

**NEWSPAPERS EXPERIENCING A SHARP DECLINE IN CIRCULATION**

Around WW II, there was a popular song by Noel Coward, called “Don’t Put Your Daughter on the Stage, Mrs. Worthington”. Today, that song could be adjusted to “Don’t Let Your Daughter Read the Newspapers, Mrs. Worthington”.

Just as young Lotharios lounged around the theatres to mislead and corrupt innocent (and, not so innocent) young girls, today’s newspapers are hanging around your home and similarly corrupting and misleading your daughters (and sons!) away from your family’s values.

Journalists today attend the same journalism schools and all produce the same liberal “mainstream” news. Same-sex marriage, euthanasia, sex with multiple partners, homosexual rights and abortion, for example, are all portrayed in newspapers as reasonable and progressive ideas, which everyone, i.e. those who are knowledgeable and informed, support, and only “dinosaurs” reject. The fact that this philosophy of life is having a horrendous effect on our society never hits the radar of these journalists and their editors: nor does the possibility that the majority of the public doesn’t go along with such an outlook, which the media incorrectly assume represents the prevailing orthodoxy. However, the fact that journalists are out of touch with the real lives of Canadians, only serves to alienate many readers, who find the content of newspapers a convincing example of a world gone mad.

It is little wonder that journalists today are not held in high esteem. In fact, according to an Angus Reid Strategies poll, released on May 1, 2008, journalists rank very low: politicians (25%), lawyers (44%) and journalists (49%) in respect by the public. In fact, regarding respect, the profession of journalism has shown the most noticeable slump of any other profession. In 2008, less than half of all respondents say they have a great deal or a fair amount of respect for journalists (49%), compared to 73% in 1994.

**Newspaper Circulation in a Free-Fall**

Newspaper readership today is in a free fall. Who wants to experience indoctrination by way of the second hand views of liberal journalists, all too many of whom write a spin on the story, rather than the story itself? This is the pattern followed by most journalists today (although thankfully not all). That is, one no longer reads the newspapers for the “news” because, mostly, one gets only a journalist’s spin on the news.

It does not help either that the media - print, TV and radio - are a virtual monopoly, by way of “convergence”, i.e. the purchase by one media company of a number of different media outlets. The result of this convergence is that the daily news is increasingly all the same - all mined from the same news source.

For example, the Globe & Mail newspaper is a division of CTVglobemedia Publishing Inc., and the Asper Family conglomerate called Can West Global Communications Corp. not only owns many newspapers across the country, such as the National Post and Vancouver Sun, but also the Global Television Network. The result is that the news from these outlets is controlled and predictable.

**Newspapers Facing Hard Times**

Newspapers, however, are facing difficult times today in that their circulation rate and advertising is noticeably decreasing. There are several reasons for the decline in newspaper circulation (in addition to the distortion of the news). The internet is now almost the only source of news for those 18 to 35 years of age. Young people take the position that it is not reasonable to spend money on a newspaper, when one can obtain the news for free off the internet. Consequently, newspapers today are read mainly by those over 55 years of age – which does not spell longevity for newspapers.

The newspapers still holding on are those which have managed to adapt to the internet by taking on thousands of subscribers on-line, (for example, the New York Times). CanWest Global Communications Corp. has beefed up its online presence with elaborate versions of its local newspapers' classified section and has specific sites which deal with auto, real estate and job-hunting themes.

Sun Media, owned by the Quebecor group, has focused mainly on boosting its Canoe.ca brand with online video, interactive content and entertainment portal Canoe.tv.

These on-line subscriptions decrease the demand for costly overhead by newspapers, such as printing plants, circulation systems and newsprint. The current, worrisome economy has certainly not helped the situation for newspapers either.

### Tracking the Decline in Newspapers

Despite these efforts, newspapers are feeling the pinch.

The Toronto Star, which at one time had the fourth largest circulation in North America, laid off 160 employees in May because its profits have fallen 25% to date in 2008. Also, the previously profitable community newspapers, called the Metroland Group, owned by the Toronto Star, have been hit by the downward trend.

In November 2007, Sun media laid off 16 editorial employees

The Montreal Gazette (owned by CanWest Global) cut 45 jobs in April 2008.

According to the Canadian Audit Bureau of Circulations (November 2007), average weekday newspaper circulation in Canada for the six months ending September 30, 2007 have decreased for the following Canadian newspapers: Calgary Herald, Edmonton Journal, Vancouver Sun, Ottawa Citizen, Hamilton Spectator, Globe and Mail, National Post and the Toronto Star.

In the US, circulation of the top 25 newspapers has fallen 7.4% in the past three years. Sunday circulation is down 4.5%.

Advertising has fallen and has been taken up on the internet. That is, readers who might have paid for a classified listing 10 years ago, are turning to popular free websites instead.

The above numbers in the U.S., however, do not accurately portray the actual disaster facing newspapers there, because the US industry's Audit Board of Circulation last year made changes to allow the newspapers to include items previously excluded from the circulation figures, such as allowing copies of newspapers, distributed free to hotel guests, to be reclassified as "paid" circulation, and to include newspapers distributed for "educational" purposes to be regarded also as "paid" circulation. These changes might make newspaper circulation look better on paper, but they do not accurately reflect their problems with the decreasing number of subscribers.

Similarly, in Canada, major newspapers are also now circulating discounted or free copies to the public in order to keep their numbers up so as to manufacture the appearance of a robust circulation.

It apparently has not occurred to anyone in the newspaper industry that if they provided the news straight, fair and balanced, they might not be facing such difficult times.

### **COURT SQUASHES GOVERNMENT POLICY ON DRUG INJECTION SITE**

The drug injection site in Vancouver called "Insite", was established by the Liberal government at a cost of \$3 million, annually, in 2003, the only government-operated injection site in North America.

Insite is highly controversial in that it does not treat the addicts, but rather just permits them to continue an ever-spiraling downward death sentence by allowing them to deepen their addiction. That is, Insite does not provide addicts with hope by way of a treatment program - only ready access to further their addiction to drugs. According to the Expert Advisory Committee, established by the Federal government to study the injection site, only 5% of the drug addicts in the Vancouver area actually use Insite. These are the poor, whose addiction continues because of the availability to inject drugs in the site. The wealthy and professionals, eg. airline pilots, teachers, physicians, etc. always have access to treatment – but not the poor whose only “care” is the injection site. This is an unfair and discriminatory policy.

Those who support Insite, believe in the “harm reduction” approach to drug addiction - that addicts are going to use drugs anyway, so why not let them do so in a clean medically supervised environment? Also, they believe in the liberalization of drug use and they regard the Vancouver drug injection site as an open door to the eventual liberalization of all Canadian drug laws. That is, Insite is a flagship institution, which they hope will serve as a model for similar establishments in major cities across Canada.

#### Minister Funds Prevention and Treatment Program for Addicts

The Federal Conservative government, on the other hand, believes in the three-pillar approach to drug addiction by way of prevention (education), treatment, and enforcement of drug laws, which has proven to be the only effective method of dealing with drug addiction. In carrying out this policy, Health Minister Tony Clement has made the following grants:

March 5, 2008, a mass media campaign was launched aimed at parents with children aged 13-15. This included newspaper, radio and online advertisements beginning the first week of March. In April, a second campaign followed, aimed at the youth themselves, aged 13-15 years. These are the first ads of their kind in 20 years to communicate with parents and young people about the dangers of illicit drugs.

April 28, 2008, \$111 million grant was made, to be distributed to the provinces and territories to assist in strengthening treatment systems and in filling critical gaps in treatment through early intervention treatment initiatives designed to reduce and eliminate the progression and severity of illicit drug use behaviour among youth.

May 14, 2008, a \$10 million grant was given to provide treatment for drug addicts by a multidisciplinary staff, eg. doctors, nurses, therapists, counselors, etc., to serve from 70-75 clients in the Vancouver downtown east side. This grant also provided 20 new treatment beds, dedicated to vulnerable female drug addicts, especially those involved in the sex trade. For many years, these marginalized women have been abused and abandoned by society, but they will at last be given compassionate care. This is long overdue.

The objective of Canada’s drug policy is to reduce the rate of addiction by educating the public, especially youths, on the dangers of the illicit use of drugs and providing desperately needed treatment beds for addicts. This is a far better policy than one which increases drug addiction by way of a drug injection site and promotes the normalization of illicit drug use. The latter helps no one, and leads to the degradation and death of the addict, as well as being destructive to families and society as a whole.

#### License to Operate Insite to Expire

The license to operate Insite was to expire on June 30, 2008. The supporters of Insite could see the writing on the wall, that Mr. Clement, the Minister of Health, would probably shut down the site and they began to move heaven and earth to prevent this from happening.

To project the injection site in a positive light, and to promote it as unequivocally successful, they published papers in official journals, downplaying or ignoring any negative findings, and reporting meaningless findings. They retained two public relations firms to plant “success” stories of the site in major newspapers (never believe what you read in the newspapers!). They held several major press conferences in Ottawa with a prominent harm reduction researcher, Professor Neil Boyd of Simon Fraser University, expounding on the success of the site, but who did not mention his

fellow criminology professor, at the same university, Garth Davies, whose evaluations of the site reached quite a different conclusion. Insite also brought in some retired police officers to support the site.

In addition, the harm reductionists resorted to using their usual weapon of choice, ridicule and intimidation, by organizing demonstrations by addicts outside several cabinet ministers' constituency offices, and a demonstration against a physician, a specialist in drug addiction, who had the audacity to publicly speak out against the Vancouver site.

Throughout their intense campaign, the supporters repeated the theme that the Conservative government was ignoring "scientific" research for ideological reasons. This was a blatant misrepresentation of the facts. This was especially the case since the government's Expert Advisory Committee, appointed in October 2006 to review the Vancouver site, had reached conclusions, published in April, that found the site to have been a failure. In particular, it found that, as mentioned above, the site reached only 5% of the addicts in the area; did not decrease HIV, Hepatitis C, or crime, etc. (see REALity May/June 2008, "Vancouver Drug Injection Site - A Failure", p. 5). Further, 65 extra Vancouver police officers were assigned to a five block area around the site when it opened in 2003, and they were prohibited from arresting anyone for illegal possession within the five block area. Instead, police were ordered to walk the addict to the drug injection site! This "no-charge" policy created a culture of entitlement for addicts who were immune from prosecution. In addition, addicts need to spend \$35,000 per year to support their habit and that is about \$350,000 worth of crime (needed to obtain that \$35,000) – crimes committed against law-abiding citizens. The drug injection site sets up a vicious circle of increased addiction and crime.

#### Legal Challenge to Support Drug Injection Site

While all this confrontation, organized by the harm reductionists, was going on, they also launched a legal challenge before the Supreme Court of British Columbia, arguing before Mr. Justice Ian Pitfield, that the "harm reduction" approach to drug addiction was the only way to proceed.

#### Single Judge Squashes Government Policy

On May 27, 2008, Mr. Justice Pitfield, in his decision, apparently believed that he knew best how to deal with drug addiction in Canada, contrary to the policies of the federal government, which has jurisdiction over the issue. He concluded that, in his opinion, he preferred the approach of harm reduction theorists that the site provided "services and assistance" that may lead to their rehabilitation. This is contrary to the findings of the Expert Advisory Committee on the injection site, which found that the site's main activity was to assist in the continuation of the addiction. In fact, between 2004 – 2005, only 3% of the injection site's clients were referred to long-term treatment.

Using the Charter of Rights as his reason, Mr. Justice Pitfield concluded that to deny addicts the use of the site contravenes section 7 of the Charter, which provides for "the right to life, liberty and security of persons." He gave the federal government one year – until June 30, 2009 to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDS) to allow for the establishment of injection sites. In effect, the judge concluded that shooting up drugs was a constitutional right.

#### Courts Not Set Up to Determine Policy

The problem is that Mr. Justice Pitfield is no authority on drug addiction and had merely accepted the argument of those favouring the policy of harm reduction while ignoring or dismissing the government's approach to drug addiction. He bizarrely declared addiction was a "disease" like diabetes – apparently forgetting that diabetes is not self-inflicted.

That is, this decision points out the total inadequacy of our appointed, non-accountable judiciary, using the Charter as their hammer to impose their views on all of Canada, ignoring the will of an elected government. This is because judges can rely only on the narrow views put forward to them by the litigants. Judges do not have access to any of the

research facilities of Parliament, nor to the differing arguments that are expressed during a parliamentary debate. For this reason, judges should not be making decisions which have far reaching social and economic consequences. They simply do not have the background knowledge or expertise to determine such policies. Not that this little detail ever stops them! All too frequently, judges seem to believe that they have special insight and knowledge, by virtue of their (political) appointment to the bench. This is an “Olympian” approach to judgeship – it enables the judges to impose their personal views on the public, under the pretence they are merely interpreting the Charter of Rights but in effect, are using the latter to promote their own ideology.

The ramifications of this court decision are tremendous. If allowed to stand, it will permit the establishment of drug injection sites all across the country – bringing more misery and suffering to addicts and many others. Already, the City Council in Toronto is setting up a committee to review the establishment of an injection site for Toronto.

#### Government to Appeal Decision

Mr. Clement, the Minister of Health, has requested that the Department of Justice appeal this case. It is hoped, however, that, pending the appeal, the Attorney General will also apply for a “stay” of the decision. This would result in the misconstrued decision of Mr. Justice Pitfield to cease to be binding until finally dealt with by the higher courts. In the meantime, the site should be shut down to protect the lives of addicts.

Please write to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Minister of Justice, Rob Nicholson and Minister of Health, Tony Clement requesting that the decision of the B.C. Supreme Court be “stayed” and that the license to operate this site be removed so that it can no longer serve as a precedent.

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### **FAMILIES IN THE WESTERN WORLD ENDURING PERILOUS TIMES**

One of the most vital social indicators of the strength of a society is the condition and strength of its families. Judging by family statistics, it appears we are living in troubling times in the western world, including Canada. Much of the difficulties with families is due to the increase in common-law and same-sex marriages, which have weakened

traditional marriage. Common-law and same-sex marriage relationships are not as stable as legally married husband and wife relationships.

### Common-Law Relationships

According to Statistics Canada, by the time they are 10 years old, 63% of children with parents living in a common-law union, have seen their parents separate, compared with only 14% of children whose parents were married and had not previously lived common-law.

### Same-Sex Marriages

Same-sex marriages appear to be more prone to dissolution than heterosexual marriages, with the literature indicating that few homosexual relationships last longer than 2 – 3 years. Other studies indicate an even shorter period of duration for such relationships. For example, a study of homosexual men in The Netherlands found a duration of only 1.5 years. The short duration of same-sex couples' relationships creates instability and insecurity in the lives of children living within them.

In comparison, in Canada, according to the National Longitudinal Survey of 23,000 children by Statistics Canada, 86% of legally married opposite-sex couples remain together over a 10-year period. In 2001, the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics Study on marriage and divorce statistics reported that 66% of first marriages last 10 years or longer, with 50% lasting 20 years or longer.

This is one of the reasons that the American College of Pediatricians concluded, in January 2004, that same-sex parents are not an acceptable alternative to heterosexual parenting.

### Non-traditional Arrangements Becoming Acceptable

Non-traditional arrangements, however, are becoming more socially acceptable, which signals that traditional marriage has become, for some, merely an optional lifestyle choice and an occasion for a gala, with a bride and groom being the central figures in the entertainment. That is, marriage in many cases is no longer perceived as two individuals solemnly joining together in a union intended to last a lifetime, but is seen, instead, as just a celebration to bring together family and friends. All too frequently marriage has ceased to be an important occasion to witness the formation of a family unit, which is, to form a part of the foundation of society.

Unfortunately, when society tells the young that marriage is optional, a growing number choose the path of least resistance, and join together informally, frequently changing partners in common-law relationships. This is bad for children because of the lack of permanency of the relationship and, therefore, bad for society.

### The Traditional Family In Canada

Living arrangements of children under 14 years of age indicate increased lone parent and common-law parenting and a relative decrease of traditional family upbringing.

Living arrangements for children aged 14 and under:

	1981	2001	2006
Lived with parents	81.2%	68.4%	65.7%
Lived with common law union	4.5%	12.8%	14.6%
Lived with lone parent	13.1%	17.8%	18.3%

Statistics Canada, Family Portrait - 2006 census analysis

## Births

According to the United Nations Common Database the total fertility rate of Canadian women has decreased steadily from 3.73 in 1955 to 1.56 in the year 2000. <http://globalis.gvu.unu.edu>

In Canada,

Out of wedlock births in 2005 were	24.5%
Births to married parents accounted for	63.3%
Did not state their marital status	10.7%

Statistics Canada Cansim Table 102 – 4506

## Divorce

Increases in number of divorces and divorce rates indicate a weakening of marital trend over the years:

	1921	1941	1961	1981	2003
latest available					
Divorce rate(per 100,000)	6.4	21.4	36.0	271.8	223.7

The situation in Europe is even worse. For example, last year, France became the first non-Scandinavian country in Western Europe where a majority of births are now out-of-wedlock.

The European statistics (kindly provided by the World Congress of Families) are as follows:

France: 50.5% of the 816,500 registered births last year were to unmarried parents, up from 48% in 2006 and up 40% from a decade ago.

Sweden, Norway, Estonia and Bulgaria: out-of-wedlock births have passed the 50% mark.

United Kingdom: 44% of births were to unmarried women in 2006, up a percentage point from 2005. Curiously, however, according to the office for National Statistics, the divorce rate dropped by 7% in 2006. Further, according to a CIVITAS/ISPDS survey, 70% of Britons between the ages of 20 and 35 actually want to be married.

Italy and Spain: Both these so-called “Catholic” countries registered births to married couples as the norm. However, out-of-wedlock births in Spain were 27% of births, and 17% of births in Italy in 2007. This represents the doubling of out-of-wedlock births in these two countries in the past decade

In the life of any society, the place of family is central. This fact alone makes the above statistics significant and seriously complicates the lives of everyone – especially children.

## Hope for the Future

Even with these troubling statistics and the world seemingly spinning into even more decadence and immorality, there is still reason for hope. This is because culture itself exhibits an ebb and flow, as surely as economies pass through cycles of ups and downs. In his book, *The Great Disruption* (1999), Francis Fukuyama cited historical examples of societies undergoing periods of moral decline followed by periods of moral recovery. The aftermath of the cultural breakdown, which the 1960s triggered, appears even now to be quietly giving way to a reassessment and some recovery of social and moral norms. Such “re-norming” will not occur in every social class all at once; in some instances, it may take hold in one stratum but not in another. This is partial progress, but progress nevertheless.

## Changes in Canadian Society

We can see a few signs of some progress in Canada today in a number of ways. The abortion rate in 2005 (96,815) fell 3.2% from (100,039) in 2004. Significantly, this decline occurred mostly among women under 20 years of age. Legislation and structures have recently been put in place to shore up society, such as raising the age of consent for sexual relations from 14 to 16 years of age; drug policies which provide treatment and prevention (education) rather than accepting addiction as inevitable; and strengthening of the provisions of the Criminal law.

The best indication of all, however, that society may be turning around is that the current generation of teenagers and young adults in Canada appear in many respects to be more culturally conservative than their immediate predecessors. This conclusion is based on polls conducted by Ekos Research Associates, one of Canada's more prominent polling firms which found a marked shift in Canadians' political identification from liberal to conservative. This is not a simple opinion blip but a clear trend line. This trend also seems to be reflected in the research by University of Lethbridge sociologist, Reginald Bibby. Surveys from 1975 – 2000 called the Canada Research Project reveal with remarkable consistency that teenagers and baby boomers continue to see family as a major source of love, support and stability. Over 90% of teenagers say they intend to marry, have children and stay with the same partner for life. One hopes their dreams coupled with determination to make their marriages work, will overcome the current statistical trends.

Statistics Canada, The Daily, June 2, 1998

McWhirter, David and Mattison, Andrew, "The Male Couple: How Relationships Develop," Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1984, pp.252, 253; Michael, Robert T. et al., "Sex in America: A Definitive Survey," Boston: Little, Brown & Company, (1994)

Xiridou, Maria et al., "The Contribution of Steady and Casual Partnerships to the Incidence of HIV Infection Among Homosexual Men in Amsterdam," AIDS 17 (2003):1031

National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (1996, 1998)

United States, "Advance Data, National Center for Health Statistics (May 31, 2001): 1

Fukuyama, Francis, "The Great Disruption," Simon and Schuster, New York (1999)

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

We are living in an Alice in Wonderland world. I noticed it after our youngest daughter played Tall Alice in Alice in Wonderland for six performances at our community's Arts Centre Theatre. In the penultimate moments before the last scene of the play (when the Queen of Hearts is wanting the King to order the cards to chop off Alice's head for the crime of causing the Queen to lose her temper) Small Alice, Alice, and Tall Alice are all onstage asserting their reason for being.

"I'm Alice."

"I'm Alice."

"I'm Alice." They each assert their normalcy over the cacophony of the cards, the Queen, the March Hare, the White Rabbit, the flowers and all the other characters.

In the same way, recently we've seen the City of Hamilton, Ontario reject facts and evidence in order to declare that pro-life billboards which said abortions are allowed in Canada throughout all nine months of pregnancy were "deceptive" and too "controversial."

The Advertising Standards Council (ASC), which oversees the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards, upheld the three complainants in this case and the decision of the Hamilton City Council.



The ads showed a pregnant woman with the words: "Nine months. The length of time abortion is allowed in Canada. Abortion: Have we gone too far? " [www.AbortionInCanada.ca](http://www.AbortionInCanada.ca)." The ruling, which silenced this pro-life educational campaign in the Hamilton area, during the 20th anniversary, last January, of the Morgentaler decision to strike down the law regulating abortion in Canada, came as a result of only three complaints made by Hamilton residents. However, the ads were displayed in more than 50 communities across Canada without complaint.

The Hamilton Right to Life filed a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission against the City. As a result of this complaint, the City of Hamilton announced that it would be revising its rules so as to allow pro-life advertisements to be displayed in city bus shelters and other similar city-owned advertising spots. In future, these rules will allow both religious and advocacy messaging.

Then there is the Human Rights complaint against Maclean's magazine and writer, Mark Steyn, brought by Mohamed Elmasry, head of the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC), who is often represented by three Muslim law students. Will this radical Muslim activist and three young adults succeed in silencing the print media in Canada? Steyn and Maclean's Magazine are charged under the same law which allowed the former divorce lawyer and Alberta Human Rights Commission appointee, Lori Andreachuk, to issue a ruling against Red Deer, Alberta, Pastor Stephen Boissoin who had published a letter against homosexuality in his local newspaper. In her ruling, Andreachuk found that there was no direct victim of Pastor Boissoin's printed comments in the local paper, but she fined Pastor Boissoin \$5000.00 to alleviate the "suffering" of the complainant, Darren Lund, a University of Calgary Professor, an anti-Christian activist, who had experienced some "public censure" for making his complaint. In effect, Mr. Lund was given a tax free award for filing the complaint even though he had experienced no personal damage from Rev. Boissoin's comments. Rev. Boissoin was also ordered to pay the expenses of up to \$2,000.00 for a witness of Professor Lund.

Andreachuk also permanently destroyed Pastor Boissoin's freedom of speech by ordering him to cease publishing or making "disparaging" remarks about homosexuality. Yes, even in his church, or in his personal emails - not hate speech or anything illegal - just "disparaging remarks", for the rest of his life. And not just about the subject of his original topic, homosexuals and homosexuality, but also about his accuser, Professor Lund. Andreachuk also ordered that Pastor Boissoin was to issue a written apology to Lund, and that this written apology be published in the Red Deer Advocate. In effect Rev. Boissoin is required to publicly abandon his deeply held religious beliefs. As stated by Ezra Levant, former publisher of the Western Standard news magazine, also accused in a human rights case of his own (for publishing the infamous Danish cartoons): "So Pastor Boissoin doesn't just have to issue a false apology, he has to publicly humiliate himself, by declaring his contrition -- contrition he does not feel -- and his abandonment of his deeply held religious beliefs. A second-rate government bureaucrat has ordered a Canadian pastor to publicly renounce his religious beliefs."

Yes, Canada is certainly getting "curiouser and curiouser".

Not surprisingly, Rev. Boissoin has announced that he is appealing this appalling decision of the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

To begin to understand what is happening here, I highly recommend Dr. William Gairdner's newest book, *Oh, Oh, Canada*, for summer reading, reviewed at page 14. Once again, Dr. Gairdner's learned, but eminently readable style provides a real explanation of how we arrived at this madness we are enduring today.

Until next time.  
Laurie

## THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, 2008

By Ginger Malacko, REAL Women's Representative At the United Nations

This year at the annual UN Commission on the Status of Women, it was decided by country representatives that Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women should be the theme of their discussions. At the best of times it is difficult to negotiate social issues with nearly 200 vastly different countries. But when the allocation of resources, particularly government resources, comes under scrutiny, countries are very cautious about to what they might be committing themselves.

The idea was to use the two weeks allotted to the commission, to draft a set of 'agreed conclusions' or paragraphs that would specify ways in which governments and civil society ought to finance the empowerment of women. The final set of 'agreed conclusions' grew to a lengthy 62 paragraphs, each one meticulously negotiated by the delegates.

As pro-life/pro-family lobbyists, we were concerned that this document would be used to promote the increasingly popular idea that there are new human rights to be accepted and enforced; the right to abortion and the right to sex. As anticipated, a reference to 'sexual and reproductive health services and rights' was proposed by Norway early in the negotiations. While this language may not sound particularly harmful, it invites the UN to determine, on behalf of the world, what these 'rights' encompass and to then apply pressure on all nations to conform.

The idea of creating a 'right' to abortion is most ardently supported by the European Union (EU), New Zealand, and Canada. These delegations are also determined to promote the idea of sex as a human right, which would be an assault on all legal and cultural barriers to legalized prostitution, gay marriage and adoption, pornography, lower ages of consent, graphic sexuality education, etc. Of course, most members of the United Nations are opposed to these new 'rights', but they are up against a formidable alliance, and are often intimidated, bribed, or lulled into silence.

One of the tasks of REAL Women's six representatives at this UN meeting was to give morally conservative nations the ammunition they need to fight against this anti-woman agenda. Our team of volunteers representing REAL Women at this meeting set to work providing the delegates with flyers that proved the harmful effects of abortion on women, and highlighted the growing problems of sex selective abortion and the legal sexual exploitation of women. In fact, we were so successful in getting our information into the hands of delegates we were confronted by UN security who demanded we cease distributing our papers. We requested to be shown any paragraph in the UN rule book that gave security the right to censor our flyers. Security then sheepishly allowed us to continue with our work.

Our position was welcomed by many delegations, some of whom were courageous enough to object openly to the proposed new 'rights' in the negotiations. The EU was effectively crippled in the debate as Ireland, Poland and Malta broke away from the union, unable to agree with their pro-abortion colleagues, and opposed the insertion of language that promotes abortion and sexual rights. With the EU members unable to agree amongst themselves, pro-life countries were able to take advantage of this moment of weakness and strike the dangerous wording from the document. The US also delivered a statement, on the record, that it was their understanding that no new human rights had been created. Nations were, as we had hoped, wary of demanding government funds in support of ideas they might otherwise have overlooked, had money not been involved.

Although we were victorious in holding back the anti-life agenda, it is interesting to review the final 'agreed conclusions' and study what does remain. For a document that is meant to empower women, there is very little substance. For example, among the 62 paragraphs, education is mentioned only once. There was very little said about primary health care, and no reference at all to infrastructure, agriculture, job training, clean water, or any of the many other issues that affect a woman's ability to succeed (or survive).

The bulk of the document contains repeated demands for increased women's participation in decision making at all levels, from government to the marketplace. As important as that may be to some, it does not help women living under oppressive governments, women that are sick or illiterate, women living in impoverished nations where there are no social services, or women who rely on their husbands for support. This was merely a UN sponsored



11:45 - 12:00 am.	REAL Women Award Presentation
12:00 – 1:30 pm.	Lunch and Socializing
1:30 - 2:30 pm.	“How to Effectively Communicate with your MP”- Pat O'Brien, Former MP
2:30 - 3:00 pm.	Refreshment Break
3:00 - 4:00 pm.	“The Significance of REAL Women” - Gwen Landolt, National Vice President REAL Women of Canada
4:00 - 4:15 pm.	Closing Remarks and Raffle draw

## Meet our Speakers

### Dave Quist

Has held various executive positions working with Members of Parliament. He is currently the Executive Director of the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada (IMFC), an initiative of Focus on the Family (Canada), based in Ottawa, Ontario. The IMFC is a social policy think tank that presents research and policy options to Canada's decision makers, including Members of Parliament, Senators, senior political and bureaucratic staff, key community and business leaders, as well as UN delegates and organizations.

### Suzanne Fortin

Suzanne, was in Quebec City and is now an Ottawa resident and mother of three young children, has established a popular pro-life/family blogg called The Big Blue Wave. In this blog, she discusses family and life issues from a global perspective. Even though busy at home raising her family, she is an example of how one can make a contribution to fight the culture wars – in her case by blogging.

### Pat O'Brien

has a Masters degree in Education and has many years of experience in that field, as well as serving as a member of the London, Ontario City Council. He is a former Liberal MP from London, Ontario, who resigned from the Liberal Caucus and Party in June 2005 on a matter of conscience over the same-sex marriage issue. He finished his term as an independent and retired in January 2006, without seeking re-election. He is currently operating a public consulting business and is involved in many community projects.

### Gwen Landolt

graduated from the Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia, Canada and was called to the British Columbia Bar. She has had an extensive legal career in private practice, as a Crown prosecutor and as a lawyer with the federal government where she specialized in immigration and aboriginal affairs. She has written extensively on Canadian constitutional issues, in particular the Canadian Charter of Rights, and has participated in many cases before the Supreme Court of Canada on pro-life and pro-family issues. Gwen is one of the founders and is currently National Vice President of REAL Women of Canada.

## Registration \$50

Registration fee includes continental breakfast, hot lunch, refreshments

How to register:

Online Or Register by mail with cheque payable to REAL Women of Canada.

Registration (name, address, e-mail address, telephone no., cheque) can be mailed to:

2010 Conference Registrar

REAL Women of Canada

Attn: Mrs. Kathie Hogan

Conference Registrar

RR #3

Parry Sound, Ontario P2A 2W9

Membership must be up to date for voting privileges if attending the Annual General Meeting. Renewal fee of \$25 can be included with your registration.

Please make cheques payable to REAL Women of Canada.

For more Conference information, please contact:

Pauline Guzik

Conference Convenor

Box 458

Powassan, ON P0H 1Z0

705-724-5964

pauline.guzik@sympatico.ca

### **Accommodation**

Clarion Resort Pinewood Park

201 Pinewood Park Drive

North Bay, Ontario

1-800-461-9592

[www.ClarionResortPinewoodPark.com](http://www.ClarionResortPinewoodPark.com)

Room Rate for Conference: \$104.75, 2 queen beds

When reserving, state that it is for the REAL Women Conference in order to get this rate.

## **BOOK REVIEW: OH, OH, CANADA!, A VOICE FROM THE CONSERVATIVE RESISTANCE**

By William D. Gairdner, BPS Books, Toronto, Canada

available at [www.williamgairdner.com](http://www.williamgairdner.com) - 195 pages, 2008, \$12.25

This important collection of short essays takes the reader beyond general reporting of current events to their historical, political and philosophical associations. Each essay can be read quickly but gives a strategic clarification of the topic under consideration. They cover culture, religion, family, politics and science. The author has a comfortable grasp of history and uses this resource to cheerfully counteract the manipulative distortion that liberalism cloaks over today's important issues.

The author, William D. Gairdner, PhD., is a former Olympic athlete, a professor of English, and the best-selling author of seven books, including *The Trouble with Canada*, *The Trouble with Democracy* and the indispensable *War Against the Family*. He was the managing editor of *Canada's Founding Debates*, a collection of early political speeches on the founding of Canada.

The section of the book on Politics and Law provides valuable information in the essays *Despotism and the French Revolution*, *Six Types of Freedom*, *In Defense of Capital Punishment*, and *Socialism: The Ultimate Conservatism*. Other essays provide revealing observations on Pierre Trudeau, Michael Ignatieff, Bob Rae and Stephen Harper.

Two essays are "in a nutshell" studies of global warming and the natural law, another reveals little known facts about the slave trade in Canada, and one entitled *Homeless or Family-less* addresses this disturbing urban phenomenon. Recently popularized public apologies are exposed. The essay *Sticks and Stones* deals with the numbers of victims murdered by various totalitarian regimes.

And how about the "marauding tax-hungry state", the "political sandwich" and "egalitarian hogswill"? "Must read" essays include *The Charter at Twenty-Five*, *There Can be No Sex in Homosexual*, *Mourning Marriage* and *Restoring the Pro-Family State*. Well written and original, these essays never fail to be timely and perceptive.

An antidote against invasive liberal misinformation, this book is a good buy, for personal enjoyment or as a gift for friends who would benefit from a lively introduction to the wide world of conservative thought.

William Gairdner has another book due in the fall of 2008 entitled *The Book of Absolutes*. It promises to be another thought provoking publication which promotes conservatism and helps Canadians sharpen their defenses against the debilitating disinformation which surrounds us.