

May 1997

Letters to the Editor. . .

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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Recommended Citation

Catholic Physicians' Guild (1997) "Letters to the Editor. . .," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 64: No. 2, Article 1.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol64/iss2/1>

Letters to the Editor

Discrimination

To the Editor:

The article by Dr. Albert Gunn (*Linacre* 63:42, 1996) entitled "Religious Discrimination in the Selection of Medical Students" is a chilling indictment of the arbitrary ways in which personal bias can affect the selection of candidates for medical schools. Given the highly competitive environment for admission, it is intolerable that an otherwise highly qualified candidate could be rejected for reasons related to religious or pro-life beliefs.

The results of this study confirm what we discovered in our study twenty years ago "Do Medical Schools Discriminate Against Anti-abortion Applicants?" (*Linacre* 43:29, 1976).

Following the publication of our study, then Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania introduced a bill which was later signed into law which makes it a federal crime to discriminate against candidates for medical school on the basis of pro-life beliefs. Any documented instance of such discrimination should be pursued legally through the US Attorney's office or the Civil Rights Commission.

— Eugene F. Diamond, M.D.
Chicago, IL

Boxing

To the Editor:

Boxing has afforded me a long and exciting legacy, from club fights, smokers (smokers!!), Golden Gloves, Bayside Arena, Max Schmeling, Joe Louis, Max Baer, to and beyond Cassius Clay. As a matter of fact, "The Boston Strong Boy", John L. Sullivan, is reputed to have attended my alma mater, Boston College, for a year. His greatest contribution to boxing, perhaps, was the boxing glove, designed to protect the wearer's hand and not the opponent's face. As a matter of fact, bare-knuckle boxing would certainly be safer than gloved boxing, because the fist is

essentially a fragile structure, and a few solid blows to the chin would result in a quick TKO. But that is an aside.

It has to be accepted that boxing carries the potential for significant and serious injury. If it did not — if, for example, boxers competed sheathed in pillows — the whole question of its morality would be moot. And it also has to be accepted that boxing is unique among sports in that its object is the direct and intended injury of the opponent. The argument that the object of boxing is to accrue points, and that any associated injury is merely incidental, is sheer sophistry. After all, how does one accrue points? By conferring a cut lip, or a periorbital hematoma, or a facial laceration, or a bloody nose, or a knock-down, or unconsciousness.

But, it is often argued, the incidence of serious injury or death is higher in other contact sports (and even in non-contact sports like baseball) than it is in boxing. This is an *ignoratio elenchi* that distracts from, but cannot conceal, the fundamental difference in intent that makes boxing unique.

— Eugene G. Laforet, M.D.
Chestnut Hill, MA

Material Cooperation

To the Editor:

In years past, this country, its people and government took the significant step to ostracize the South African Republic for its apartheid policy. The people, their institutions and their government divested themselves of South African stocks and worked to isolate this country with so horrendous a policy. The principle of material cooperation in evil, even if remote, was considered anathema. And so good did come when good people did something. Today the international pharmaceutical house of Hoechst-Marion-Roussel are bringing to our country the abortifacient drug RU 486. It is time for good people to again act. This multinational conglomerate also wishes us

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to use their other drugs: Bently, Cardizem, Diabeta, Ditoropan, Lasix and Seldane for which there are excellent alternatives. They also want us to use Altace, Amaryl, Briconyl, Cantil, Carafate, Clomid, Hiprex, Norpramin, Novafed, Rifamate, Refater, Tenuate, Trental and Pavabid. If substitutes cannot be found, can we find generics suitable for patient needs? Should we materially cooperate even remotely with those whose profits will allow even more mischief?

— John P. Coughlin, M.D.
San Antonio, TX
