
RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

are "things that every rational man is presumed to want." However these luxuries are defined, Rawls would allow their consumption only if there is no significant risk that succeeding generations would thereby be denied a minimum standard of living.

The Rawlsian theory of justice is "pure" or "ideal," says Hubbard. What would be more useful would be an "applied theory of justice" that uses empirical data to determine, for example, if luxuries should simply be heavily taxed or their production completely prohibited in order to maintain a "just minimum" for society's least advantaged.

There are substantial costs involved in adopting an equilibrium strategy, Hubbard writes. Authoritarian controls, including surveillance and bureaucratic intrusions, might be required to insure that proper consumption levels are not exceeded.

The implications of an equilibrium state may be offensive to many, says Hubbard, but "there is no logically necessary connection between a reduction in economic growth and a loss in political liberty." Moreover, the equilibrium perspective deserves serious consideration if only because the limits-to-growth proponents may be right in saying that the earth cannot sustain exponential growth.

The Issues in Abortion

"Religious, Moral, & Sociological Issues: Some Basic Distinctions" by Baruch Brody, and "Enacting Religious Beliefs in a Pluralistic Society" by Frederick S. Jaffe, in *The Hastings Center Report* (Aug. 1978), 360 Broadway, Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y. 10706.

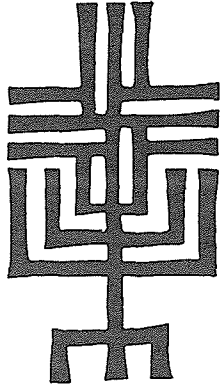
Is abortion a religious issue? No, says Brody, a philosopher at Rice University. Opposition to abortion need not be, and frequently is not, based upon any religious beliefs—any more than opposition to torture in Brazil becomes a religious position just because that opposition is led by Catholic bishops.

Moreover, even if opposition to abortion were a religious position, the question of the use of federal funds to pay for abortions need not be a religious question. "The issue is that of the use of coercively collected funds [tax revenues] to pay for abortions when many from whom the funds are collected believe that they are being forced to support what they believe is murder," writes Brody.

But Jaffe, president of the Alan Guttmacher Institute, argues that abortion is an issue between religious groups based on differences in theological beliefs concerning the morality of abortion, the circumstances (if any) in which it is permissible, and who has the right and obligation to make the moral decision. Orthodox Jews, Mormons, and some fundamentalist Protestant groups, as well as the Roman Catholic Church, oppose abortion. Other Protestant and Jewish groups teach that in some circumstances abortion may be a more moral course of action than bearing an unwanted child.

The belief that a fetus becomes a person at conception with a right to protection equal to or greater than that of the woman in whose body it

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The Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights is comprised of religious groups—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and others—that support the right to choose legal abortion. The logo of the coalition combines a Christian cross with many branches and a menorah, symbol of the Old Testament, representing both the Jewish faith and the roots of Christianity.

is located meets every test of a religious belief, says Jaffe. It is a religious doctrine, based on religious values, expounded by religious leaders, and taught by religious institutions.

In the current debate over the federal funding of abortions, says Brody, the issue of separation of church and state is being raised by pro-abortion groups as an excuse to disregard the legitimate rights of believers. Jaffe disagrees. Laws embodying religious beliefs (e.g., restrictions on federal funding of abortions) should be enacted only when the beliefs are very broadly shared, he says. When there are irreconcilable differences on issues of morality, it is impermissible, in a pluralistic society, for legislatures to enact laws which embody one set of beliefs and impose them on those who believe otherwise.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

*The Fateful
Protein Markers*

"A New Power to Predict—and Prevent—Disease" by Gene Bylinsky, in *Fortune* (Sept. 25, 1978), 541 North Fairbanks Court, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

Conventional medicine is strongly oriented toward the cure rather than the prevention of disease. This could change dramatically, says Bylinsky, a *Fortune* staff writer, with the recent discovery by immunologists at Palo Alto, Los Angeles, and London that people carry telltale markers of susceptibility to specific illnesses.