

account of justice grounded in a concern for freedom as nondomination “demanded of the members of the body politic in democratic states” (194).

Finally, in what may be the most pertinent section of his book, Bushlack assays a constructive practical account of civic virtue and public rhetoric. He begins by identifying three negative effects of public Christian rhetoric in recent years: First, a “public language of discrediting, vilification, and denunciation of one’s (perceived) opponents contributes to a culture of public shame and exclusion” (203); consequently, “Christian engagement in these forms of political witness further contributes to the breakdown in meaning of the broader culture” (204); with the result that in the “context of the culture wars rhetoric it becomes impossible to speak about the common good as a real and existent good shared by all members of a society” (205). As an antidote, Bushlack proposes a Thomistic ethos that reimagines “Christian civic engagement in late modern democratic culture and politics” (209). He believes this proposal is of particular value, since it is capable of persuasively arguing that the “pursuit of the common good can only function to motivate human behavior if persons perceive this as a real, existent good and believe that the attainment of the common good will contribute to human flourishing or happiness for themselves and for others” (228). In conclusion, Bushlack’s proposal for a constructive public discourse on the common good is particularly relevant in today’s fraught political culture.

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*Beyond the Abortion Wars: A Way Forward for a New Generation.* By Charles C. Camosy. Foreword by Melinda Henneberger. Grand Rapids, MI, and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 2015. xiv + 207 pages. \$22.00.  
doi: 10.1017/hor.2016.90

Most Americans probably assume that the abortion debate between “pro-life” and “pro-choice” proponents is stalemated. This is one of the reasons I have never published on the topic, although it is a regular unit in courses I teach. What more is there to write? The landscape appears overplowed, with desertification surrounding the canyon separating the opposing camps. With this book, however, Charles Camosy of Fordham University argues that fecund common ground now exists upon which we can move past this putative impasse.

Much has been and continues to be written on abortion, especially in op-eds and social media. Yet, as Camosy notes, “Very few pieces are even aware

of what their opponents are actually arguing, much less engaging it in a fair and careful way" (2). Good classroom teacher that he is, Camosy provides an accessible volume aiming to help readers better inform their consciences through honest consideration of the complexities and nuances of this issue.

The first chapter maps the political maneuvers of Democrats and Republicans over the decades, wherein their stands on abortion have shifted, so that their current positions are actually "*the opposite* of their natural political instincts and philosophies" (17; emphasis in the original). Camosy excels in exfoliating the usual binaries: "pro-life" versus "pro-choice," Republican versus Democrat, religious versus secular, conservative versus liberal. Also, he drills into the data on current abortion practices. Of importance, in his view, is that 2 percent of the 1.2 million abortions performed per year are connected with rape or saving the life of the mother—and, according to polls, most Americans believe abortion is morally justified in such cases. They also now want abortion for other reasons to be more restricted. Key for Camosy are current demographics: the rise of the millennials and Hispanics in the United States, along with the fact that abortion-related jurisprudence is already undergoing change. Yet, I would point out that polls can cut both ways, since, as Camosy repeatedly notes, some 90 percent of fetuses diagnosed with Down syndrome are aborted. What do millennials and Hispanics think about that?

The next two chapters cover ground more moral-theological. In "Who or What Is the Fetus?," Camosy surveys the standard points/counterpoints about personhood, viability, potential, and the like before concluding that "prenatal children" (his preferred term, although he also uses "fetus") are persons who "deserve equal protection of the law, including a *right to life*" (56; emphasis in the original). In "Aiming at Death or Ceasing to Aid?," he draws on the Catholic moral tradition's teaching on "direct killing" (e.g., homicide, "direct abortion," which aims at the death of the fetus), "indirect killing" (e.g., self-defense, "indirect abortion," which does not aim at the death of the fetus), and "refusal to aid" (e.g., letting someone die for a proportionately serious reason). Here Camosy considers cases beyond the removal of the fallopian tubes, such as the use of Plan B, Ella, and RU-486. For Catholic moralists, this chapter may renew debate on "intrinsic evil" and the purportedly prodigal method of proportionalism—Camosy's endnote attempting to dissociate himself from that notwithstanding (176).

The fourth chapter considers public policy and law, including the criminalization of direct abortion and, drawing on earlier work by M. Cathleen Kaveny, the way law can teach morality in society. I wish Camosy had engaged Kaveny's more recent books on law, virtue, religion, and public discourse, however. The fifth chapter relies on Catholic pro-life feminist Sidney

Callahan's work to argue that most choices for abortion are really not as free and pro-women as assumed. Although in his introduction, Camosy recommends humility, solidarity with interlocutors, and avoiding dismissive words/phrases, I fear that some might feel his writing a bit patronizing here.

In the final chapter, Camosy creatively suggests "a way forward" by proposing legislation: the Mother and Prenatal Child Protection Act (MPCPA, although some "pro-choicers" might hold that MPCPA stands for Morality Police Concerning Pregnancy and Abortion). This piece of legislation seeks to protect the life of the fetus while also giving due consideration to legal protection and social support for the mother.

I appreciate Camosy's audacity and hope that this book will spark discussion in classrooms, parish groups, and beyond. An agent should get him invited to speak in as many venues possible, including TV talk shows.

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*Conscience and Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, and Institutional Responses.* Edited by David E. DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer. New York: Orbis Books, 2015. xxiii + 216 pages. \$38.00 (paper).  
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*Conscience and Catholicism* grew from a 2014 seminar at Santa Clara University that explored Catholic conscience formation. David DeCosse's extended essay on the subject in the *National Catholic Reporter* spurred the seminar, and the US Catholic bishops' conflict with the Obama administration over the Affordable Care Act—framed as a conscience issue—as well as John Paul II's and Benedict XVI's insistence on the primacy of the magisterium over individual consciences prompted DeCosse to write the *NCR* essay. The volume contains fourteen essays from individual authors with a revised version of DeCosse's original piece. The authors often refer to each other's contributions throughout, but each can be read independently of the broader collection.

DeCosse's *NCR* article argues that Catholic tradition identified three important principles in conscience formation: moral law, practical reason, and freedom. He saw the American bishops elevate moral law so powerfully as to crowd out the individual's incorporation of practical reason and freedom in forming his or her conscience. The contributors to this volume do not address DeCosse's framework directly, and perhaps for that reason his essay appears at the end rather than the beginning of the volume. But most of the essays amplify the more contextual development of conscience that