

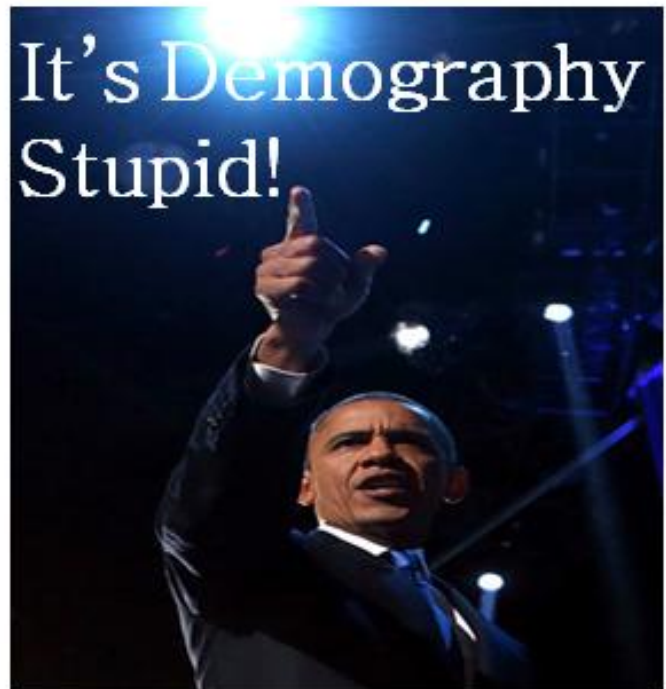
A forum to encourage independent thinking

# The THINK Club

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## New Age Morality



## Porn Goes Mainstream



## 2012 Book Of The Year



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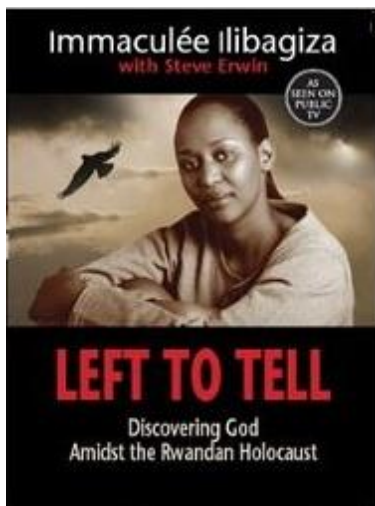


# Book of the Year

## Press Release

December 28, 2012

### The Think Club Publications Announces the 2012 the Book of the Year Award



**Bloomfield Hills, MI, December 28, 2012** The Think Club Publication has chosen *Left To Tell* by Immaculée Ilibagiza for its 2012 Book of the Year award. The Think Club Publication presents this award to lesser known writers in order help and encourage

them in their endeavors.

The Think Club Publication is a forum to encourage independent thinking among fellow human beings. This annual award is given to the author whose idea or ideas can contribute to the resolution of contemporary human problems based on his or her original and independent thinking. The Think Club chose *Left To Tell* as the Book of the Year because the author teaches us how to transcend fear and physical suffering into profound inner peace, grace and forgiveness despite her ordeals.

Her story has the backdrop of the civil war between the Hutus and Tutsi tribes in the African country of Rwanda where one million Tutsis were massacred by the Hutus over a 100-day period in 1994. Immaculée shares her miraculous story of how she

survived during the Rwanda genocide in 1994 when she and seven other women huddled silently together in the cramped bathroom of a local pastor's house for 91 days.

At the end of the book Ilibagiza says, "the love of a single heart can make a world of difference." We are extremely fortunate to have Ilibagiza as a role model for dealing with fearful and seemingly desperate conditions. Thus we present the Book of the Year award for 2012 to Immaculée Ilibagiza for her unquenchable faith and connection to God throughout the ordeal that uplifts and inspires all of us.

*The THINK Club* is published quarterly by The THINK Club Publications, a forum to encourage independent thinking among fellow human beings.

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## Thinking Wildly

A system of morality which is based on relative emotional values is a mere illusion, a thoroughly vulgar conception which has nothing sound in it and nothing true.

– Socrates

I tend to think of action movies as exuberant morality plays in which good triumphs over evil.

– Sylvester Stallone

You can't legislate morality.

– Jesse Ventura

# Editorial



## It's Demography Stupid

By Anil Shrivastava

Evolution and dissolution of political parties in America are nothing new. In the past 236 years, several major parties have either appeared or disappeared from the American political scene, foremost among those are Federalists Party, Anti-Federalists, Democratic-Republicans, the Union Party, People's party, Progressive party and many more. There always have been and will always be groups of people united to further their own ideological ends based on new socio-political realities and demographic shift in population. The 2012 election result is an indication of the impending change in both the areas mentioned above.

Political parties' existence depends on demography. The Federalist Party which depended on the support of wealthy Whites from Northeast eventually disappeared as the nation expanded toward the American South. Similarly, the Whig Party lost to Jackson's Democrats as the dominance of the North was resisted. "After 1964 Civil Rights Act Southern Democrats left their party to join GOP. Now the cycle of history has turned against GOP." (Wall Street Journal, November 8, 2012).

The Republican Party was formed in 1854 in Wisconsin to oppose the spread of slavery into the western territories. Later it took political stances generally in favor of laissez-faire, free enterprise, and fiscal responsibility and against the welfare state. It generally believes that less government is better government and that government should only intervene where the individual is incapable of helping him/her self. So far, so good! Things changed in the twenty-first century when the extreme right, religious fanatics gave an impression of running the GOP. It was more and more perceived a party of people like Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Ann Coulter, Donald Trump, John Sununu, Joe Arpaio, Bryan Fischer and Sarah Palin. They struck a fear in the hearts of the Blacks, Latinos and women. Besides them, many Asians and urban whites considered the GOP as an anachronism.

As a result 93% Blacks, 73% Latinos, 72% Asians and 55% women voted for Obama. Further, the majority of

the young, as many as 60% under 30, also supported the Democrats. Benghazi and Obama Care was inconsequential to those voters. Their own fear and distaste of the extremists in the Republican party was foremost on their minds. In my personal interviews of about 100 people of different races, religions and genders, I found that the interviewees perceived the Republicans as racists, religious bigots and suppressors of women's rights. I personally disagree with this perception, however, the stalwarts of the present Republican Party have created that impression on voters' minds that they are (the Republican leadership) lunatics and extremists amongst us.

The fact remains that President Barack Obama's election victory has exposed tectonic demographic shifts in American society that is reordering the U.S. political landscape. The 2012 presidential election likely will be remembered as marking a new coalition, as voters regroup in cultural, ethnic and economic patterns that challenge the existence of the Republican party. In cities and dynamic suburbs, a rapidly growing force of Latinos, Asian-Americans, African Americans and urban Whites have emerged as the strength of winning Democratic coalition, the same folks who shunned GM, Ford and Chrysler.

Older voters and white working-class voters, once core elements of the Democratic Party, have drifted into the Republican column. Rural and small-town voters, whose grandparents backed the New Deal, now fill the swath of the U.S. that leans reliably GOP. They have mainly moved to the Red States, so the Republican Party, at best, will become and survive as a regional party. As Wall Street Journal mentioned in its Op-ed, "Demography is political destiny and today Democrats have the numbers to prove that. If the trend continues, the Democratic Party will be the new right and an ultra-liberal party may emerge as a new left in the future. Yes, it is possible, after all, 'it's demography stupid!'



# Commentary



## Playboy Pinup Sherlyn Chopra and India's Changing Morals

By Visi R. Tilak

On Aug. 30, 2012 U.S. astronaut Sunita Williams is set to embark on a spacewalk, the fifth in her career. Next month, Ms. Williams, who is of Indian origin, will take command of the International Space Station, where she is stationed for six months.

But what has captivated greater interest than Ms. Williams' latest space journey in recent months is Sherlyn Chopra, an Indian model and actress who in November is set to be the first Indian to grace the cover of Playboy magazine.

Recently, my Twitter feed has been rife with folks comparing the two women, with many arguing he Ms. Chopra's achievement is more noteworthy than that of Ms. Williams. For instance, Twitter user @Sushoban recently wrote: "we argue that Sherlyn Chopra has taken a huge step for India and Indians. More important than, say, Sunita Williams."

The BBC dubbed Ms. Chopra as a woman who "defied convention," spawning this title for her in the blogosphere.

It is true that bona fide famous Indian women have not had to shed their modesty to become successful. While it's rare to see women at the helm of most developed nations, Indians can point to former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. There are notable examples in the corporate world as well, including Indira Nooyi, the chief executive officer of PepsiCo Inc. In the U.S., there are many women of Indian origin we can point to as well, like Bhairavi Desai, the executive director of New York Taxi Workers Alliance or California State Attorney General Kamala Harris. In the world of arts and culture, the examples are plenty, from writer Anita Desai to Indian-born Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta.

Ms. Chopra, told the BBC she wanted to pose for Playboy because "power derives from money. I

always wanted to make a lot of money on my own, to have power from that."

"If total freedom comes with the perceived notion of being a whore, then so be it," she added.



Richard Gere kissed Shilpa Shetty at an event in New Delhi, March 14, 2008.

What's perhaps most surprising about the reaction to Ms. Chopra posing for Playboy is that it has been surprisingly lukewarm, with few voices coming out strongly against her. Compare this to what happened five years ago, when Hollywood actor Richard Gere kissed actress Shilpa Shetty on the cheek.

India went berserk. This surprised foreign observers, with Time Magazine asking "How can the country that gave the world the Kama Sutra be so prudish?"

The incident was widely seen as an attack on India's cultural and moral values and resulted in countrywide protests.

This time around, no fingers can be pointed to a "firangi," or foreigner. After all, Ms. Chopra approached Playboy herself.

Ms. Chopra's case is not isolated. Recently, Indo-Canadian actress and porn star Sunny Leone made her Bollywood debut in *Jism2* one of the raciest films to hit Indian screens to date.

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## Madonna Awarded Nobel for Peace!

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

OSLO/Timbuktu: Madonna was declared the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for 2013 for her efforts in ridding the world of moral values, patriotism and intellect, refusing to contain promotion of drugs like ecstasy and MDMA, hardcore sex and insanity among Generation Z (iGeneration).

There was widespread celebration all over the world after this announcement. "We're having a blast," said some peace-loving citizens of electronic dance music (EDM) community. Many others took a break from tattooing, piercing and binge drinking to join the revelry.

Madonna has been the key to transforming our society "from a world of hate to a world of love," committee chairman Thorbjørn Jagland said while announcing the award in Oslo. "We specially laud her work in connecting with the young crowd," he added.

The ex-VP, Al Gore is said to have welcomed the news. He was later heard asking some reporters if he would be entitled to a second Nobel Prize in physics this time. He then addressed a press conference and said: "We, ultra-liberals, are the world's leading exporter of fluff and absurdity. And now the world has completely recognized our talents."

In the midst of all these celebrations, a controversy has broken out. Brahim Zaibat, the 25-year-old boyfriend of Madonna and her famous kissing partner, Brittany Spears have also demanded to be recognized, claiming to have played a major role in enabling Madonna to be worthy of the prize.

The leader of the free world was interrupted while he was watching a DVD of his own Nobel Peace Prize. Sources said that the leader was upset over Madonna's remarks, "for better or for worse... we have a black Muslim in the White House, OK?" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90bAsaeKabu>)

Meanwhile, Americans have praised the choice of award and are living by Madonna's maxim, "Listen, everyone is entitled to my opinion." Some intellectuals have recommended the Pope to beatify Madonna for her insight into theology, "crucifixes are sexy because there's a naked man on them." (Madonna: An Intimate Biography By J Randy Taraborelli: page 19)

Some liberal intellectuals have demanded that the Nobel Committee also award Al Qaida the peace prize

for having survived relentless American attacks and the brutal murder of Osama-bin-Laden. Meanwhile, at the conclusion of the press conference Madonna made this statement, "I just want to give back, you know? I feel so empty sometimes. Like, as if my body of work is pointless. I get the sense smart people, you know nerds who watch Jeopardy! are laughing at me. I want to make a difference. Oh well, sex is what I know."

"I've seen some scary things," she said at the time. "I've seen people being locked up and put in jail for taking drugs, for being gay, for not practicing religion, for not dressing the proper way. Yeah, it's scary. But what it made me realize is how lucky I am to defy every norm. We still have a long way to go."

Sent your comments to:

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# Current Affairs



## Dreams, Racism and God

By Robert Bickmeyer

I guess you know the three things that "go" as we age. One is memory and...er...uh...I forget the other two. But there are three matters of concern to me that I will never forget.

DREAMS - "He got up on the wrong side of the bed" is a cliché often used to describe someone who arises in the morning in an irritable or depressed state of mind.

I contend that these moods stem from a stressful or frightening dream they experienced shortly before awakening. Dreams are easily forgotten by our conscious mind, but their effects remain in our sub-conscious until the realities of the day take over. The duration of these effects will vary from a few seconds for some or up to a half hour or more for others.

Children are more likely to suffer from such dreams as they have more difficulty dealing with moods. Many of us, including myself, are plagued with them frequently. If you are aware of why you "got up on the wrong side of the bed" (it was only a bad dream) you will more easily overcome your mood and are more likely to "have a good day."

RACISM - It was recently reported that some whites fear certain businesses would attract blacks to shop and work in their town. Shame on them. I condemn them for their narrow-mindedness. If they resent affirmative action (preferential treatment for skin color) or reparation for blacks, put me in their corner. I once offered, in a Detroit newspaper, to pay \$1,000 to every former slave, but no one showed up. And I call them blacks because even the NAACP avoids that silly term African American, otherwise they would call themselves the NAAAAP (National Association for the Advancement of African American People). Further, if Ernie Els, the white golfer, and Charlize Theron, the beautiful

blonde actress, both from South Africa, become citizens they would be African American.

A racist I am not. My favorite singer was Nat King Cole, basketball player Joe Dumars, fighter George Foreman. I am an ardent admirer of columnist Thomas Sowell, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and I voted for Alan Keyes over George Bush in the 2000 presidential primary - all black!

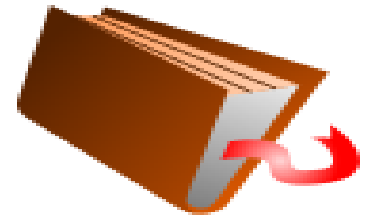
Recently, while dining in a restaurant a nicely dressed traditional family with two well behaved youngsters sat at a table near us. They were black. I said to my wife, "It gives me a nice warm feeling to see that family living in our neighborhood." They earned the right.

Some years ago my immediate neighbor was selling his house. I told him, "If you have the opportunity to sell to a decent black family, don't worry about me. I won't mind." Shame on those whites who don't even want blacks shopping and working in their neighborhood.

THE SAME GOD - According to a recent poll, 93 percent of Americans believe in God or a universal spirit. It follows then, that 93 percent of us are "religious," to varying degrees of course. I have a message for the 93 percent. In discussions on moral issues such as unwed couples living together, unrestricted promiscuous sex, homosexuality, abortion, pornography and obscenities I am sometimes told, "Hey, it's the 21st century, get with it." My response is, "The same God who judged us 100 years ago is judging us today."

Let us all remember: If you wake up in a foul mood, it was only a dream; moral, hard working blacks and moral hard working whites are equal with equal rights; on moral matters God is not "progressive." He stands fast, of course, and so should we.

# Book Review



## Science Left Behind

**Authors: Alex B. Berezow and Hank Campbell**

**Publisher: Public Affairs, 2012**



This is an excellent book about the scientific blindness of the Left, who focus on evolution and other issues while ignoring scientific approaches that truly may improve human lives. *Science Left Behind*, is a fascinating book with eye opening information and sprinkled with

clever humor.

This book is also heavy with footnotes to back up what the authors have presented as evidence for the rise of the anti-scientific left. That makes the information presented difficult to refute and yet, it is an articulate, clear, informative, and entertaining read . . . full of information and easy to understand.

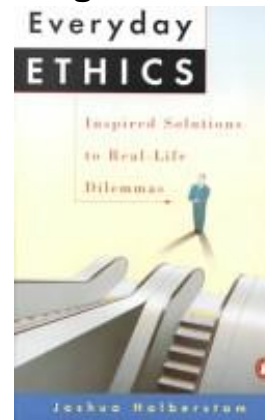
As a follower of both science and politics, I found *Science Left Behind*, as a necessary volume for anyone wanting to engage in an honest discussion of how politicians have hijacked science for their political gain. And, it is not restricted to one side of the political aisle. One final point. The authors seem to make a sincere effort to protect 'science' and not take a political side. I found that refreshing.

principles and ideals - subverts the Constitution - for expediency. The worse things the U.S. can do, it seems to me, is to promote the conditions for terror to occur, such as in Iraq; and to flaunt international law such as denying the validity of the Geneva Conventions.

## Everyday Ethics

**Author: Joshua Halberstam**

**Penguin Books (Soft Cover)**



This is a good opening to anyone who has never thoughtfully considered the ethics of our personal life. Yes, we know that we have ethics, but do we ever examine them and question ourselves?

Halberstam takes a look at the ethics of friendship, romance, and conversation. He looks at where moral questions arise in these situations. He does not make judgments about what is the wrong or right way to conduct one's affairs. More importantly, he points out where morals are evident in these situations and asks how we manifest our ethics to the world. By reading through this, you can not help but look at yourself and question the perception that you thought you were exhibiting.

In the end of the book, the author talks about common pitfalls that we fall into when defending our ethics or in questioning others. He also gives some ideas in how we can improve and strengthen our own sense of moral behavior.

I would recommend this to everyone. This is a great introduction into the study of ethics.

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## The Moral Landscape

### How Science Can Determine Human Values

**Author: Sam Harris**

Sam Harris proposes the intriguing idea that the establishment of human moral values can be accomplished through science. That is to say a scientific method could at least in theory determine moral values.

This book is very readable, not the esoteric prose that often is the stock and trade of philosophy books. This book will be controversial to many, but Mr. Harris' ideas cannot be rejected out of hand.



# Essay



## Morality Can Change Over Time

By Anil Shrivastava “Musafir”

Morality for most of us means conforming to the code of conduct that is put forward by the society we live in. Back in the fifties and sixties of the last century in the society where I grew up, morality meant not having pre-marital sex and not marrying outside one’s own caste. Times have changed since then. Pre-marital sex and marrying outside one’s own caste are not immoral anymore albeit having a child outside the wedlock still is.

To take morality to refer to an actually existing code of conduct put forward by a society results in a denial that there is a universal morality, one that applies to all human beings. In the normative sense (normative morality examines standards of the rightness and wrongness of actions), morality should never be overridden, that is, no one should ever violate a moral prohibition or requirement for non-moral considerations. All of those who use morality normatively also hold that, under plausible specified conditions, all rational persons would endorse that code.

Unfortunately, moral theories differ with regard to those to whom morality applies, that is, those whose behavior is subject to moral judgment. For Roman Catholics abortion in any form is immoral. Some religious groups have no objection to abortion. There are different standards of incest varying from religion to religion and clan to clan. Many religions condemn homosexual behavior as immoral, but those who hold that morality is primarily concerned with avoiding and preventing harm condemn religious discrimination against homosexuals as immoral. A large diverse society such as the United States has a bigger dilemma since immigrants from different parts of the world come here with different moral standards. There is not a common code of conduct put forward and accepted by any group, or even by an individual. Apart from containing some prohibitions on harming some others, different moralities can differ from each other quite extensively.

But how about universal morality? Can that be dynamic and differ from society to society? Hobbes’ description of morality states “qualities of mankind that concern their living together in peace and unity.” (*Leviathan*, Chapter XI, paragraph 1). Is it possible for a

society to regard morality as being concerned primarily with living together in peace and unity? Although all societies include more than this in their moralities, this feature of morality is overlooked when it comes to their national interest or political manifesto. “All is fair in war and politics” is a manifesto that all nations have lived by from the beginning of the civilization. That means the universal morality can be compromised when it comes to war and politics. Although avoiding and preventing harm is common to all, morality can refer to codes of conduct of different societies with widely differing content, and still be used ambiguously.

Morality is thus an ambiguous word. Those who hold that there is a universal code of conduct that all rational persons, under plausible specified conditions, would adhere to governing the behavior of all moral agents do not claim that any actual society has or has ever had such a guide to conduct. However, “Natural law” theories of morality claim that “any rational person in any society, even one that has a defective morality, can know the general kinds of actions that morality prohibits, requires, discourages, encourages, and allows.” (*Bernard Gert: The Definition of Morality: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). In the theological version of natural law theories, such as that put forwards by Aquinas, “this is because God implanted this knowledge in the reason of all persons.” (*Bernard Gert: The Definition of Morality: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). In the secular version of natural law theories, such as that put forward by Hobbes, “natural reason is sufficient to allow all rational persons to know what morality prohibits and requires.”

In conclusion, the concept of morality is controversial but it does have some universal features that should be widely accepted. Morality requires doing that act that would result in the best overall consequences. However, no human being can possibly know what act would result in the best overall consequences over time. Thus moral standards can change over a period of time.



# Perspective



## Porn Goes Mainstream

By Anil Shrivastava “Musafir”

"Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall". (Act II, Scene I). Measure for Measure

My family and I love movies. Unfortunately, more often than not, we come across nudity, sexual encounters and explicit lesbian acts which are embarrassing for everyone. A good movie maker and director can depict sensuality without asking actors to disrobe or making them indulge in raw sex. Good actors do not have to use nudity to share emotions. They can do it with their eyes, voice, face and facial expressions. They can captivate the audience without taking their clothes off. Remember Audrey Hepburn's beauty, charm and naïve innocence in *Roman Holiday*? Julie Christie portrayed sensuality in David Lean's *Dr. Zivago* without any nudity. Who can resist the sexuality of Deborah Kerr in Leo McCarey's *An Affair To Remember*? I will also mention Jennifer Garner's *Catch and Release* in the same breath.

Why is there so much nudity and explicit sex scenes in today's movies even when omitting them the film would be unchanged? The most common answer I get is, "Because people like it. Hollywood is in the business of making money by giving the people what they want. And they want to watch nudity and sex."

Well, desire to watch nudity and sex is nothing new. Nude scenes and blatant sexuality should be left to the porn industry. That way, an individual will have a choice between mainstream movies and pornography. Thus people with such desire, compulsion and obsession can frequent adult theatres or watch DVDs alone without their family around them. But thanks to mainstream cinema of today, there is no escaping those situations whether we want it or not!

The Oscars are purposely given to movies depicting vulgarity and pornography. We used to make sure to watch Oscar winning movies expecting the excellence in the art of cinema.

Needless to say, of late, it has been a disappointment. *American Beauty* was full of vulgarity. Kate Winslet performed an explicit sex act in *The Reader* and Natalie Portman and Mila Kunis brought lesbian porn to mainstream cinema in *Black Swan*. Looks like an Oscar is now awarded for **the best sex scene ever**. Sex has become a criterion for talent. Having a sexual and lesbian expletive in a stupid movie about ballet dance is a good challenge to become the biggest star in the future. They are worse than porn stars inasmuch as a porn actress does not pretend to be an elite. She is a prostitute on and off the screen. Moreover, like other practitioners of the trade, she does not choose to live this life; she is forced into this situation because of her circumstances. But the mainstream actresses do porn scenes on screen because of so-called **artistic** and **subjective values**. Mila Kunis, Lindsay Lohan, Leighton Meester, Halle Berry, Monica Bellucci, Penelope Cruz, Natalie Portman are the same products as other porn stars with a brand differentiation.

Explicit sex is not artistic, but sincerity, love, and creativity are. This ongoing sexual debauchery is something thrust upon us as a part of social engineering by Hollywood. The Mainstream industry promotes drugs, violence and immoral sexuality to compensate for the lack of talent and to forcibly thrust their morality upon us. According to 'Pop Culture News And Views' the majority of the Hollywood crowd is either bisexual or lesbian and gay. The stars of Hollywood believe in open marriages and change their partners like rotating trophies.

In the realm of Political Science, the term "social engineering" refers to the efforts to influence society on a large scale. Thus, special interest groups together with powerful individuals try to get

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# Point

## Moral Standards Change Over Time

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

The very fact that we are having this discussion (Does Morality Change Over Time?) is an indication in itself that morality is an adaptation rather than an absolute. Morality is conditioning. When I was growing up, our family morality consisted of two things: 1. Marrying in our own cast and 2. Not having sexual contact with the opposite sex before marriage. Now those morals have fallen by the wayside. Our characteristic attitude about those kinds of behaviors has changed as our social institutions have evolved further through the years.

I agree with the thinkers who believe that human morality has an evolutionary origin. "it is a product of natural selection and other evolutionary processes." Our moral standards are set as products of learning and culture. A good example will be incestuous behavior. This moral standard varies from region to region and religion to religion. We share certain moral codes as a cultural product and as an outcome of many different factors.

Anyone who says that morals are *always* absolute are the type of people who have the luxury of living a sheltered life, surviving through the protection, grace, and effort of others. These are the types of men and women who live in secluded seminaries and argue about heaven and hell. The same people endorse killing of infidels. Murder is bad, but we want our soldiers to kill our enemies. In some circles abortion under any circumstance is immoral; it is quite moral for others. The same stands for mercy killing, gay marriage and virginity.

How, then, do we define morality? What is a moral action? Years ago, when confronted with this unpleasant question, I was forced to define morality for myself in a way that addressed the changing nature of human choice.

A moral action is one that results in the maximization of both individual and collective happiness, freedom, and fulfillment without imposing unreasonable or unjustified costs upon third parties or the broader civilization. Everything else can change.

# Counterpoint

## Morals Don't Change

By Bala Prasad

Morality and moral standards do not change. It is our interpretation that changes to fit our purpose. It's open to different interpretations depending our situation and position in life, socio-economic and otherwise.

Who doesn't know right from wrong most of the time? But we see right and wrong as we want. Smaller events in life, of no great importance, lead to bigger action later – good or bad. Examples abound, though it's hard to cover every angle. But here are some points of interest.

Three great issues dividing our society are capital punishment, abortion and end of life decisions. While there is solid statistical supporting both sides, every point of view no doubt, is tinged with our own views on morality. No matter what we believe in, society has its own moral standards and then there is Supreme Court with its decision. This becomes law of the land, regardless of other facts and conjectures.

Volumes of data show capital punishment is not a deterrent. Punishment is not just for rehabilitation. Others believe in an eye for an eye. Abortion is another issue that divides us and surely our own view is guided by our interpretation of what is moral – complicated further by where life starts. Now we are fighting the second and third term abortion. In America today there is no reason for pregnancy if either participant does not desire such result. Moreover, the Supreme Court has spoken and first trimester termination of pregnancy is the law of the land. But the primary question as to whether the termination of pregnancy at any stage and for any reason, be it rape, incest or otherwise is or ever will be moral will always remain open to discussion.

End of life decisions have may control whether we live or die. While this decision is mostly on the advice of the treating physicians, family input remains supreme. It will be very hard for a spouse or children to agree to terminate all life support. Highly emotional, our own moral compass plays a very significant role. What right does anyone have to end a life? Who has given this power? Moreover, what right do spouses and children have to prolong the misery and suffering of someone unable to decide for themselves.

Capital punishment should be legal punishment for heinous crimes. The judge or jury decide whether a crime is bad enough. Do-gooders and politicians shouldn't interfere. Abortion, the law of the land, should be available for situations like rape, incest or to protect the life of the mother. It shouldn't be a method of birth control and on demand.

End of life decisions are necessary. When there is no hope of recovery, why should suffering be prolonged? Some will disagree based on their own statistical evidence and morals. Wasn't it W.C Fields who said so eloquently, "There are lies, there are damn lies and then there are statistics." You can prove or disprove anything with the same set of figures. Those who disagree with me on moral grounds, I have no argument.

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### Playboy Pin Up Sherlyn Chopra

While there has been some criticism and reaction from the general public, the response to Ms. Leone has been fairly muted as well. Some went as far as criticizing the actress for not exploring herself enough in the movie.

All this seems to reveal a shift in moral attitudes in India. “There’s no doubt that attitudes toward sexuality are changing among Indian women and Indians generally. That’s a transformation best described by the way Bollywood movies portray love and sexuality, and by the clear influence of the globalized world on Indian mores,” says Miranda Kennedy, a journalist and author of a memoir based on her five year stay in India, “Sideways On A Scooter.”



Sherlyn Chopra at a press conference in Mumbai, July 23.

While it would be a mistake to see Ms. Chopra’s freedom to pose for Playboy as evidence of greater female empowerment – far from it – this suggests Indian society may have become less judgmental.

“Sherlyn Chopra posing nude in Playboy isn’t exactly a feminist’s dream milestone marker for women in India,” says Ms. Kennedy, “but it is probably further evidence of the way women can choose to portray themselves in India without ruining their lives and futures.”

“Only a couple of decades ago, a B-list film star’s decision to pose nude in a banned magazine would have made her an outcast – not just from Bollywood, but from her family, and her community. Now, though, women can choose to be more than a marriageable asset – they can be vamps

and harlots and have fabulous careers for themselves,” adds Ms. Kennedy. “Whatever you may think of Playboy, that’s surely advancement of some kind – a woman’s choice to define herself as she wishes,” she adds.

Not all agree this necessarily reflect changes in Indian society more broadly. “Chopra is entitled to her choices, and perhaps her decision was personally empowering. While this decision may be a reflection of a more open society, the society in question may not be ours: let’s not forget that Chopra lives and works abroad, and that Playboy isn’t officially available in India,” says Sonia Faleiro, author of “Beautiful Thing: Inside the Secret World of Bombay’s Dance Bars.”

Ms. Faleiro instead points to other role models: “I’d like to think that women in India are more likely to be inspired by the achievements of Olympian Mary Kom or of [Congress Party President] Sonia Gandhi, the most powerful politician in India today. Through their achievements these women have not only broken barriers, they’ve raised the bar for men and women.”

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Continued from Page 9

### Porn Goes Mainstream

people to believe, embrace or at least tolerate what they wouldn’t ordinarily tolerate. When many groups and individuals coordinate to utilize social engineering tactics, the mainstream starts accepting their values. Those who do not are termed as phobic, diffident and conformist. Obviously, for the last fifty years, those in charge of making movies in Hollywood have been using social engineering tactics in their movies to promote feminism, homosexuality, group sex, rebelliousness against parents, transvestitism and hatred of men.

The purpose of this writing is not to change anybody’s personal morality. That is a matter of choice and will vary from individual to individual, but as you have a choice to watch porn, we also need a choice to watch our kind of movie. Please do not mix the two together. That’s all folks!



# Lifestyle



## The Importance of Having Meaning, Purpose, and Spirituality in Life

By Rekha Shrivastava

A sense of meaninglessness and a lack of purpose in life can be significant factors in causing anxiety, depression, and phobias in life. It has been found that people who have not been able to find their full potential, suffer from something called “existential anxiety.” People suffering from this kind of anxiety suffer from a vague sense of tension, boredom, desperation and a feeling of incompleteness. They seem to be unaware of where their life is going and have difficulty defining their life purpose. Such lack of meaninglessness can also cause panic attacks and phobias. Once these folks develop a life purpose and give a greater sense of meaning to their lives, and take necessary risks to attain their life goals, they are able to overcome their anxieties and phobias. They are able to then realize their own potential and become ready to confront their fears.



In order to feel happy and satisfied with your life, you must have a purpose in life. Common examples of life purpose could be succeeding in a fulfilling career, making a contribution to your community, raising a family, developing artistic

talent, completing an educational goal, helping others with your own experiences, overcoming addiction or problems of dysfunctional childhood. When you realize what truly gives your life meaning and purpose, you are more likely to go beyond your personal needs and have a beneficial impact on others. When you begin to discover your true purpose and potential, you tend to move above and beyond your personal needs and make a contribution. This, in turn, gives you satisfaction and relieves your tension and anxiety. In addition, it gives you a sense of completeness and you work hard for the betterment of others too as a self intrinsic motivation.

How do we explore our life purpose? In order to get an answer, you must ask yourself questions. Am I satisfied with the education I have obtained? Do I have creative outlets? Have I developed my spirituality What would I like to accomplish in my life? What are the most important values in my life? Is there anything that I deeply value but have not been able to attain it? What changes do I need to make to be able to realize these values? Do I have special

talents that I have not fully realized in my life? What are the obstacles and barriers that I need to overcome in order to realize my full potential?

Once you have answered these questions, you need to break your goals and list what you need to commit to doing in the next month, year, and three years to eliminate your barriers and achieve full life potential. Once you have listed your life purposes, you can do an exercise on visualization to reinforce your commitment. Visualization is a very powerful tool to help you with your motivation level, and it definitely aids in the attainment of your goals. Visualizing the fulfillment of your life purpose on a regular basis will be very instrumental in helping you achieve your goals and full potential. When you visualize that you have already achieved your goals, you become more motivated in real life to make efforts to be able to reach that point. By daily practice, you will see that your efforts will begin to bring results eventually and you will be able to reach your full potential. Visualization makes your subconscious feel that it is happening in real life and it has the benefit of empowering you with the right attitude and a sense of determination.

### Spirituality

Just like having a meaning and life purpose is important to help you with the relief of anxiety and tension, spirituality also helps in overcoming your fears and anxieties.

Spirituality involves the recognition and acceptance of a Higher Power beyond your intelligence and will. Once you cultivate a relationship with your Higher Power, you will get inspired, have a peace of mind, and subtle guidance that you will receive from your Higher Power. Whenever you feel insecure, you can resort to your relationship with your Higher Power and ask for strength and assistance to help you cope with your problems and worries. Spirituality does not mean that you have to stick to any particular religion or faith. Spirituality refers to the common experience behind the viewpoints of several religions. It is an experience that involves an awareness and relationship with something that transcends your personal self. For our purpose, we will refer to the Higher Power, which can be abstract or very simple. Natural surroundings, scenic views, and beauty around you are like the hidden revelations of the Higher Power. They are the manifestation of the presence of a Higher Power.

# American Scene



## Moral Dry Rot in American Politics

By David Beagan

On a vacation with friends, our friend's young son wanted a certain item for lunch. His mom told him, "you won't like it." But he wouldn't be deterred. "Mom, I want it!" So she let him have it. Of course mom was right. He ate a few bites and then realized that he didn't like it and started whining that he wanted something else. "I told you you wouldn't like it." Then he said something both amusing and surprising. "You should have talked me out of it, Mom." In his mind, it was mom's fault, it was her job to impose her wisdom on him.

Lest we think this is just childish silliness, I remember a few years ago I was on a project to develop a computer information dashboard. My team had recommended repeatedly that they invest the time and expense of developing a datamart for the dashboard. But they just did not want to invest in this. Then months later once the wisdom of a datamart was apparent one of the managers said, "I wish you would have made us build a datamart."

And so it goes with the wisdom of our Federal government spending within its means. As George Will has observed, the government provides ten dollars worth of services for every six dollars it collects in taxes. Collectively the citizens and the government have fooled themselves into believing that using ten dollars worth of services while only funding six dollars is what we want. But in the end the bill comes due. Unfortunately, the Federal Government can continue to amass more debt, raising the debt ceiling, further forestalling that day when it will suddenly be clear that we should have done better, we should have lived within our means. The so-called fiscal cliff is actually something that is forcing the government to live within its means – or at least closer to doing so. This may seem like a harsh measure, but in the long run it is good medicine.

Looking closer to my home in Michigan, just south of my town, in Detroit they are facing a day of reckoning. Detroit has been teetering on the brink of bankruptcy for years and now seems to be truly at the end of the line. It would seem that the appointment of an emergency manager is inevitable. This comes about after years of a dysfunctional and sometimes corrupt leadership. Governor Rick Snyder has tried everything possible to help the city find a way out. The consent agreement, signed on to by the city this spring, was supposed to be a way for Detroit to emerge from its fiscal deathbed. But they couldn't stick to it and once again are looking at the prospect of an emergency financial manager. So many cities and other governmental units have made promises to their employees for pensions and

health care that are now bankrupting the cities. It is understandable that no one can predict economic downturns, downturns that jeopardize the financial stability of retiree health and benefit plans, but it is inevitable that they will happen sometime. Government planners need to allow for these, holding funds in reserve. But too often these reserve funds seem like they could be put to better use to address pressing issues that seem important now.

Whether at the local level or the national level the promises that government makes need to be considered not just in light of the good they are doing but also with the recognition that these funds are coming from somewhere. We tend to think of projects that get funded by governments as drawing on a pool of funds that are just sitting there waiting to be tapped. This is a wrong and immoral way of thinking. Without recognizing and understanding that the benefits and funding provided by government is at the expense of someone else, we are believing a lie.

Consider an example, social security. I imagine that most people who are collecting social security essentially think like this, "I have paid into social security all of my life, now I am collecting what I have paid." The actual fact is, most people collect more than what they have paid in. I am not suggesting that the government renege on promises that it has made, but government should not foster an untruth to hide an inherently immoral funding mechanism. But politicians have always been reluctant to speak out on the truths about funding for all programs. The taxes that all of us pay at local, state and federal levels are many and varied. If all the taxes were added up and presented to each of us as one big bill, I think most of us would much more seriously consider what are we getting for our money.

The fiscal cliff is a joke and the indication of gutless or incompetent politicians who would appear incapable of balancing a budget. But who voted them in? Are we the collective constituency acting like the young boy who didn't like his lunch and will say about all these seemingly free government benefits: "you should have talked me out of it."?



# Observations



## The Bright Side of Aging

By David Beagan

As all of us are getting older there is lots of fear in our minds. We are worried about our health, financial situations, families, jobs and other aspects of life regarding our future and destiny. Considering all these facts in mind I did some research as to how we age gracefully and I was amazed to find out how many research studies have been done in medical science regarding the positive aspects of aging.

1. This is a documented fact that older adults with bright outlook to future live longer and happier than those with negative thoughts
2. Remember our life is full of joys, sorrows, failures and accomplishments. The key to happiness is always count your blessings, be happy and never look back then you will not see your shadows behind.
3. For us to be healthy it is very important to eat well balanced diet supplemented with vitamins, and minerals. Researchers have proved the facts that antioxidant supplements like vitamins A, C, E and Selenium protects cells by neutralizing free radicals and atomic fragments that can cause cells destruction in bodies.
4. Furthermore scientists have proved the fact that vitamin E supplement in elderly lowers the risk of heart attacks, stroke and Alzheimer's' disease.
5. Exercises are very important in all stages of life as it keeps our body healthy.
6. Light up your life and get regular medical checkups as suggested by your physician.
7. Laughter is the best medicine to improve your mood when you are feeling down. The heart and lungs are stimulated when you laugh because the amount of oxygen in your blood is increased due to deep breathing. Furthermore, the heart beats faster and blood pressure rises, temporarily followed by a drop in blood pressure and relaxation of skeletal muscles.
8. Additionally, with laughter there are exercises of facial muscles, hence it prevents wrinkles.
9. Lastly be cheerful, happy and think positive. Remember the saying, April showers brings May flowers and winter blast bring spring joy.

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### Aging Demographics

From Wikipedia

Rapid aging populations are expected worldwide. In 1900, there were 3.1 million people aged 65 years and older living in the United States. However, this population continued to grow throughout the 20th century and reached 31.2, 35, and 40.3 million people in 1990, 2000, and 2010, respectively. Notably, in the United States, the "baby boomer" generation began to turn 65 in 2011. Recently, the population aged 65 years and older has grown at a faster rate than the total population in the United States. The total population increased by 9.7%, from 281.4 million to 308.7 million, between 2000 and 2010. However, the population aged 65 years and older increased by 15.1% during the same period. It has been estimated that 25% of the population in the United States and Canada will be aged 65 years and older by 2025. Moreover, by 2050, it is predicted that, for the first time in United States history, the number of individuals aged 60 years and older will be greater than the number of children aged 0 to 14 years. Those aged 85 years and older (oldest-old) are projected to increase from 5.3 million to 21 million by 2050. Adults aged 85–89 years constituted the greatest segment of the oldest-old in 1990, 2000, and 2010. However, the largest percentage point increase among the oldest-old occurred in the 90- to 94-year-old age group, which increased from 25.0% in 1990 to 26.4% in 2010. With the rapid growth of the aging population, social work education and training specialized in older adults and practitioners interested in working with older adults are increasingly in demand.



# Observations



## Lessig on Ethics – Sort of

from GH at [artisthousemusic.org](http://artisthousemusic.org)

Lawrence Lessig recently posted a very interesting piece on his site entitled “The Ethics of Web 2.0.” For those unfamiliar with the term Web 2.0 it is a phrase coined by O’Reilly Media in 2004 in order to describe a sort of second wave of Internet services. These services, like social networking, tagging, etc. are prominently seen in sites like Flickr, del.icio.us, and some would argue, MySpace. The main characteristics of Web 2.0 are community, sharing, open source, and user generated (and defined) content. In all, it’s incredibly exciting and incredibly important that you determine a way to understand both the nature of this movement, and how it applies to your music related activities.

In his post, Lessig talks about the difference between Web 2.0 sites that aggregate user generated content in a “true sharing” manner versus those who do so via “fake sharing.” He makes this distinction thus:

A “true sharing” site doesn’t try to exercise ultimate control over the content it serves. It permits, in other words, content to move as users choose.

A “fake sharing” site, by contrast, gives you tools to it make seem as if there’s sharing, but in fact, all the tools drive traffic and control back to a single site.

In this sense, YouTube is a fake sharing site, while Flickr, (parts of) Google, blip.tv, Revver and EyeSpot are true sharing sites.

He elaborates by saying the YouTube is a fake sharing site because while they allow people to contribute content, they don’t allow people “an easy way to actually get the content someone else has uploaded.” He then goes on to list sites such as Flickr, blip.tv, EyeSpot, and Revver who all make it easy for people to not only upload content, but also download the content to do with it what they please (no DRM, etc.); in other words, truly share.

This is important, Lessig makes the point, because, if you agree with the philosophy of Web 2.0, then, axiomatically, as O’Reilly noted, “the service automatically gets better the more people use it.” It also allows for “remixability,” and all of the other things that “hoarding” or controlling content does not. Lessig believes that this remixability that is such a crucial factor to Web 2.0, and, of course, to his entire message regarding Creative Commons is the only “ethical” manner in which to operate.

While I must take a slight bit of issue with his use of the word ethics here (I think something like “best practices” might be more appropriate, though also certainly...uh...more boring), I take no issue whatsoever with his message. The continued evolution of the Internet, and particularly, the Internet as distribution mechanism and community aggregator as it relates to music is dependent on this idea of true, rather than fake, sharing. Judicious application of this true sharing in your marketing efforts is what will help you attract and retain a constituency for your music over the long-term.



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# New Century



## Fetus? No, It's a Baby

No way can I count the number of pregnant women I've known over eight decades – family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc. During their pregnancies every one of them referred to the little life within her as "my baby." NEVER did any of them call it a "fetus." However, abortionists prefer fetus, a devious psychological ploy.

There are laws protecting unborn eagle and tortoise eggs, but no laws protecting unborn babies who are destroyed by "choice." Whales, seals and spotted owls have more rights than an unborn child. There are people who worry because they think trees can feel pain, but believe an unborn baby cannot. What misguided compassion. The inmates are indeed running the asylum.

Another ploy is to call themselves "pro choice" instead of pro abortion. If a choice is to be made it should be at the baby's birth. Either keep the little darling and raise it or allow a loving married couple on a long list of anxious couples to adopt it.

Another ploy to confuse pro-lifers is the accusation that they are hypocritical because many of those who believe in the sanctity of life also favor capital punishment. The equating of lives of innocent babies with the lives of heinous murderers is the fallacy in this stratagem. Making an adoption plan for a child one cannot support is the most loving, selfless course possible for a woman who finds herself with a crisis pregnancy. Besides giving your child life, a pregnant woman can give an infertile couple a lifetime of joy and frees herself from the guilt of killing her own child. Everyone comes out a winner, especially the child.

Pat Buchanan, a presidential candidate, was asked why, as a Republican, he puts more emphasis on the abortion issue than he does on tax cuts. He explained that when he meets his Maker he will not be asked if he voted for tax cuts, but he will be asked what he did to fight abortion, the killing of babies.

If you want to know if your action is right or wrong there is a simple test. Ask yourself, if everyone did it, what would be the result? The country and the world would cease to exist!

True story – while talking to Stephen, her four-year-old, about his little sister she was carrying, Stephen asked if he could sing to the little one. Mommy said, "Sure, put your head near my tummy and sing to her." He sang his favorite,

"You are my sunshine," and he continued to sing it to her at least every day until she was born. Unfortunately, there were severe complications and the newborn was not expected to survive. Stephen wanted to sing to his little sister while she was still alive. Mommy asked her doctor who, unable to deny this request, consented. As they entered the nursery a nurse asked what they were doing there. When Mom told her, the nurse sternly said, "I'm sorry, no children are allowed in here." Mom, even more sternly, said, "We aren't leaving until my son sings to his sister" and he did. As he continued singing "You are my sunshine" the baby's heart monitor registered increased activity. The nurse asked him to keep singing and, eventually, the heartbeat was normal. The stern nurse stood there, tears streaming down her cheeks. The baby survived.

An American missionary couple were doing their good works in the Philippines with their four children. Pregnant with her fifth child, the woman fell ill. Her doctors recommended abortion. She refused their well intended advice and gave birth to Tim Tebow who, before graduating from college, led the Florida Gators to two national championships and won the Heisman Trophy. Fortunately, Pam Tebow did not abort little Timmie who is now a quarterback in the NFL

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### Roe v. Wade

Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113 (1973), is a landmark decision by the United States Supreme Court on the issue of abortion. Decided simultaneously with a companion case, Doe v. Bolton, the Court ruled 7–2 that a right to privacy under the due process clause of the 14th Amendment extended to a woman's decision to have an abortion, but that right must be balanced against the state's two legitimate interests in regulating abortions: protecting prenatal life and protecting women's health. Arguing that these state interests became stronger over the course of a pregnancy, the Court resolved this balancing test by tying state regulation of abortion to the trimester of pregnancy.

The Court later rejected Roe's trimester framework, while affirming Roe's central holding that a person has a right to abortion until viability.

# Mental Exercise



By David Beagan

## Linguistic Arithmetic

Mathematical equations do not always work linguistically, particularly with idioms. With that in mind, consider what word could be filled into the both blanks.

Two half \_\_\_\_\_s do not make a whole \_\_\_\_\_.

Here is a hint:

The \_\_\_\_\_ will set you free.

## State of Mystery

Many U.S. State borders follow topographical features, for example rivers. Two states, Colorado and Wyoming, have no such borders, but rather follow lines of latitude and longitude. Both are four degrees of latitude from north to south and both are seven degrees of longitude from east to west. However, they are not the same in area, Colorado is more than 6% larger. Why?

## Odd Averages

In baseball, a player's batting average is the player's number of hits divided by number of at bats. Before the baseball season started, Smith wagered with Jones that he would have a higher batting average at the end of the season. When it was all over Jones asked, "my batting average for the first half of the season was .300 what was yours?"

"Mine was .250," replied Smith.

"And for the second half, my batting average was .400."

"Mine was .375," admitted Smith.

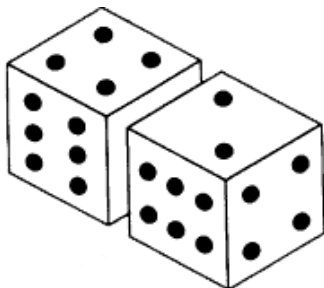
"Then I win the bet," Jones said.

"Hold on, let's run the numbers."

And it turns out that Smith did win the bet. How is this possible?

## No Dice

Did you know that opposite sides of dice add to seven? Knowing that, what is the total of the two hidden sides that are facing one another?



## No You Don't

There is something that you don't want. But once you have it you don't want to lose it. What is it?

## Gold Shavings

An artisan fashions miniature statues from one ounce gold bricks that he buys from a gold supplier. When he makes five statues the metal shavings left over can be melted down into another one ounce gold brick that can be used to make another statue. How many statues can he make with 25 gold bricks?

## Answers

### Linguistic Arithmetic

Two half truths do not make a whole truth.

The truth will set you free.

### State of Mystery

The lines of longitude narrow as they go north, all meeting at the North Pole. So Wyoming being north of Colorado is a bit narrower which accounts for the slightly smaller area.

### Gold Shavings

The 25 gold bricks produce enough shavings to make five more statues. In making the additional five statues there are enough shavings to make one additional statue. This makes a total of 31 statues.

### Odd Averages

Smith could win if his .375 batting average is based on many more at bats than the other three averages. Here is one example:

	Jones			Smith		
	hits	at bats	ave.	hits	at bats	ave.
1st	30	100	.300	20	80	.250
2nd	40	100	.400	150	400	.375
Season	70	200	.350	170	480	.354

### No Dice

Eight. A three and a

### No You Don't

A lawsuit.

### Gold Shavings

The 25 gold bricks produce enough shavings to make five more statues. In making the additional five statues there are enough shavings to make one additional statue. This makes a total of 31 statues.



# Publisher's Desk



## My Turn

By Bala Prasad

There was a time, many years ago, that Newsweek used to have a one page article titled 'My Turn.' I always wanted to write in that forum – but never was asked. Well, here is my chance.

Here is my sermon to President Obama as to what he should do for the next four years. As I have no responsibility for either the success or failure of these ideas. I can really let it fly. Moreover, I doubt my ideas will ever reach or will be discussed within a 500 mile radius of the White House.

You have been re-elected as U.S President and perhaps will not run for any office again with the exception of the Chicago School Board. So no submission to partisan groups – do what “you” think is best for the country and go full speed ahead.

Under your watch:

1. No American should lack food and shelter.
2. Everybody should have basic healthcare.
3. Everybody should have education going as far as they are capable.
4. Tax laws should be changed to get from everybody according to their ability and to give o everybody according to their necessity.
5. Disability and welfare benefits.

The first three are a no brainer, so no reason to dwell on them. The problem is that financial resources are limited. So you have to cut somewhere to spend resources on numbers 1, 2 and 3. Where do you cut and how do you cut it is your business. But we, the John Q. Public elected you. So you cannot let us down and not repose in us these basic human rights and sometimes requirements. Again trim where ‘you’ feel it is right. Ignore the pencil pushers, the naysayers and your advisers.

Of the fourth, you have to tighten up the screws on the rich. A lot of tax and revenue laws are old and redundant. Most glaring example of that are laws that involve social security benefits. When the law was passed in the 1930s by President Franklin Roosevelt, the underlying theme was to have a safety net for the poor and elder Americans. The word “senior citizen” had not been coined yet. Now everybody, upon reaching a certain age, get on the government dole, also known as social security. No doubt a vast number of Americans need it and no doubt they should continue to get it. But Warren Buffet, Ross Perot, and President Bill Clinton? I am not picking on them. Perhaps they give it to charity. But

there are vast numbers who have and will always have income from other sources. What does an individual who has a half million dollar income from other sources need a social security check for? The money should be passed on to more needy Americans or used to cut our multi-trillion dollar debt. The same is true of higher taxes. People whose income is a half a million dollars should pay more tax. They will carry on, cry and whine a lot. All of them are not republicans. A lot of these fat cats are democrat as I know many of them from both parties. You let them sulk.

So my advice – no social security check for people making \$250,000 or more a year and increased taxation for people making more than a half a million dollars a year. I read that the taxation level you have settled at is \$400,000. I have no argument with that figure. The rate of the higher tax, I leave it for you to decide.

Of the fifth, I have no problem accepting that we give to the truly disabled. The American disability laws were passed to help them. But the underlying principle that made us pass these laws has been violated every time. Young people who do not want to carry their share of responsibility that the society expects them to can obtain a different kind of government dole. Severely obese people collect benefits because they claim to be disabled. A New York City worker collecting disability for years, was first to reach the top of the empire state building – by stairway. A million dollar lottery winner was still collecting food stamps. So everybody must carry their weight and rules should be tightened.

Merry Christmas and happy holidays.

*Sincerely,*

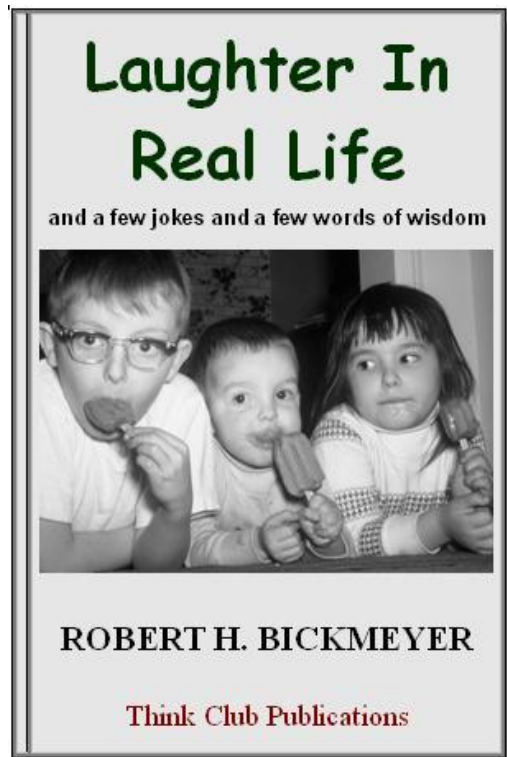
*Bala Prasad*

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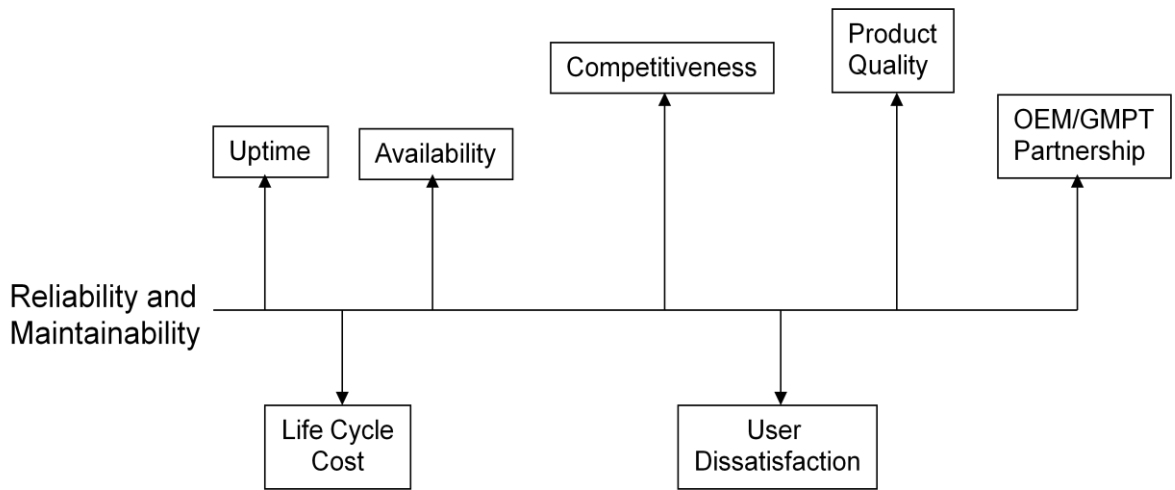
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