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I RECENTLY SENT THE FOLLOWING EMAIL TO VOX DAY:

"I ASSUME THAT YOU SEND YOUR PACK OF MORONS (SUBSCRIBERS) TO HARASS THE PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST OF "TARGET-RICH ENVIRONMENTS."

THEREFORE, I AM REQUESTING TO BE ADDED TO THE LIST.

WHY?

I'M IN NEED OF FRESH MEAT."

VOX DAY'S REPLY APPEARED ON HIS WEB SITE:

"I don't send anyone anywhere, for any reason, but nevertheless, his request is duly granted."

I THEN RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING EMAIL FROM A CHRISTIAN PASTOR NAMED EUGENE WHO WAS APPARENTLY CHOSEN BY VOX TO BE HIS CHAMPION.

PASTOR EUGENE'S EMAIL

Vox Day’s blog referred me to your cite,

EUGENE, WHAT IS IT THAT YOU GHOST WORSHIPPERS HAVE AGAINST DICTIONARIES ANYWAY? ALL OF YOU PEOPLE SPELL LIKE YOU'RE STILL IN MIDDLE SCHOOL.

indicating that you were interested in interaction. When I got there I saw that you made a big deal out of Anders Breivik’s “Christian” identity.

WRONG EUGENE. THE MEDIA SIMPLY *POINTED OUT* BREIVIK'S CHRISTIAN IDENTITY, WHICH THEN FORCED THE JESUS NETWORK, AKA FOX NEWS, TO TOTALLY HUMILIATE THEMSELVES BY TRYING TO DENY THE FACT.

IF THEY HAD JUST BEEN HONEST AND SAID, "YEAH, HE WAS CHRISTIAN, SO WHAT? THERE'S EVIL IN EVERY GROUP: CHRISTIAN; MUSLIM; HINDU; ATHEIST; NO ONE IS IMMUNE." THEN THE ISSUE WOULD BE DONE WITH.

BUT IN TYPICAL CHRISTIAN FORM, THEY AVOID HONESTY LIKE VAMPIRES AVOID SILVER BULLETS, AND TRIED TO LIE THEIR WAY OUT BECAUSE THEY MUST MAINTAIN THEIR POSITION OF MORAL SUPERIORITY. A POSITION THAT IS COMPLETELY CONTRADICTED BY 2,000 YEARS OF BLOODY, BRUTAL HISTORY.

I wrote an article that refutes this nonsense.

EUGENE, ONCE AGAIN YOU GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO ILLUSTRATE YOUR IGNORANCE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. I READ WHAT YOU WROTE, AND YOU'RE DREAMING IF YOU THINK THAT CRAP IS A REFUTATION.

I’ve also copy-pasted it below.

The “Christian Fundamentalist” Terrorist

When I first heard about the explosion in Oslo, Norway and then the shooting that was taking place nearby I suspected–as I image most people did–that the two were linked and that the two were acts of calculated terrorism as opposed to some sort of spree-killing. I imagined that the perpetrators might be jihadist Muslims or, just possibly, some sort of political group like the IRA, ETA, or the Red Army Faction which seem to pop up from time to time in Europe.

EUGENE, I THINK THE FIRST THOUGHT ON EVERYONE'S MIND WAS MUSLIMS. AS IT TURNS OUT, WE WEREN'T THAT FAR OFF.

When I saw that a group named “Ansar al-Jihad al-Alami” (i.e. Helpers of the Global Jihad) had claimed responsibility for the attack I remembered the comedian Stephen Colbert’s quip that Islam has had a PR nightmare on its hands lately. The “Religion of Peace” had struck again in yet another bit of bloody irony.

EUGENE, DO YOU CONSIDER CHRISTIANITY A RELIGION OF PEACE? SURE YOU DO. BUT ONLY IF YOU IGNORE 2,000 YEARS OF BRUTAL ATROCITIES; WHICH OF COURSE, IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU DO. MODERN, ENLIGHTENED HUMANS HAVE DRAGGED FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIANS, KICKING AND SCREAMING, OUT OF THE DARK AGES, BUT NOT WITHOUT A FIGHT. WATCHING MUSLIMS TODAY GIVES US A PICTURE OF HOW CHRISTIANS LIVED FOR ALMOST 20 CENTURIES.

SO THE QUESTION IS, SINCE THERE HAVEN'T BEEN ENOUGH ATHEISTS ALIVE IN THE LAST 200 YEARS TO BOOK A VOYAGE ON A CRUISE SHIP ... WHO CIVILIZED THE CHRISTIANS? WELL EUGENE, UNLESS YOU BELIEVE IN SPACE ALIENS, THE ANSWER HAS TO BE ... OTHER CHRISTIANS; CHRISTIANS WHO HAD THE COMMON SENSE TO REALIZE THAT MUCH OF THE BIBLE WAS NONSENSE WRITTEN BY ANCIENT, IGNORANT NOMADS. THEY FOUND MEANING IN THE PARTS OF THE BIBLE THAT PROMOTED PEACE AND LOVE. IN OTHER WORDS, MOST CHANGE CAME FROM WITHIN CHRISTIANITY. HOPEFULLY CHRISTIANS CAN LEARN TO WORK WITH MUSLIMS AND HELP GUIDE THEM OUT OF THEIR BONDAGE SO THAT THEY TOO CAN ENJOY THE FREEDOMS NOW AVAILABLE TO MANY MODERN HUMANS.

But wait! Hold the phone for just a moment. After only a few hours additional details began to emerge and the picture began to change. The shooter had been apprehended and, far from some keffiyah-clad individual intoning “Allahu Akbar” at the top of his lungs, the self-confessed perpetrator was found to be a stridently nationalistic native Norwegian named Anders Behring Breivik. My surprise turned to shock when the Oslo police reported that Breivik was a “Christian fundamentalist.”

EUGENE, AND THAT'S WHEN YOU AND THOUSANDS OF OTHER CHRISTIAN APOLOGISTS ALL OVER AMERICA WENT TO DEFCON 4 AND BEGAN DOING WHAT YOU PEOPLE DO BEST: FIGURING OUT HOW TO LIE YOUR WAY OUT OF YET ANOTHER EMBARRASSMENT. THE SIMPLE WAY OUT, HONESTY, IS NEVER AN OPTION FOR YOU PEOPLE.

Wonderful, I thought, for the next decade I’ll be hearing this guy’s name on the lips of every cocky critic of the Christian faith: “Pff, don’t try to sell me that Jesus stuff. Christianity is dangerous! Just look at that Norwegian guy. He was a fundamentalist Christian. See! SEE!!” I wasn’t looking forward to a PR nightmare of my own.

EUGENE, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK COCKY CRITICS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH NEEDED BREIVIK? YOU PEOPLE HAVE GIVEN THE EARTH 2,000 YEARS OF MURDER, TORTURE, SLAVERY, GUILT, SHAME, AND HATE. BREIVIK IS JUST ANOTHER IN A LONG LINE OF MILLIONS OF EMBARRASSMENTS.

More details have emerged since then, though, and the picture is changing once again.

EUGENE, THE PICTURE ISN'T CHANGING. YOU PEOPLE HAVE SIMPLY STARTED THE PROPAGANDA ENGINE, AND YOU ARE NOW REWRITING HISTORY LIKE YOU ALWAYS DO. OKAY, SO LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'VE COOKED UP THAT YOU'RE SO PROUD OF.

Despite the fact that left-leaning media outlets are having a field day emphasizing the religious angle (e.g the Atlantic’s cautiously titled article “The Christian Extremist Suspect in Norway’s Massacre” and the always even-handed Village Voice’s declaration that Breivik was motivated by his “Christian fundamentalist ideology”) Breivik’s own statements give a very different impression.

EUGENE, IF BREIVIK WASN'T MOTIVATED BY HIS CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALIST IDEOLOGY, HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN BREIVIK'S CLAIM THAT HE FOUNDED AN ORGANIZATION IN 2002 KNOWN AS THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR? YOU SHOULD READ ABOUT THEM EUGENE, THEY SOUND LIKE A SWELL BUNCH OF GUYS. HERE'S THE LINK:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knights\_Templar

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY GROUPS OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES. THOSE ARISING SINCE THE 18TH CENTURY ARE REFERRED TO AS NEO-TEMPLARS; WHICH I FIND PERSONALLY OFFENSIVE. AND YES, I WILL BE SEEKING COURT ACTION.

What does Breivik’s Christian identity mean as far as the man himself is concerned? Well, let’s take a look at his Unabomber-style “manifesto”:

EUGENE, BREIVIK COPIED, PASTED, AND THEN EDITED LARGE CHUNKS OF TEXT FROM THE UNABOMBER'S MANIFESTO. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY IT'S IN THE UNABOMBER'S STYLE.

"A majority of so called agnostics and atheists in Europe are cultural conservative Christians without even knowing it."

EUGENE, THIS GUY BREIVIK HAD A GREAT FUTURE AS A CHRISTIAN APOLOGIST. HE WAS ALREADY ADEPT AT REDEFINING WORDS TO MEAN THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN.

FROM WICTIONARY:

CHRISTIAN

A believer in Christianity.

ATHEIST

One who does not have a belief in the existence of God or gods.

AGNOSTIC

A person who holds to a form of agnosticism, especially uncertainty of the existence of a deity.

EUGENE, THEY ARE COMPLETE OPPOSITES. THE FACT THAT BREIVIK FIGURED HE COULD COMBINE AGNOSTICS AND ATHEISTS WITH CHRISTIANITY SHOWS THAT HIS MIND HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO CRACK.

WHAT DISTURBS ME MORE EUGENE, IS THAT YOU BOUGHT IT.

"So what is the difference between cultural Christians and religious Christians? If you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and God then you are a religious Christian."

EUGENE, I SEE IT A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY: IF YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE A "PERSONAL" RELATIONSHIP WITH AN INVISIBLE GHOST, THEN THAT MEANS YOU ARE A DELUSIONAL NUT JOB.

"Myself and many more like me do not necessarily have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and God."

EUGENE, HOW PATHETIC OF A CHRISTIAN IS BREIVIK, WHEN THE 2 HEAD GHOSTS WON'T EVEN HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM? NO WONDER BREIVIK WENT BANANAS: HE GOT REJECTED BY TWO GUYS ... WHO WEREN'T EVEN THERE.

"We do however believe in Christianity as a cultural, social, identity and moral platform. This makes us Christian."

SO EUGENE, YOU DON'T SEE ANY EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIAN IDENTITY THERE? IF CHRISTIANITY IS HIS MORAL PLATFORM, WHAT WOULD YOU CALL HIM, A HINDU?

HOW COME WHEN SUICIDE BOMBERS KILL INNOCENT PEOPLE IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THEY ARE MUSLIMS; BUT WHEN CHRISTIANS KILL INNOCENT PEOPLE IN THE NAME OF CRUSADING FOR THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR, THEY AREN'T CHRISTIANS?

So there you have it; for Breivik, Christianity isn’t so much about God or salvation through Jesus, it’s a social construct, a cultural platform that can be legitimately embraced even by an individual who continues to affirm atheism.

EUGENE, LET ME GIVE THE LISTENERS MORE EVIDENCE OF THE DISHONESTY THAT YOU PEOPLE EMPLOY WHEN PRESENTING YOUR ARGUMENTS.

YOU QUOTED THE PART WHERE BREIVIK ADMITTED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS OR GOD. THAT'S ALSO THE WAY IT APPEARS ON THE CHRISTIAN PROPAGANDA MACHINE, CONSERVAPEDIA.

BUT - IF ONE WERE TO VENTURE OVER TO WIKIPEDIA, WHICH ATTEMPTS TO MAINTAIN AN ATMOSPHERE OF NEUTRALITY, GUESS WHAT ONE WOULD FIND? BREIVIK'S CONFESSION THAT HE PLANNED TO PRAY TO GOD SEEKING HIS HELP DURING HIS ATTACKS. I'VE NEVER SEEN AN ATHEIST DO THAT; *ANY* KIND OF ATHEIST.

EUGENE, I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU LEFT THAT OUT. I ALSO UNDERSTAND WHY CONSERVAPEDIA LEFT THAT OUT. IT'S UNFORTUNATE THAT ALL THOSE WHO FREQUENT YOUR WEB SITE ARE ONLY EXPOSED TO PROPAGANDA, WHILE PERTINENT INFORMATION IS HIDDEN FROM THEM.

BUT THAT'S NOT THE ONLY THING YOU LEFT OUT, IS IT YOU DISHONEST LITTLE DEVIL YOU? LET'S ALLOW THE AUDIENCE TO HEAR SOMETHING ELSE THAT THEY WILL NEVER BE EXPOSED TO, BY LIMITING THEIR SOURCES TO CONSERVAPEDIA, FOX NEWS, AND VOX DAY:

"Rev. Olav Fykse Tveit, head of the World Council of Churches and himself Norwegian, accused Breivik of blasphemy for citing Christianity as a justification in his murderous attack."

EUGENE, IF BREIVIK DID NOT JUSTIFY HIS MURDEROUS ATTACK WITH CHRISTIANITY, AS YOU CLAIM, WHY DID THE HEAD OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES ACCUSE BREIVIK OF BLASPHEMY FOR DOING JUST THAT?

I'LL BET THAT ONE WILL KEEP YOU GUYS UP LATE FOR A FEW WEEKS.

Indeed, Breivik goes so far as to draw an explicit distinction between “religious Christians” and mere “cultural Christians”, placing himself (it would seem) into the latter group. Well, if that’s all it takes to be a “Christian fundamentalist” these days, it would seem that the brand has been watered down a bit.

EUGENE, IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW SHIT-FOR-BRAINS DEFINED CHRISTIANS. CRUSADERS, INQUISITORS, WITCH-BURNERS, ABORTION CLINIC BOMBERS, ALL BELIEVED THEY WERE FOLLOWING GOD'S WORD WHEN THEY COMMITTED THEIR MURDERS, JUST AS MUSLIMS USE THE KORAN TO JUSTIFY THEIRS.

YOUR BIBLE COMMANDS YOU NOT TO KILL IN ONE PLACE, AND THEN TELLS YOU TO STONE TO DEATH ADULTERERS AND BLASPHEMERS IN OTHERS. YOU CAN JUSTIFY THE MOST HORRIBLE CRIMES BY INTERPRETING THE BIBLE ANY WAY YOU NEED IT TO BE INTERPRETED. IN 1861 WHEN THE SOUTH ENTERED THE CIVIL WAR, THEY DEFENDED SLAVERY BY REFERRING TO ... THE BIBLE. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\_views\_on\_slavery

Given all this it’s quite obviously ridiculous to label Breivik a “fundamentalist Christian” given what that particular label has historically meant.

EUGENE, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT YOUR GOAL IS TO DISTRACT EVERYONE'S ATTENTION AWAY FROM BREIVIK'S RELIGION BY ARGUING OVER HIS SPECIFIC CLASSIFICATION WITHIN CHRISTIANITY. YOU ARE ENGAGING IN THE RED HERRING LOGICAL FALLACY.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red\_herring\_(fallacy)

In fact it’s pretty sketchy to label him a Christian at all with the above in mind.

EUGENE, HOW DID I KNOW YOU WOULD FINALLY COME TO THAT CONCLUSION? IT'S BECAUSE THAT'S THE CONCLUSION YOU STARTED WITH, FROM THE INSTANT YOU LEARNED BREIVIK WAS A CHRISTIAN. YOU TRIED TO FORCE A LOGICALLY FLAWED ARGUMENT TO FIT INTO THE CONCLUSION YOU NEEDED, WHICH IS WHY YOUR ARGUMENT LOOKS TO EVERYONE LIKE SHAQUILLE O'NEAL TRYING TO WEDGE HIS WAY INTO A SUPERMODEL.

HERE'S THE LINK TO THE LOGICAL FALLACY YOU JUST TRIED TO USE TO SALVAGE YOUR ARGUMENT:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No\_true\_Scotsman

IF YOU HAD ANY KNOWLEDGE OF LOGIC AT ALL YOU WOULD KNOW THAT ANY ARGUMENT BUILT UPON A LOGICAL FALLACY IS AN INVALID ARGUMENT. IT'S THAT SIMPLE EUGENE. YOUR ARGUMENT ... IS DEAD.

BUT BASED ON HOW OFTEN I SEE THIS DESPERATE ARGUMENT, I THINK THEY SHOULD VOTE ON RENAMING THE "NO TRUE SCOTSMAN" FALLACY TO THE "NO TRUE CHRISTIAN" LOGICAL FALLACY.

BUT WHATEVER "KIND" OF CHRISTIAN HE IS, THE ONE INESCAPABLE FACT IS ... THAT BREIVIK *IS* A CHRISTIAN.

Again I imagine the sardonic face of a critic rising up before me:

“Nice try, pastor man!"

ACTUALLY EUGENE, IT WASN'T EVEN CLOSE TO BEING A NICE TRY. THE TRUTH IS ... THAT WAS PATHETIC. ONLY THOSE TOTALLY DEVOID OF A KNOWLEDGE OF LOGIC WOULD FALL FOR AN ARGUMENT BUILT UPON A LOGICAL FALLACY.

YOU DON'T GET TO TRY TO PATCH IT UP AND SAY "OH, JUST IGNORE THAT PART"; AND THEN CONTINUE ON WITH YOUR ARGUMENT. LOGIC DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY. YOU NEED TO GO BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD AND CONSTRUCT A LOGICALLY VALID ARGUMENT. THEN COME BACK, AND WE'LL TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT IT.

“Nice try, pastor man! But it ain’t gonna work. Maybe Breivik doesn’t match some dusty technical definition of a fundamentalist, but this is the real world and not some ivory tower! You just don’t like the idea of Christianity’s reputation being tarnished by this guy and so you’re trying to wriggle off the hook. The label stands! FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIAN.”

WELL EUGENE, THAT CERTAINLY IS AN INTERESTING IMAGINATION YOU'VE GOT THERE. CAN WE GET BACK TO THE EMAIL NOW?

(NOW, EUGENE RESPONDS TO HIS IMAGINARY CRITIC).

Are you sure about that? Let’s see. So on this reckoning, all a person need do to merit the label ”fundamentalist Christian” is to describe himself as a ”cultural Christian?”

EUGENE, YOU READ BREIVIK'S MANIFESTO THE SAME WAY YOU READ YOUR BIBLE, YOU IGNORE 90% OF IT, AND ONLY PICK OUT THE PARTS YOU FIND USEFUL. HOW COME YOU HAPPENED TO REMEMBER THE PART ABOUT "CULTURAL CHRISTIAN" BUT CONVENIENTLY FORGOT TO MENTION THAT THE MANIFESTO ITSELF STATED THAT ITS AUTHOR IS "100 PERCENT CHRISTIAN?" I WOULD SAY THAT DOES A LOT MORE THAN SIMPLY DESCRIBE HIM AS A CULTURAL CHRISTIAN.

I seem to recall that someone else once made some noise about being a “cultural Christian.” I’m eager to read the first newspaper article that embraces this sort of absurdity in a consistent way and thus refers to “Richard Dawkins, the notorious fundamentalist Christian.” I won’t hold my breath.

EUGENE, I AGREE THAT YOU SHOULDN'T HOLD YOUR BREATH. IF YOU GO TOO LONG YOU'LL RISK LOSING BRAIN CELLS, AND AS THIS EMAIL PROVES, YOU REALLY CAN'T AFFORD IT.

EUGENE, I HAVE YOUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU. CHECK OUT THIS RECENT STORY:

"The Florida man who allegedly killed his wife and shot two pastors yesterday had been on probation for killing a previous wife. At a hearing today, Fogle was charged with murder and attempted murder for yesterday's shooting. Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd said Fogle had been a deacon at the church where yesterday's shootings occurred, but was asked to take a sabbatical 'because some of the women in the church complained about the way he hugged them.' "

ANOTHER REPORT ADDED:

"Theresa Fogle's sister Maria Beauford said the couple had been members of Greater Faith Church, but had started their own ministry out of their house and regularly hosted Sunday services."

TIME TO GET BUSY, EUGENE. BASED ON WHAT I READ IN THIS EMAIL, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT BY THE END OF YOUR REBUTTAL, YOU WILL HAVE ALSO TURNED THIS GUY INTO, HOW DO YOU PEOPLE REFER TO US NOW, OH YEAH, AN "AVOWED" ATHEIST.

CONCLUSION

SO EUGENE, YOU'RE THE BEST THAT VOX HAS TO OFFER? THIS PLAYED OUT ABOUT THE SAME AS IT DID IN ANCIENT ROME WITH THE CHRISTIANS AND LIONS. VOX HAS TO BE TURNING OVER IN HIS GRAVE. THAT'S RIGHT EUGENE, VOX DIED FROM A HEART ATTACK ABOUT 2 PAGES BACK WHEN HE HEARD YOUR "NO TRUE CHRISTIAN" DEFENSE. IF I WERE VOX, I WOULD SENTENCE YOU TO IMMEDIATE, RETROACTIVE EXCOMMUNICATION.

OR PERHAPS VOX WILL EXPLAIN THE FINER POINTS OF LOGIC TO YOU; POINTS WHICH APPARENTLY WERE NOT INCLUDED IN YOUR THEOLOGICAL TRAINING. BUT I WOULDN'T COUNT ON MANY MORE ASSIGNMENTS FROM HIM AFTER THE WAY YOU MUFFED THIS ONE.

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SUTURELESS METHOD FOR JOINING BLOOD VESSELS INVENTED

RECONNECTING SEVERED BLOOD VESSELS IS MOSTLY DONE THE SAME WAY TODAY -- WITH SUTURES -- AS IT WAS 100 YEARS AGO, WHEN THE FRENCH SURGEON ALEXIS CARREL WON A NOBEL PRIZE FOR ADVANCING THE TECHNIQUE. NOW, A TEAM OF RESEARCHERS AT THE STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE HAS DEVELOPED A SUTURELESS METHOD THAT APPEARS TO BE A FASTER, SAFER AND EASIER ALTERNATIVE.

IN ANIMAL STUDIES, RESEARCHERS USED A POLOXAMER GEL AND BIOADHESIVE RATHER THAN A NEEDLE AND THREAD TO JOIN TOGETHER BLOOD VESSELS, A PROCEDURE CALLED VASCULAR ANASTOMOSIS.

THE BIG DRAWBACK OF SUTURES IS THAT THEY ARE DIFFICULT TO USE ON BLOOD VESSELS LESS THAN 1 MILLIMETER WIDE. SUTURES ARE TROUBLESOME IN OTHER WAYS, TOO. THEY CAN LEAD TO COMPLICATIONS, SUCH AS INTIMAL HYPERPLASIA, IN WHICH CELLS RESPOND TO THE TRAUMA OF THE NEEDLE AND THREAD BY PROLIFERATING ON THE INSIDE WALL OF THE BLOOD VESSEL, CAUSING IT TO NARROW AT THAT POINT. THIS INCREASES THE RISK OF A BLOOD CLOT GETTING STUCK AND OBSTRUCTING BLOOD FLOW. IN ADDITION, SUTURES MAY TRIGGER AN IMMUNE RESPONSE, LEADING TO INFLAMED TISSUE THAT ALSO INCREASES THE RISK OF A BLOCKAGE.

THE NEW METHOD COULD SIDESTEP THESE PROBLEMS. ULTIMATELY, THIS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE BY DECREASING AMPUTATIONS, STROKES AND HEART ATTACKS WHILE REDUCING HEALTH-CARE COSTS.

RESEARCHERS HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR A SUBSTANCE THAT COULD BE TURNED EASILY FROM A LIQUID TO A SOLID, AND BACK TO A LIQUID AGAIN, AND THAT WOULD ALSO BE SAFE TO USE IN VASCULAR SURGERY. THEY FOUND A FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION-APPROVED THERMOREVERSIBLE POLOXAMER CALLED POLOXAMER 407. IT IS CONSTRUCTED OF POLYMER BLOCKS WHOSE PROPERTIES CAN BE REVERSED BY HEATING.

RESEARCHERS MODIFIED THE POLOXAMER SO THAT IT WOULD BECOME SOLID AND ELASTIC WHEN HEATED ABOVE BODY TEMPERATURE BUT DISSOLVE HARMLESSLY INTO THE BLOODSTREAM WHEN COOLED. THE POLOXAMER THEN WAS USED TO DISTEND BOTH OPENINGS OF A SEVERED BLOOD VESSEL, ALLOWING RESEARCHERS TO GLUE THEM TOGETHER PRECISELY.

THE RESEARCHERS USED A SIMPLE HALOGEN LAMP TO HEAT THE GEL. IN TESTS ON ANIMALS, THE TECHNIQUE WAS FOUND TO BE FIVE TIMES FASTER THAN THE TRADITIONAL HAND-SEWN METHOD. IT ALSO RESULTED IN CONSIDERABLY LESS INFLAMMATION AND SCARRING AFTER TWO YEARS. THE METHOD EVEN WORKED ON EXTREMELY SLIM BLOOD VESSELS -- THOSE ONLY 0.2 MM WIDE -- WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO TINY AND DELICATE FOR SUTURES.

DERMABOND, A SURGICAL SEALANT, WAS USED TO ATTACH THE ENDS OF THE BLOOD VESSELS TOGETHER.

POLOXAMERS HAVE BEEN USED BEFORE AS A VEHICLE FOR DELIVERING DRUGS, INCLUDING CHEMOTHERAPEUTICS, VACCINES, AND ANTI-VIRAL THERAPIES. RESEARCHERS HAVE USED POLOXAMER 407 TO OCCLUDE BLOOD VESSELS IN EXPERIMENTAL ANIMALS FOR THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATING THE GEL'S SAFETY AND EFFICACY IN SO-CALLED "BEATING HEART SURGERY," IN WHICH CERTAIN VESSELS NEED TO BE TEMPORARILY BLOCKED TO IMPROVE VISIBILITY FOR THE SURGEONS PERFORMING A CORONARY ARTERY BYPASS.

ALTHOUGH OTHER SUTURELESS METHODS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED, THEY GENERALLY HAVE NOT PRODUCED BETTER OUTCOMES. OFTEN, THE USE OF MICROCLIPS, STAPLES OR MAGNETS IS ITSELF TRAUMATIC TO BLOOD VESSELS LEADING TO FAILURE RATES COMPARABLE TO OR HIGHER THAN SUTURED ANASTOMOSES.

RESEARCHERS SAY FURTHER TESTING ON LARGE ANIMALS IS NEEDED BEFORE HUMAN TRIALS CAN BEGIN, BUT THEY NOTE THAT ALL OF THE COMPONENTS USED IN THE TECHNIQUE ARE ALREADY APPROVED BY THE FDA.

THE NEW TECHNIQUE COULD SATISFY A HUGE UNMET NEED AND PROVE ESPECIALLY USEFUL IN MINIMALLY INVASIVE SURGERIES, IN WHICH MANIPULATING SUTURES TAKES ON A WHOLE NEW LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

DENIS DIDEROT (1713–1784) 70 YEARS.

HE WAS A FRENCH PHILOSOPHER, ART CRITIC, AND WRITER. HE WAS PROMINENT DURING THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND IS BEST KNOWN FOR SERVING AS CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF EDITOR OF THE ENCYCLOPÉDIE.

DIDEROT ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO LITERATURE, WHILE ALSO EXAMINING PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS ABOUT FREE WILL. DIDEROT IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE AUTHOR OF THE DIALOGUE, UPON WHICH MANY ARTICLES AND SERMONS ABOUT CONSUMER DESIRE HAVE BEEN BASED. HIS ARTICLES INCLUDED MANY TOPICS OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT.

“WANDERING IN A VAST FOREST AT NIGHT,

I HAVE ONLY A FAINT LIGHT TO GUIDE ME.

A STRANGER APPEARS AND SAYS TO ME:

'MY FRIEND, YOU SHOULD BLOW OUT YOUR CANDLE

IN ORDER TO FIND YOUR WAY MORE CLEARLY.'

THIS STRANGER IS A THEOLOGIAN.”