

MALA 61023: The Abortion Debate  
3 semester hours, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas  
June 3-July 5, 2013 (online course)

**Instructor:** Charles Bellinger [c.bellinger@tcu.edu](mailto:c.bellinger@tcu.edu) 817-257-7668

**Prerequisites:** none.

**Description of Content:** Abortion has been a highly controversial subject in American culture since the 1960s, and it will likely remain so for the foreseeable future. This course will examine this complex issue from various angles: medical, psychological, philosophical, legal, and religious.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To introduce students to the key aspects of the contemporary debate about abortion.
2. To provide an opportunity for students to develop and articulate their thinking on abortion.

**Course procedures:**

1. Online discussions of essays, books, and web sites.

**Requirements and grading:**

1. Online participation (60%). Students will post responses to the reading assignments 4-5 days each week. Participation will receive a letter grade each week. Higher grades will be earned through demonstrating the ability to understand the reading assignments accurately and respond to their arguments in a substantive way. Being able to dialogue with other students in the class respectfully and with philosophical maturity will be valued, but the grading will focus more on the responses to the readings.
2. Position paper (40%). (10-12 pages; research beyond the course assignments is not required or expected)
3. Grading scale:

A = 94-100	A- = 87-93	B+ = 79-86	B = 71-78	B- 62-70	C+ = 46-53	C = 46-53	C- = 38-45
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**Texts:**

Baird, Robert M., and Stuart E. Rosenbaum, eds. *The Ethics of Abortion: Pro-Life vs. Pro-Choice*. 3rd ed. Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2001. ISBN: 1573928763 \$24\*

["Baird" in reading assignments below]

Johnson, Abby. *Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of the Former Planned Parenthood Leader Who Crossed the Life Line to Fight for Women in Crisis*. Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale, 2011. ISBN: 1414339402 \$12\*

["Johnson"]

Wicklund, Susan. *This Common Secret: My Journey As an Abortion Doctor*. New York: Public Affairs, 2007. ISBN: 1586486470 \$11\*

["Wicklund"]

\*these are list prices; books can often be obtained for less through various vendors.

There will be additional readings and videos assigned by the instructor.

week	essays in books	web sites	online essays
Week 1 June 3  Cultural / Psychological Perspectives	Baird, Introduction, ch. 2 (Messer-May)  Wicklund, 1-127		Jennifer Baumgardner, ed. <i>Abortion &amp; Life</i> . 78-80, 111-113, 119-125. <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Abortion-and-Life.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Abortion-and-Life.pdf</a>  Mathewes-Green, <i>Real Choices</i> , pages 85-99 <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Real-Choices85-99.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Real-Choices85-99.pdf</a>  Swope, Paul. "Abortion: A Failure to Communicate," <i>First Things</i> 82 (April 1998): 31-35. <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Swope.htm">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Swope.htm</a>
Week 2 June 10  Feminist and Medical Perspectives	Baird, ch. 1 (Selzer), 14-15 (Callahan-Wolf)  Wicklund, 128-248	I'm Not Sorry.net: Celebrating the Right to Choose <a href="http://www.imnotsorry.net/">http://www.imnotsorry.net/</a>  Feminists for Life of America <a href="http://www.feministsforlife.org/">http://www.feministsforlife.org/</a>	Ellen Willis, "Putting Women Back in the Abortion Debate" <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Ellen_Willis.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Ellen_Willis.pdf</a>  Juli Loesch Wiley, "Solidarity and Shalom" <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Juli_Wiley.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Juli_Wiley.pdf</a>  Bernard Nathanson, excerpts from <i>The Hand of God</i> , 54-62, 187-196. <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Nathanson-Hand.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Nathanson-Hand.pdf</a>  Lisa Harris, "Second Trimester Abortion Provision: Breaking the Silence and Changing the Discourse," <i>Reproductive Health Matters</i> 16 (2008): 74-81. <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Harris.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Harris.pdf</a>  Gosnell trial articles
Week 3 June 17  Moral and Religious Arguments	Baird, ch. 16-17 (Leber-Maguire), 21-23 (Thomson-Wilcox-Warren)  Johnson, 1st half of book	Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice <a href="http://www.rcrc.org/">http://www.rcrc.org/</a>  LifeSite News <a href="http://www.lifesitenews.com/">http://www.lifesitenews.com/</a>	Alberto Giubilini and Francesca Minerva. "After-birth abortion: why should the baby live?" <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Giubilini-Minerva.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Giubilini-Minerva.pdf</a>  Francis Beckwith. "'Potential Persons' in the 'After-Birth Abortion' Article" <a href="http://www.thecatholicthing.org/columns/2012/potential-persons-in-the-after-birth-abortion-article.html">http://www.thecatholicthing.org/columns/2012/potential-persons-in-the-after-birth-abortion-article.html</a>  Norma McCorvey [Jane Roe], excerpts from <i>Won by Love</i> <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/McCorvey.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/McCorvey.pdf</a>  Bellinger, Charles K. "Questions on Abortion and the Struggle Against Tyranny." <i>The Crucible</i> 3 (1992): 3-8. <a href="http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1777">http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=1777</a>
Week 4	Baird, ch. 7	National Abortion and	George McKenna. "On Abortion: A Lincolnian Position." <i>Atlantic Monthly</i> 276, no. 3 (Sept. 95): 51-68. <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/McKenna.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/McKenna.pdf</a>

June 24 Moral and Legal Arguments	(Roe), 9 (Casey), 11 (McConnell)  Johnson, 2nd half of book	Reproductive Rights Action League <a href="http://www.naral.org/">http://www.naral.org/</a>  National Right to Life Committee <a href="http://www.nrlc.org/">http://www.nrlc.org/</a>	William Brennan. "Specifying the Abortion-Holocaust Connections."  Robert Weisbord. "Legalized Abortion and the Holocaust: An Insulting Parallel." <i>The Jewish Veteran</i> (1982).  Jacob Neusner. "Israel's Holocaust." <i>Christianity Today</i> (Oct. 26, 1998).
Week 5 July 1  Overview	<b>position paper due July 2</b>  Baird, ch. 25-26 (Callahan- Marquis)  intra-class debate		Bernadette Waterman Ward. "Abortion as a Sacrament: Mimetic Desire and Sacrifice in Sexual Politics." <i>Contagion</i> 7 (2000):18–35. <a href="http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Contagion07.pdf">http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/abortion/Contagion07.pdf</a> [print out pages 22-39 of the PDF file, which are pages 18ff. of the original journal issue]

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Charles Bellinger's home page: <http://lib.tcu.edu/staff/bellinger/cbhome.htm>