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ASSOCIATE JUSTICE LABELS CONTRACEPTIVES

AS 'POISONS' THAT ATTACK HEALTHY OVARIES

(printed in Philippine Media)

*Opponents to the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law seemed to have found an ally in Associate Justice Roberto Abad who described hormonal contraceptives as 'poison' as the Supreme Court resumed debates on the controversial law. Abad said manufacturers of contraceptives themselves have admitted their drugs can "prevent normal function of a woman's body."*

Judge, lots of things prevent the normal functioning of a woman's body. For example, when her body comes into contact with poison ivy, her body's normal reaction is to produce histamines which cause an allergic reaction. Antihistamines can be given to her to reduce suffering by interfering with the normal functioning of her immune system. We call that modern medicine. We also call that progress. Something you are ... obviously against.

The prevention of the normal functioning of a woman's body does not automatically make something ... a poison.

*There are currently 14 petitions questioning the law, with 6 intervenors or those who are not petitioners but wanted to participate in the case. The Supreme Court's 15 magistrates started hearing oral arguments against the law early this month.*

*During the second round of oral arguments on the controversial law, Abad read portions of an information sheet of a contraceptive that warns against its use once a woman is pregnant. Abad said this means a child can be harmed, adding "contraceptives attack healthy ovaries to make them dysfunctional. Court needs only common sense not medical experts to know this."*

Judge, condoms are contraceptives. They do not attack ovaries. You are committing the logical fallacy of Generalization. As to why you are using a logically fallacious argument ... that is all too obvious. People are forced to resort to illogical arguments when the facts don't support their position.

As for the label, isn't that exactly what you would expect responsible medical personnel to tell customers?

And judge, whenever people attempt to appeal to common sense above scientific experts, it is because the science ... didn't go your way.

*"It would appear these government sponsored contraceptives as admitted by their manufacturers are not altogether safe,"*

Judge, there is nothing on this Earth that is "altogether safe." Reality doesn't work that way. That's the purpose of the warning labels, like the one you just referred to.

*he also said, adding that hormonal contraceptives are "poison."*

Judge, yet oddly, the women taking this "poison" ... recover without an antidote. It's a miracle!

*Luisito Liban, so far the second lawyer to criticize the law before the Supreme Court magistrates during the oral arguments, also seemed to have found an ally in Abad. Liban claimed that the law would allow the government to "harness its entire machinery ... supposedly to reduce maternal death and probably controlling population growth. But they have ignored more important and pressing problems the law would bring."*

Counselor, so controlling population growth and reducing maternal death are not very important? So what are these far more important and pressing problems?

*Liban said "It is part of the government's strategy to inundate, to promote and flood the country with contraceptives and develop a contraceptive mentality among its population."*

Counselor, like I asked earlier "and that is a bad thing because ..."

So your point is that developing a contraceptive mentality is far more serious than overpopulation and maternal death? Seriously?

*Liban also emphasized that the law's provision requiring the teaching of sex education in schools was "discriminatory" and violative of a person's right to equal protection of the law.*

So counselor, does that mean that the schools must stop teaching math? Geography? Why is that subject discriminatory? How does it violate equal protection if all children are taught the same thing?

*Liban has earlier agreed to tackle how the law allegedly violates the right to religion, right to free speech, academic freedom, and "proscription on involuntary servitude."*

Wow counselor, the Reproductive Health Law violates all that?

It's kind of amazing that you are actually licensed to practice law since it is obvious that you have less sense than a coconut shell.

*Liban said "Mandatory sex education will violate parents' right to rear and educate children for civic duty and for the development of moral character."*

Counselor, can you explain how mandatory sex education is even related to civic duty?

Can you explain how learning about sex makes learning morals more difficult?

Are you sure you're a lawyer?

*Liban said "the mandatory teaching of sex education in public schools would lead to students' discrimination because they will have to bear the additional burden of additional topics in school."*

Counselor, so Filipino students are so stupid they can't be given any more topics than they already have? What evidence do you have that Filipino students have reached a maximum saturation point in their education load?

Hey, I've got a great idea: why don't you replace the time they waste in church talking to an invisible ghost with a class on sex education? That way they won't be spending any more time studying than they were before.

*Liban said "Even in private schools, where sex education would be optional, parents and their children would be exposed to a possible unequal protection. The law says a private school has the option. So some may adopt it some may not. People in the same group may be treated differently."*

Easy solution counselor: make it mandatory for private schools as well so that no child is denied this important education. And you can bet your paycheck that this class will be far more important to their lives than trigonometry.

*The Reproductive Health Act seeks to provide improved public access to natural and artificial family planning options, better maternal care, and youth education.*

Comment: How horrible! Who is responsible for this ... this ... progress?

*The Catholic Church has strongly opposed the law,*

Comment: Which tells you right away that it must be good for the people. In 2,000 years, the Catholic Church has yet to get even one right, especially when it involves anything that benefits the people.

*which was first introduced in Congress 14 years ago.*

Comment: The Church has been stalling this bill for 14 years; meanwhile the horrors of their religion continue to drain the country. Breaking free of centuries of religious domination will require a superhuman effort by many, many brave people. This is a fight that is being waged worldwide. Third-world countries like the Philippines are the last bastions of religious domination. The only exception to that being ... the United States (how totally embarrassing).

*The Senate and the House of Representatives separately ratified the bicameral conference committee report on the controversial Reproductive Health Bill last Dec.*

Comment: That's pretty amazing considering the influence that the Catholic Church holds over all Filipinos. But as you've pointed out in this article, the Church still has plenty of support from people like Abad, Liban, and others.

*Under the new law, the government will promote programs that allow couples to have their desired number of children with due consideration to the health of babies and women.*

Outrageous!

The Catholic Church assures us that these people aren't ready to leave the Middle Ages ... just yet.

*Resources will also be made available to parents in accordance with their personal and religious convictions.*

Comment: I thought Liban said that the Bill violates the right to religion? Seems the facts contradict his position, don't they?

*It also aims to inform young people between the ages of 10 to 19 years old about reproductive health issues and responsible teenage behavior among other things.*

Comment: Is that the part that Liban said violates academic freedom? Or is that the part that he said violates moral character?

*President Aquino had certified the controversial measure as urgent after it narrowly passed the crucial second reading at the House of Representatives in mid-December. In a matter of days, both the Senate and the lower house finally voted on the approval of the bill, which Aquino quietly signed into law minus the customary photo opportunity with the bill's main proponents.*

Comment: Smart move. Religious people have a long history of blood and violence ... when things don't go their way.

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

3D Comparative Analysis Confirms Status of Homo Floresiensis

as a Fossil Human Species

Ever since the discovery of the remains in 2003, scientists have been debating whether Homo Floresiensis represents a distinct Homo species, possibly originating from a dwarfed island Homo Erectus population, or a pathological modern human. The small size of its brain has been argued to result from a number of diseases, most importantly from the condition known as microcephaly.

Based on the analysis of 3D landmark data from skull surfaces, scientists provide compelling support for the hypothesis that Homo Floresiensis was a distinct Homo species.

The ancestry of the Homo Floresiensis remains is much disputed. The critical questions are: Did it represent an extinct hominin species? Could it be a Homo Erectus population, whose small stature was caused by island dwarfism?

Or, did the skull belong to a modern human with a disorder that resulted in an abnormally small brain and skull? Proposed possible explanations include microcephaly, Laron Syndrome or endemic hypothyroidism ("cretinism").

The scientists applied the powerful methods of 3D geometric morphometrics to compare the shape of the cranium (the skull minus the lower jaw) to many fossil humans, as well as a large sample of modern human crania suffering from microcephaly and other pathological conditions. Geometric morphometric methods use 3D coordinates of cranial surface anatomical landmarks, computer imaging, and statistics to achieve a detailed analysis of shape.

This was the most comprehensive study to date to simultaneously evaluate the two competing hypotheses about the status of Homo Floresiensis.

The study found that the cranium shows greater affinities to the fossil human sample than it does to pathological modern humans. Although some superficial similarities were found between fossil, the cranium, and pathological modern human crania, additional features linked the cranium exclusively with fossil Homo. The team could therefore refute the hypothesis of pathology.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

Daniel Dennett (born 1942) 71 years old

He is an American philosopher, writer, and cognitive scientist whose research centers on the philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, and philosophy of biology, particularly as those fields relate to evolutionary biology and cognitive science.

He is currently the Co-director of the Center for Cognitive Studies, and a University Professor at Tufts University. Dennett is an atheist and secularist, and a member of the Secular Coalition for America advisory board. Dennett is referred to as one of the "Four Horsemen of New Atheism", along with Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and the late Christopher Hitchens.

"You don't get to advertise all the good that your religion does

without first scrupulously subtracting all the harm it does

and considering seriously the question

of whether some other religion, or no religion at all, does better."