

Looks At Books:

Bradshaw's 'Family'

by John Terrell

One of the books I read over the holidays was *Bradshaw On: THE FAMILY* by John Bradshaw. And it is the kind of book that I think everyone should read.

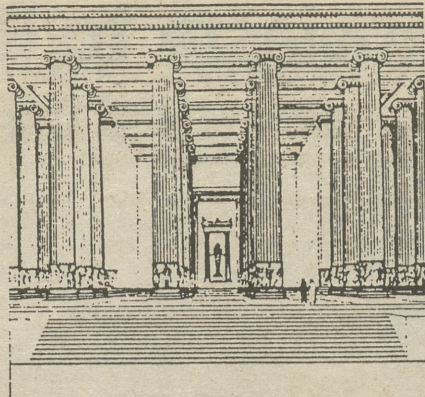
Bradshaw's thesis is that dysfunctional families are the primary cause of the social and psychological problems that we as a society have. To many of you (possibly most of you), that may sound like pretty boring and dry reading. However, upon reading, what one discovers is that almost all of us grew up in a family that is dysfunctional in some manner. Bradshaw illustrates this in an easy-to-read manner and often refers to individual cases and to his own life, in which his father was an alcoholic and Bradshaw himself became an alcoholic as well as work addicted. This book gives all of us a perspective on our problems and how to begin to solve these problems, and hence to live a fuller life.

What is a dysfunctional family? It is a family in which one or both parents have problems which have a negative impact on the children. These problems include situations where parents are disabled by alcoholism, drug addiction, hypochondria, depression, and manic-depression. These situations and others may lead to parents physically and emotionally abusing their children. Unfortunately these behaviors are often passed on to the children and from them onto subsequent generations. You may say to yourself that I am not an alcoholic, even though one parent was, or I don't suffer from depression and a personality disorder as my one parent did. However, the scars remaining from our childhood may not be detectable by us. They may manifest as an inability to form or commit to intimate relationships, unexplained anxiety and anger, an addiction to work or its opposite, underachieving, or marrying an alcoholic. The book is quite revealing in the number of ways in which our parents' problems contribute to our own problems.

None of us can go back and change our childhoods, but by becoming more aware of our own feelings - shame, guilt, anger, anxiety - and the reasons we may have them, the better our chances of moving on to more self-filling lives. This book is certainly not a substitute for psychological therapy or counselling, but it will increase your awareness and lead to additional thinking. This book will probably raise more questions than it answers, but that is how the road to enhanced awareness proceeds.

Bradshaw's fervent wish, and I think a wish of all of us, is to have a society where children are not abused in any manner and grow up to realize as much of their potential as possible. Obviously, a perfect world will never exist. But I can encourage all of you who are reading this to read that book and maybe help make society a little better.

This book is a worthy addition to anyone's library. Even if you do not have time to read it now, buy it and put it on that shelf or table where it is visible so that you will read it when you have a chance: *Bradshaw on: THE FAMILY* by John Bradshaw.



THE FORUM

*The Forum is a regularly featured column that explores important, sometimes controversial, always thought provoking issues facing our college campuses and society today. We encourage you to submit your opinion on these issues to the Lion's Eye mailbox (Main Building) for publication in succeeding issues. Your essay must be submitted by February 19 for inclusion in the next issue, March 1. Read the following essay, gather additional information at the library, collect your thoughts, and express yourself in The Forum.*

In 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional for states to intervene in a woman's abortion decision during the first three months of pregnancy (*Roe v. Wade*). At that time, the issue of minors' rights was not addressed. As a result, many states, despite a number of heated challenges, continued to enact and enforce laws requiring minors seeking abortions to first obtain parental consent.

In 1976, the Supreme Court intervened and declared that states could not grant parents an absolute veto over a

Abortion Rights of Minors: A Personal and Moral Issue

minor's abortion decision, but they could legislate parental rights of consent and notification in conjunction with an alternative known as "judicial bypass," which gave minors the right to seek consent through the courts. (*Planned Parenthood of Missouri v. Danforth*)

The state laws that followed the 1976 Supreme Court ruling have varied widely within those guidelines, and many have been found constitutionally defective in their details. In fact, most of these laws are presently under court injunction to prevent their enforcement.

Two competing arguments lie at the heart of the debate and controversy over regulating the abortion rights of minors:

Proponents of state regulation argue that state laws should seek to promote stronger family bonds, encourage family consultation, and preserve parental authority by requiring parental consent or notification in the case of minors who lack the experience, perspective and judgment to make informed and mature decisions.

In lieu of parental involvement, those in favor of regulation would entrust the courts to evaluate a minor's maturity, competence and best interests and allow judicial bypass.

Opponents of state laws regulating a minor's abortion decision argue that the states cannot legislate parent-child intimacy, particularly when our society has such a high number of dysfunctional families. They feel that parental involvement requirements may further fractionalize such families and subject pregnant minors to serious emotional and physical abuse.

Judicial bypass statutes have also criticized. Since legal representation must be secured and the typical court docket is so backlogged, the process is very difficult to administer confidentially and promptly. Moreover, once in motion, no guidelines are provided to assist a judge in evaluating a minor's maturity and best interests. Concerns that the expected delays in judicial bypass could result in increased abortion costs and medical risks and that such an intimidating process might encourage minors to seek illegal or self-induced abortions also pervade the arguments against it.

Finally, opponents invoke a right of privacy, regardless of age. In October, 1989, the Florida State Supreme court struck down the state's abortion consent law for minors finding "there is no compelling state interest in protecting minors or preserving family unity that would justify intruding on a minor's right to privacy."

The debate continues on these and a much wider range of philosophical, religious and constitutional fronts. The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear, this term, three cases involving state regulation of minors' rights to abortion; a decision is expected in June, 1990. If the states retain the right to regulate a minor's abortion decision, it will be your responsibility, as voting age citizens, to express your views and opinions to your state legislators. Review the debate, gather additional information from magazines, newspapers and public forums, and share your opinions with us in the next issue of the *Lion's Eye*.



ASK ? ORLOY

Dear Dr. Orlov:

I'm feeling very frustrated with one of my courses. It meets at night and the teacher is a "part-timer." I found out that this instructor doesn't have an office here and only seems to show up just before class time. When the class ends, it's late, I'm tired, and the prof. indicates he has to leave right away. Meanwhile, I'm having trouble understanding the course material and don't seem to have any way to talk with the instructor to get help. So I'm aggravated and worried, not learning the material well, and in fear of a bad grade; at the same time, I think I'm not getting my real money's worth for the education tuition dollars paid for the "privilege" of

taking this course. What should I do?

- Short-changed

Dear "Short-changed":

Your problem is an important one that deserves comment, since quite a few of our campus courses are taught by part-time instructors. You and other students need to understand better who these people are, what you can expect from them, and so on.

The University hires part-time faculty because the full-time professors of the campus can not handle the "staffing" of all the courses the campus offers to meet the students' needs. These "part-timers" are well-educated and caring, dedicated teachers who are quite qualified to teach our courses. However, most of these part-time instructors have hectic lives in which they are also teaching at one or more other colleges, dividing their time between classes here and obligations to family, etc., or teaching here while still pursuing studies or doing other jobs in the field of their expertise.

As a result, many of our part-time instructors are unable to spend much time on campus. To heighten their problems, this campus offers very limited office space for faculty. So most part-timers either have no office, as such, or must share certain places that aren't always available. All of this means that a part-time instructor may well suffer not only from limited time to help his/her students, but also from lack of a decent "office" space to confer with them. None of these factors are the "fault" of part-time faculty members, and students

need to understand these circumstances as mere realities of the academic world and of the lives of those whose drive to teach and enthusiasm for their subjects lead them to contribute to our campus on a part-time basis.

Nevertheless, it is also true that you and all students absolutely have the right to expect that your tuition money pays not only for instruction during class time, but also for whatever help you need from a prof to allow you to understand course material and to do your best possible work in any course you take. So, if a part-time instructor seems truly to be unavailable to you and your classmates, you have every right to complain. Assume initially that the instructor has simply not realized your frustrations. The instructor should be able and willing to arrange a talk with you before or after the class, or at some time during the week when he or she may make a special trip to campus for "office hours." Remember, though, that you should assume the person teaching you is good-willed and cares about teaching you, even if his or her busyness poses problems for you. Only if and when you have attempted to communicate your need to the instructor and gained no satisfactory responses, should you feel justified in some "aggravation" and sense of not getting the education you've paid for. If that occurs, you should see Dr. Hanes, the Director of Academic Affairs, on the second floor of the Main Building - to report the situation and seek further satisfaction. Good luck!

