discussion, and

**Australia** has considered the option through much of 2012-2013. On the 20<sup>th</sup> June a Green bill to recognise the marriages of same-sex couples who wed overseas was lost in the Senate by 44-28 votes. The following day the Adelaide Advertiser ran a poll – should gay marriage be legalised – and 91 per cent of 1,211 respondents voted No. Labor MP Susan Close tabled a bill in the SA lower house to allow same-sex marriage. Constitutional lawyers advise that marriage is the domain of federal parliament and that any such state law would face a High Court challenge. DLP Senator John Madigan has suggested that we have a marriage referendum, with balanced Yes and No cases, and let the people decide.

Kevin Rudd has recently decided he supports same-sex marriage, and comments – “Under no circumstances should marriage equality legislation place any legal requirement on the church or other religious institutions to conduct same-sex marriages. The churches should be explicitly exempt.” Please see the comment on anti-discrimination law above.

John Howard said in 2011 – “Changing the definition of marriage, which has lasted for time immemorial, is not an exercise in human rights and equality; it is an exercise in de-authorising the Judaeo-Christian influence in our society, and any who pretend otherwise are deluding themselves.”

**The US Supreme Court** on the 26<sup>th</sup> June issued two decisions to override the federal Defense of Marriage Act and to refuse to overturn the lower court decision in California holding that man-woman marriage is unconstitutional. This has the effect of allowing same-sex marriage in California and in any other US state that approves it. The majority ruling seemed to indicate that the only reason Christians oppose same-sex marriage is hatred of gays and lesbians.

**In France** the Socialist government led by President Francois Hollande legalised same-sex marriage and

adoption on the 18<sup>th</sup> May, and literally millions of French people have gathered in peaceful protests focused on the right of children to have a mother and a father. The European Centre for Law and Justice says that in sheer numbers this is the largest mass social movement in France since the epoch-making demonstrations of 1968. The French police appear to have been directed to firmly suppress these protests, and there are numerous videos online showing riot police using tear gas and baton charges against family groups and the elderly opposing the new law. A report



in Le Figaro estimates over 1,000 arrests and 500 detentions since the 26<sup>th</sup> May. As of the 26<sup>th</sup> June the pro-family protest group La Manif Pour Tous have highlighted one student arrested at a peaceful protest, 23-year-old Nicolas Bernard-Buss, who has been sentenced to one month in prison for “rebellion”. La Manif Pour Tous have a Facebook page at [facebook.com/SoutienANicolas](https://facebook.com/SoutienANicolas), and as I write there are scenes of more than 100 protesters standing still and silent the required 3 metres apart in the Place Vendome, waiting for the release of Nicolas. From the fringes there are calls to Liberez Nicolas!

## Bishops conference urges Catholics to turn political

The ACBC, the executive leadership of the Catholic Church, is urging Australia’s five million Catholics to “take their democratic freedoms seriously, become involved in the political process, and vote for the common good”. Specific areas mentioned are health and aged care, helping the poor and disabled, indigenous Australians, defending traditional marriage, opposing abortion and euthanasia, and lobbying for “fair, equitable and transparent” funding for all schools. They oppose any harsher measures for asylum-seekers and call for an end to mandatory detention. They specifically criticise the policy of not allowing asylum seekers to work or get full social welfare. In the coming election campaign “we should all take the opportunity to meet with local candidates and make our concerns known.” The writer would be delighted to see Lutherans shake off their political inertia and follow this advice. ([theaustralian.com.au](http://theaustralian.com.au))



# Snippets continued

## Gender-selection abortion bill miscarries

Readers of the last *Life News* may recall that DLP Senator John Madigan had tabled a bill seeking to remove Medicare funding for abortion on the grounds of gender selection. This followed reports of a couple opting to abort IVF twin boys because they wanted to “balance” their family with a girl, achieved by further IVF with female embryos only being implanted. The Federal Senate Committee invited submissions and received over 1100, and it is reported that over 98 per cent were in favour of the bill being passed. Despite this high level of interest the Committee has refused to hold any public hearings. The Committee issued its report on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June and declined to make any recommendations, simply observing that the report will provide information for senators on the arguments received. With Parliament closing on the 27<sup>th</sup> June the bill may return after the Federal election. This shuffling has occurred while the United Nations reports that as many as 200 million girls are missing in the world today, due largely to



gender-selective abortion.

## Late-term abortionist in Australia deregistered

The Victorian Tribunal found that between 2000 and 2009, Dr Mark Schulberg of Croydon had provided multiple patients with more than 25,000 Xanax tablets and more than 9,000 Valium tablets among other addictive drugs. His defence counsel argued that he was the only doctor in Victoria providing late-term abortions and should be allowed to continue this service. Noreen Megay of the Tribunal rejected this, saying she was concerned that late-term abortions were being done in a day surgery clinic without a specialist anaesthetist and without intensive care services nearby. A woman is reported to have died at his clinic in December 2011. Dr Schulberg had employed disgraced anaesthetist Dr James Peters, who is serving a 14-year jail sentence for infecting 55 women with Hepatitis C at the Croydon clinic. (Steven Ertelt)

## Abortion drug RU-486 reduced to AUS\$11.80

In the closing week of Federal parliament Julia Gillard and health minister Tanya Plibersek combined to add Mifepristone (RU-486) and Misoprostol to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, to be used together to terminate an early pregnancy (defined as up to 7 weeks gestation). The PBS is designed to provide essential life-saving drugs. (smh.com.au)

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Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

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