

Inside the Bell

Women's Rights – Really?

Recently we have been treated to an impassioned public debate on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act/mandated purchases/religious freedom/birth control/women's rights. Since Secretary Kathleen Sebelius' January 20th announcement mandating all employers to offer health insurance coverage, including birth control, to their employees, we have been treated to an Olympic level of political gymnastics.

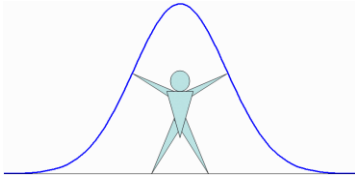
The original announcement offended the Church; the Administration's "fix" made it worse; conservatives tried to shift the focus to First Amendment rights; liberals called on a 30 year old, libidinal law student to focus the discussion on the hardships of birth control and women's rights and, finally, the ultimate absurdity, a sex strike by women in Austin, Texas. This has never been about Women's Rights but more about political expediency. The number of people who believe the political rhetoric and believe they have to take action to defend something that has not been attacked repeatedly amazes me.

The debate will eventually lead to the elephant in the room – abortion.

In my opinion, on the issue of birth control, conservatives have it right. I fail to understand the classification of birth control as a health issue worthy of health insurance reimbursement. What constitutes birth control? What is the reimbursement rate for the rhythm method or abstinence and are men eligible for reimbursement for the purchase of prophylactics? And, addressing the status of RU-486 wakes up the elephant. The use of pharmaceuticals does not automatically constitute a health issue. With the exception of Federal employees, veterans and some impoverished citizens, the Government shouldn't pay for medical insurance or procedures, including birth control and abortion, nor mandate any corporation or individual do so.

Having written the above, I can't help but notice the hypocrisy with the conservative position about the elephant. How can intelligent individuals embrace freedom, smaller Government, self-determination and individual choice possibly justify using the power of the Government to deny families the ability to determine their own direction and make their own choices. Conservatives argue that the prohibition is based on Judeo-Christian morality upon which our nation was founded. However, the United States is not a homogeneous Christian nation and it never has been. If anything, Christianity teaches tolerance and acceptance of religious thought and that has to include moral codes that differ from Christian moral code.

If the Government can ban elephants today, what's to stop them from banning sex before marriage, adultery or homosexuality? How about the number of children permitted or religious education in public schools or even heresy?



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Creeping morality in Government regulation is little different from creeping progressivism in the same government. Is there really any difference between Government embracing a Christian moral code or an Islamic one? I fail to comprehend how you can be for one and against the other. You can argue that one is right and the other is wrong, but right and wrong are subjective values, influenced by upbringing, social structure and individual experience. The current situation works perfectly. The Supreme Court, in defending a woman's privacy, got it right. No woman is forced to violate her personal moral code. In fact, the current system encourages individual choice, exactly what the abortion opponents seek to preserve in all aspects of our lives. If we're going to defend the Constitution against Progressive and Islamic influence let's not swing so far in the other direction that we restrict the freedoms of the citizens we're trying to defend. If we're going to keep Government out of our churches then we also should keep our churches out of our Government. It was tried in Europe in the 12th century. It was called the Dark Ages. How did that work out?

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