

Book Review

The Quick and the Dead: RU-486 and the New Chemical Warfare Against Your Family,

by George Grant (Crossway, Wheaton, 1991), 156 pp. \$8.95.

Reviewed by David Hall

George Grant has scooped the liberal press again. With his latest expose of RU-486 Grant, one of the most informed evangelicals in these areas, provides information which will be of service to concerned parents, teachers, public officials, and medical personnel. What with the NEA's recent endorsement of this abortifacient, Christians will want to be armed with the facts. One of Grant's purposes is to provide those facts in a fair manner. This journalist-cum-theologian does just that.

Laced with several testimonies by women who've unsuspectingly been duped, one of this books strengths is the appeal from actual -- albeit regretful -- users of RU-486. Following a lengthy introduction to this ethical issue by way of the experience of one young lady, Grant gives a recapitulation of the history and development of Mifepristone, Mifegyne, and other related chemical components of RU-486. This second chapter is eminently factual and adaptable for use in public debate. As one of the intended uses of this work is to arm evangelicals in the public sector, this chapter will be essential reading. Although technical by nature, Grant does a yeoman's job in translating these medical inscrutabilities into intelligible text for the expert and non-expert alike.

Another outstanding aspect of this short work is Grant's review of our modern search for medical salvation. His fourth chapter is also a review of the Biblical basis for modern medicine, along with the assertion that such medical practice has departed from its Judaeo-Christian foil. In these Grant retains the knack for summing up weighty subjects in a few sentences for the layman.

Grant is helpful as he waxes philosophic. Comparing modern medicine to some modern art, he observes, "Goya knew that medicine, like art, when not in the service of heaven, is most likely in the service of Hell" (p. 94). A little later he states the "failure of modern medicine is much more a maltheory than a malpractice. In other words, the problem with health care is not so much bad technologies as bad philosophies" (p. 94). Citing S. Ladourvec, Grant opines, "With the subtle secularization and industrialization of medicine, has come a rootlessness, a lack of cohesiveness, and a latitudinarianism. There is no longer a philosophical definition of [the] profession. The tragic result is that young doctors have no real sense of calling, and they either have to find meaning and purpose in raw financial gain or in some ideological pursuit. What we are seeing then is the inevitable fragmentation of medicine into a thousand cults and sects" (p. 94). The author is also helpful in his expose of the World Health Organization. This work might be strengthened from criticism if it provided the comparative failure rates of other surgical or pharmaceutical procedures.

Also included in this brief monograph is a critique of the pro-death bias in the modern media who, according to Grant, exhibit "Milli Vanilli-like lip-synching of the pro-abortion party line provid[ing] stark evidence that it has tossed any semblance of impartiality or objectivity to the four winds" (p. 112). The final chapter is a setting of this problem in the larger historical context, and some concluding suggestions as to how to practically battle this plague. The book is enhanced by abundant endnotes for further reference, and a listing of bibliographic resources.

This book has the punch of Grant's earlier *Legacy of Planned Parenthood* and is written in that same admirable style. In fact, I wondered as I began, would this book be up to the previous classical style? I found it not only to be stylistically superior, but equally excellent in content as well. The opening Latin quotes and the juxtaposition of citations from Theodore Roosevelt and Charles Spurgeon sweeten the excellence. Grant's information is a real service to the Christian community, and his readable style will make this a resource for every Christian home and church concerned with teenagers. Christians will also want to distribute widely some of these to legislators, physicians, educators, and others in the public domain. Above all, the Christian community will welcome this as a theological evaluation of RU-486. The underlying philosophies are exposed as various "radicalism[s which], like most other ancient religions, [are] largely made up of false prophecies and unshackled perversities.

His thesis is well summarized by his reference from T. Roosevelt (p. 61): "There are those who believe that a new modernity demands a new morality. What they fail to consider is the harsh reality that there is no such thing as a new morality. There is only one morality. All else is immorality. There is only true christian ethics over against which stands the whole of paganism. If we are to fulfill our great destiny as a people, then we must return to the old morality, the sole morality." Grant may help us toward that end and has provided able leadership in this crucial area.