

ECHO ECHO ECHO ECHO

Pro-life organization names student as winning essayist

A Bishop Kearney student has been named the first-place winner in the essay contest sponsored by the Pro-Life Group of St. Thomas the Apostle Church. Michelle Stemmler's essay was selected from among 84 entries submitted by students from seven area high schools. Participants wrote their essays in response to an imaginary friend who asked "Why shouldn't I have an abortion?"

Stemmler received a prize of \$200 for her first-place entry. Second-place winner Paul Ciavarrri of Aquinas Institute received \$75. Cheryl Batusti of Bishop Kearney won third place.

The following is Stemmler's essay:

By Michelle Stemmler
Bishop Kearney High School
DEDICATION: To my little brother, Christopher, and to all the unborn children of this world.

I know this must be a very difficult time for you. You do have to cope with the reality of your mistake, but abortion isn't the answer to your problem. There has to be another way. Please try to keep your mind open to other options and consider them. I'm not here to condemn you; I'm here for you because you're my friend, and I want to help.

Let me ask you something: have you ever

actually thought about the human being that's growing inside you? I know it's hard to think of this "thing" as a living person, but that's probably because you can't see it. It's so easy to get rid of something you can't see, isn't it?

Many girls get abortions because they think of their child as just a pregnancy or a medical condition, not as a person. Because they don't see the babies before, during or after the abortion, it's just another operation to them, like having their appendices removed or something. They don't comprehend what they are doing as murder because they don't consider the babies to be real. I'm not faulting you if you think like that, since I used to think about unborn children the same way. You see, my mom has had three miscarriages. In each case, the fetus was only a few months old, and when it actually happened, it did seem more like a medical problem than the death of my brother or sister. But on March 15, 1986, my way of thinking changed completely.

I didn't feel very attached to the other three because I never knew them. It seems like you almost have to hold or touch the baby before you realize that this is a human being and he is a person with a special purpose in life. But my mother was seven-



Michelle Stemmler

months pregnant when Christopher strangled on the umbilical cord. He was real. Mom and Dad said he looked exactly like me when I was born, but I'm alive and he's dead. I cried, mostly for my own sorrow, but also for him, because it wasn't fair that his life was taken away from him. There was nothing I could have done to save Christopher, but you can save your baby. This is your son or daughter that's going to die if you let it happen. It won't be fair to your baby if you allow it to be killed. That child has a right to grow and experience life!

Just because you can't or don't want to handle the pregnancy is no reason to have an abortion. Life is too precious, too delicate to just throw away and pretend it doesn't exist. It does exist!

When Mom lost Christopher, cards, letters, phone calls, and food came pouring into the house from people who cared about us. When the seven astronauts died in the shuttle explosion, the entire nation mourned for them. When anyone dies violently or suddenly, everyone acknowledges how terrible it is. But all the unborn children who are aborted die violently and suddenly, and no one mourns for them. The only difference between the two forms of death is that many people don't think of the unborn child as being human. Since they can't actually see it, it's non-existent to them, and they find it hard to mourn for something they don't really consider to be living. Yet a three-month-old fetus is no less human than a 20-year-old man.

You're sitting there saying, "But it's not fair to me if I have the baby!" Do you think

it's fair to kill a child just because you don't want it? The child is the one who's going to suffer from the consequences of your mistake if you abort it. It wasn't as though you had to get pregnant either. Pregnancy is a choice, and you definitely could have avoided it if you wanted to. And you're trying to tell me it's not fair to you?

Besides, nobody is saying you have to keep the baby. I have a friend, a junior in high school, who gave birth to a beautiful baby boy about a month ago. She knew she couldn't keep him because she had plans for the future and had to finish school. She didn't really want the baby either, but she knew that even if she didn't want it, someone else would. Most adoption agencies have a three- to five-year waiting list for couples who want to adopt infants. So there is no way you can truthfully say that no one will want your baby.

Beth (name has been changed) had a tutor come to her house for her education so she wouldn't have to face the people at school. She lived at home and gave her son up for adoption soon after he was born. The hardest part about the whole thing was actually saying goodbye to her little boy. It was very hard on her parents and her brother, too. But I know they'd rather go through that experience than know that Beth had an abortion.

None of the choices you have present an emotionally easy way out. Every option has some pain involved, including having the abortion. Some women who have abortions go through a time of guilt when their babies would've been due to arrive. That's when they realize what they've done. So please, for your own sake, but mostly for the child's sake, don't kill your baby. Give him or her the chance to live.

"People are special, and human life is sacred, whether or not we admit it. Every life is precious and worthwhile in itself — not only to us as human beings but also to God. Every person is worth fighting for, regardless of whether he is young or old; sick or well; child or adult; born or unborn; or brown, red, yellow, black or white."

from *What Ever Happened to the Human Race?*, by Francis Schaeffer and Dr. C. Everett Koop, pp. 195-198.

Equal Time

Aquinas Institute
How does the nuclear mishap in the Soviet Union affect nuclear research in the United States?

BILL HURSH, freshman

As a result of the recent nuclear mishap in the Soviet Union, much more attention will have to be paid to making things safer in the United States and in the world. The design of the building housing the reactor proper will have to come under closer scrutiny. Many safeguards will have to be incorporated into the plans for the buildings because, in some people's minds, nuclear power plants and atomic bombs are interchangeable concepts.



ELLEN STOFFEL, freshman

The United States will not stop making nuclear weapons. The mishap, though, makes the United States realize how awesome nuclear power really is, and how careful we have to be in using it.



ANGELA CARROLL, sophomore

The nuclear mishap in the Soviet Union has had many effects on nuclear research in the United States. It has caused everyone to realize just how dangerous nuclear plants are. The United States has now begun practice drills within the plants to prepare the workers in the case of a real emergency. There has also been more testing on the nuclear-alarm systems to make sure they will give enough warning time. Because of the distance the radioactive cloud has spread from Chernobyl, people are now questioning about how far housing should start from a nuclear plant.



RICHARD MAWN, sophomore

This nuclear-energy accident reminds the world of what can happen because of human carelessness and taking for granted a powerful form of energy. In the United States, the restrictions at nuclear-energy sites will probably increase.



Although this accident has caused much grief and death in the Soviet Union, the world can benefit from the turmoil. If a nuclear energy reactor causes so much grief, just think about what the death toll would be if a bomb were deliberately dropped on a country.

Speaking Out

By Marilou Halsted
Bishop Kearney

This is the time when summer reading lists are being prepared, and the student can only wonder what monstrosities will be forced upon him during his vacation. One book I would recommend — written by an author not widely read by teens, but who has been on the best-seller list for a time — is *The Butter Battle Book*, by Dr. Seuss. One is likely to think this suggestion silly, because it is "only" a children's book. Having read it, however, I must argue that it is an excellent piece of "fantasy," worthy of a high school student's leisure time.

The Butter Battle Book is the story of the Yooks and the Zooks. On one side of a territorial wall live the Yooks, who put butter on the upside of the bread; on the other side of the wall live the Zooks, who prefer their butter on the downside. This small culinary difference has brought about suspicions on both sides of the wall, but so far, peace has been maintained, symbolized by the wall.

When a Zook uses a slingshot to break the Yooks' defensive "tough-tufted prickly stick-berry switch," the "arms race" begins. These fictional characters invent such successive counter-attack weapons as the "triple-sling jigger," "the eight-nozzled, elephant-toted boo-blitz," and finally the "big-boy boomeroo." As one would suspect, the "big-boy boomeroo" is the "ultimate weapon," which could destroy everything if it is dropped — and both the Yooks and the Zooks have one.

Is this "children's book" a portrayal of our own threatening situation? Indeed it could be. It has all the elements: two countries involved in a cold-war-turned-arms race; an "Iron Curtain" blocking com-

munication; and opposing views on the source of conflict.

Some might say *The Butter Battle Book* is an ultra-simplistic version lacking Cuban, Afghan and Libyan crises, but one must remember that this book was intended for five- and six-year-olds who do not notice such subtle differences as these.

There are a few "honest" discrepancies between the book and the real world, though. Certainly we, the United States and the Soviet Union, do not appear as foolish as the Yooks and Zooks, for both sides realize the irrevocable consequences of a war involving our "big-boy boomeroo," the nuclear bomb. Our communication has been hindered at times, but surely we still understand one another. And, of course, our situation is much more complicated than bread and butter.

The book's last scene shows the two opposing generals standing atop the fortified wall, daring each other to drop his "big-boy boomeroo." Since there is no definitive ending, my first reaction was, "Well, what happens now?" And I'm sure many adults as well as children will ask the same thing. But what can we tell them? Is there an answer?

An adult might recognize the similarity of the book to present-day foreign relations and wonder if this genius Dr. Seuss has thought up a solution to the problem no one yet has been able to solve. When he realizes, however, that there are no more pages to turn, that the author has left him hanging, the adult might become cynical and chide himself for thinking there could be such a simple answer. How could there be?

A child, however, when given an incomplete story, will — in his innocence — imagine the best. He can see no reason why the two generals can't sit down, be friends and keep their world from being blown to bits. Of course, the child is only considering the imaginary. Things are not so absurdly simple in "real life."

HOUSE OF GUITARS

We received 11 correct entries identifying **Frank Sinatra** as the vocalist of the two mid-50's hits "Learning The Blues" and "The Tender Trap"



The winner was **Nick Pieranico** of MCC

MUSIC TRIVIA

This week's question:

"I Wish" was a 1977 chart-topper by what Superstar who doesn't have to wish for hits! Name him

A:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip Code _____
School _____

Rules:

Each week the Courier Journal, in conjunction with the House of Guitars will feature a Music Trivia contest. All you have to do to enter is answer the question fill in your name and address and the school you attend (if applicable) cut out the coupon, and send it in to the Courier Journal. If more than one correct entry is received, a drawing will be held and one winning entry will be drawn.

If yours is the winning entry, you will be mailed a coupon for a free album or tape of your choice redeemable at the House of Guitars, 645 Titus Ave.

All entries must be received within seven days of this paper's issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following each drawing.

The Courier-Journal Music Trivia

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