



Open Talk Magazine

Dare to think

Issue 3 June 2013

SEX TERRORISM?

Ushs 2,000/=, US\$1

TEENS UNDER ATTACK AS DEFILEMENT CASES SOAR



Bright Junior School



Children's Corner Junior School



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Teens show Case Talents



Inside This Issue: The Top Stories:

- Abducted, Defiled and Assaulted, A young Girl's Shocking Story.
- Defiled at 14, I have a baby without a Father! A true Sad Story.
- A Lawyer's take on Sexual Offences.
- Teens on the Meaning of Life and Life after Death
- Education or Mis-Education? Teens share their Opinions
- Teens' Take on Abortion, Homosexuality, Dressing Code and F.G.M
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- Much, Much More.....





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Open Talk Magazine

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Editorial

IF THE TERM SEX TERRORISM is not legally recognised, I want to propose that it should be immediately considered and law books amended right away. The law talks about rape, aggravated rape, defilement, marital rape, aggravated defilement, etc but at the look of things, it appears that the best term that would carry serious meaning and perhaps guarantee quick government intervention and alert the entire community -may be this term; **SEX TERRORISM.**



Look we are all aware how our government quickly responds whenever we hear of terrorists. Even when it is a mere rumour, the government will swiftly swing into action, cordoning off the suspected place, giving directives that generally inconvenience the common man all in an attempt to stop terrorists from causing further mayhem in the country. Rationally speaking, we admire such interventions if indeed have been aimed at saving dear life and not selfish politics.

What remains a thorn in our flesh is the fact that the number of girls being defiled raped or forced into marriages due to unwanted pregnancies or desire for bride wealth or dowry has been on the increase for the last ten years. Even when the law exists and we all know that children have rights not to abuse their bodies and it's illegal and punishable under the existing law to force them into sex whether with their consent or not, we continue to read and receive several cases related to defilement and assault. HALEA Youth Support Centre has so far recorded over 50 defilement cases and in 90% of these cases, the defilers are known and remain at large! Is this an ABOVE THE LAW State? Who cares about the minors' rights and plight? Some Answers please!

Some members of our communities have accepted defilement as a not so bad offence and devised irrational means of avoiding the big punishment. We are aware of parents who connive with the defilers and accept money in 'compensation' and some go the extra mile by allowing the defiler to 'marry' the victim and the entire community does not even raise a finger. What then is the role of Local Council leaders, religious leaders and opinion leaders if they cannot object to this injustice? I know that there are some religions whose teaching is to the effect that once a girl starts to menstruate, she is ripe for marriage and

as such, girls as young as 13 years end up in what they prefer to call 'marriage' even when they are aware that the law is strictly against such a barbaric practice. In this publication, we once again bring to you very sad stories on defilement. Two of our beneficiaries are victims of defilement and the culprits remain unpunished. They are on the run and we are appealing to all persons concerned to help us fish these criminals such that justice is done. We are also aware of too many cases of sodomised boys and the

'defilers' are on the run! We cannot afford to simply sit down, or stand still or go on our knees and hold our hands and pray. We must practically act. We must condemn these sex terrorists right now.

In this Issue of the Open Talk Magazine (OTM), young people have been given a platform once again to talk about issues affecting them openly. The topics presented here are first debated by the teens in their various schools and later essays are submitted for publication. At HALEA, we believe that no subject is above discussion and thorough debate. Teens have openly discussed Homosexuality, Defilement, Abortion, Female Genital Mutilation, Faith issues and Education matters among others in a more critical approach that shows the growth of rationalism and progressive thinking much needed in the current century. Like it or not, nothing can be totally hidden from the ambitious and inquisitive teens today! You heard about the Kasese floods? We have young survivors narrating the disaster! In our special feature is the story of Dr. Henry Montengler, a man who lived an exceptionally relevant life. You can learn several lessons from him.

Thanks to HAMU, the OTM is back to give you fair coverage on very important issues generally unreported in the so-called main stream media. Thanks to our peer writers, contributors and editors, the OTM is growing stronger. The numbers of articles we receive are so many that only the very best can be published in the OTM. Our promise remains to continue serving you when the opportunities still exist. Dear reader, do the reading and take action, Nice reading and keep us posted.

**Kato Mukasa is the Executive Director:
HALEA Youth Support Centre**

Abducted, Defiled And Assaulted By A Neighbour: HALEA'S Beneficiary Becomes Another Sex Assault Victim.

Kato Mukasa

I remember the look of horror and anger when I first met her a day after her escape from the hide-out, the crime scene where she had been defiled and assaulted by a man she had for years known as Daddy Promise, (Promise's father), their neighbour in Kisalosalu Kyebando Village. Her red t-shirt and black and white dotted skirt were torn with the skirt missing its zip and could no longer fit. She appeared scared, disastrous and pale with a few scratches on her arms following a terrible catfight she had with her defiler the night before. She had just recorded her first statement at police, thanks to our peer counsellors who have always advised teens to report any wrong immediately to a nearby police station.

This was not the lovely Lilly we knew. The Lilly we know cuts an image of a girl in the prime of her youth, tall and slender, always smiling shyly, revealing her white teeth which matches well with her light complexion, creating a radiant effect that has always made her a warm and welcoming individual who has a smile for every passer-by. The simple and charming Lilly was in tears and I was eager to know all that happened to her. Here is the account of her ordeal:

Lilly Speaks Out

“My name is Lilly Omurungyi (not the real name) aged 17 years, an orphan and a student of Catering at Kamwoya Christian Caring Community Vocational Training Institute through the sponsorship of HALEA Youth Support Centre. I stay in Kisalosalu Kyebando with a friend who has a two months baby. I have no relative in Kampala and I have survived largely on the mercy of friends as well as working as a maid. It was Friday 10th May at about 9pm when, a man I had known for some time as a neighbour whose name is Kalibala but is commonly known as Daddy Promise called me requesting that he wanted me to deliver his message to his home. I was on my way to buy a quarter of sugar when he called me over as I passed by his parked car on the road side. He told me that he was to send me to take a few things to his home and he was rushing somewhere but as soon as I

got near his car, he got out and the behind door of his grey saloon car opened. He told me to sit inside and as I hesitated, another man came out and they forced me inside and a scuffle of sorts ensued as I laboured to get out and they struggled to keep me seated. Then I saw a white handkerchief forced onto my face and I was doused. I lost consciousness and cannot tell how I was moved from Kyebando to where ever they took me but I become conscious past midnight and I found myself in a room in a place I could not tell. Music was playing from a cassette player. Kalibala was the only other person in the room, almost naked save for his underwear.

Terribly scared, I asked him where we were and he never answered but rather told me that I was there to have sex with him. I reminded him that he is a married man and I had always told him that I cannot have sex with him because I do not love him, I fear contracting HIV/ AIDs and getting pregnant. I pleaded that I am still a student and I need to complete my studies first before I get into sexual relationship. He could not listen to me. He told me that he wanted me to be his other wife and was much interested in having sex with me. Meanwhile; he was already fondling my breast and attempting to remove my T-shirt and skirt. I struggled to wade him off but he was too powerful for me. He tore the T-shirt and skirt as I made alarm- yelling to high, he increased the music volume and I could not be heard. He forced himself onto me, tearing my undergarment and forcefully inserted his manhood into me causing excruciating pain that I attempted to bite him. The reward was an abrupt slap that left me dazzled. He pulled out a sword which he put on my neck swearing to stab me if I continued to resist his lust. He unleashed more slaps and caught up in the mayhem, I went on my knees begging for mercy, apologising for having troubled him and begging him not to kill me. Afraid of death, I gave up and he did whatever he wanted, using me for several hours until when I lost consciousness again”

At this point, Lilly lost control of her emotions and literally broke down. With tears flowing and a hiccup taking its toll on her, she could hardly speak

Defilement Cases on the Increase

loud enough and I advised that she takes a couple of minutes silent before she could talk further. In about three minutes, she was back in control and could talk, this time more calmly and she chose to sift through her words before she spoke, peered long and hard at us as if weighing what else should be said or left unsaid. I encouraged her to be bold enough and tell us everything.

“When I woke up, at about 4 am in the morning, I was once again alone in the room and without any further hesitation, I picked myself up and scampered out of the room running through a number of rooms and finally finding my way to a main road. It was there that I realised that I was somewhere in Ntinda (a suburb near Kampala city) and I immediately decided to go to Mulago Hospital for early medication. Through HALEA’s counselling sessions and peer leadership trainings, we had been advised that the best thing to do first after any sexual assault is to go to an established health facility to get medical care which may help to arrest several viruses from taking charge of your body. I also wanted to get drugs that would help me avoid getting pregnant”, she said, pausing for a few seconds as if struggling to remember something elusive.”

“The doctors were not there and the nurses available seemed too busy to help. At first I feared to open up until when I gathered courage to share my pain with one elderly nurse. She advised me to go to a certain room where I found a young male doctor (who I later came to understand that he was a student doctor) and told him about the sex assault. He did not ask me many questions but was rather sorry for my poor healthstatus. He did not do any thorough checking either. He scribbled something on a piece of paper and directed me where I could pick some drugs. He then advised me to first report to the police and pick a medical examination form and then report back to the hospital with it. Having picked the drugs, I swallowed some as prescribed and went to Kiira road police station where I reached at about 8am in the morning.

“The police was open but there was only one police officer at the counter with several people from whom he appeared to be getting some information. I waited for close to one hour when two other police officers reported and I approached one- who took the first statement from me. It took about an hour to be

done with the statement and I was given the Medical Examination form which I took back to Mulago Hospital. The young doctor was not there but instead I met Dr. Ssebadduka, who having been explained to what had happened to me told me that he had been briefed by the other doctor. He took the form from me and filled it without asking me many questions and I returned it to police.

“At the police I did not find the officer who had taken the statement from me and I was told to wait. I waited for two other hours in vain and after what looked like a long wait, the police officer came back and I handed over the filled police form. It was then that it occurred to me that I had not told any member of HALEA about my predicament. I checked myself and I did not have my contact note book. I had to wait until when I was back at home and then notified you and its good you are here”, she said somewhat relieved, she tried her best smile, and yes, her eyes welled as she beamed with joy on learning that we were there and ready to support her all the way to justice. We were there with three HALEA officials at 7 pm and we could not leave until after 10 pm.

HALEA Intervenes

Lilly’s story fits together like a jigsaw. It serves to point out the evils that men do to vulnerable teens in form of sexual exploitation and many go unpunished. We resolved from that point to pursue the suspect. We were informed that the man had not returned to his home after the incident. We reported the matter to the area police and we advised Lilly to remain firm, cooperate with police and ensure that she is safe at the same time.

We were very upset when two days later; Lilly called to report that her defiler had waylaid her and further assaulted , digging his claws into her face, bruising her hand and inflicting more wounds. He did so with the help of another man who Lilly was able to identify. We immediately reported the matter to the area police and the manhunt for the suspect was mounted. In the process, the vehicle used to commit the crimes, a grey Toyota Corona car; UAJ 523 was got and taken to Kiira road police station. The criminal remains on the run and has since changed residence, relocating to a place not yet known to us.

Defilement Cases on the Increase

A Wanted Man.

HALEA appeals to members of the general public to help cooperate with the police to have Kalibala, alias Daddy Promise arrested and be aligned before courts of law. Kalibala is wanted to answer three different cases: (1) Kidnap, SD REF 61/23/05/2013,(2) Defilement, SD REF 11/11/05/2013 and (3) Assault, SD REF 48/23/05/2013.

HALEA's interest in this case is to ensure that justice is not only said to be done but it is actually done. This story is simply incomplete without arresting and prosecuting the accused. Kalibala is symbolic of men lustful men that have caused untold misery and suffering to thousands of young girls in Uganda and beyond. Many at time, the offenders use their financial prowess to bribe their way to freedom. In this very case, we are determined not to let this happen because both the direct and circumstantial evidence available is simply overwhelming. We shall go all the way. Remember; we have a cause of action here.

DEFILED AT 14. I HAVE A BABY WITHOUT A FATHER. ANOTHER VICTIM CRIES OUT!

Background

I am a young mother, a primary five pupil at Grace Fellowship Primary School. Thanks to HALEA Youth Support Centre and my good teachers, I am back to school after two years. My Name is Patience Nakibuuka (Not real name).It was in 2011 when I was defiled by the man called Suudi Balyeku. He was a friend to the wife of my brother and a 'bodaboda man'- a motorcycle rider. He often checked on her at the shop where we stayed. The two adults were in a group circle commonly known as NIGIINA- a form of saving and credit association through which they pull money together on a daily basis and at the end of the month give it to one beneficiary and the circle of collecting money and giving it to one beneficiary at every end of month continues until each member has benefited. Thus, they often collected money daily and would give it to one member at the end of every month. That's how I knew Suudi, as a friend to my in law, a man of over 35 years who used to work from Kagugube stage next to both the Magistrates Court and the Law Development Centre.

Getting Defiled

It all happened when my brother's wife sent me to the shop where we usually bought safi, a cheap soft drink. I found Suudi and he took me to a nearby house claiming that he wanted to give me my In law's mon-

ey since she was the one to benefit from the Nigiina circle that month. He said all the members had given him the money and it was at his home. He then led me to a room in a large house and before I knew it he was ordering me to remove my nicker and when I refused, he wrestled me down and forcefully took it off, tearing it in the process and bruising my back. He forced himself on me and had sex with me holding my throat at one time and covering my mouth to stop me from wailing. It was extremely painful and I began bleeding heavily. No one came to rescue me from the defiler. Having had his fill, he ran out of the room and left me alone crying for help. I was too scared; I did not know what to do next. I was only 14 years and I had never had sex before this defiler come into my life. I remember running out and informing the by standers who then took me to my in law and then got a motorcycle that took us directly Wandegeya police and we reported the case. Medical check up was done and evidence adduced. We also tested for HIV and later on I was informed that the test come out negative. I went back to school at the same school in primary three at that time. After two months I started experiencing changes like vomiting and I was always feeling feverish. My auntie was advised that we go for a pregnancy test and yes, I tested positive, I was told, I was already two months pregnant! A mother at fourteen? I was too scared that I could not comprehend what was happening to me and why all this was happening.

Defilement Cases on the Increase

I knew very well that I would not be allowed to be at school again because pregnant girls are not allowed to attend classes. I could not afford to stand the teasing and trauma from my peers and I did not know how my teachers would react. I decided to stop schooling since I considered it wastage of time. Even when I loved to be at school, I knew I had no chance left, I considered my self down and out.

Tough Life!

Carrying the pregnancy was the most terrible thing that has ever happened in my life. I was so stressful. I was always sickly and very weak. I lacked almost everything a pregnant mother should have. My in law was and remains very poor. She was supportive in whatever way she could but could not provide all that I demanded. She however struggled to ensure that I remain alive and I did. Fortunately enough I gave birth to a baby boy and the baby and the mother were all fine. I stayed out of school for over a year taking care of my baby. We had shifted from Makerere Kivulu to Nansana because the mad and wattle rooms in Kivulu had been demolished by Kampala City Council. I had no one to support me and my child though my in law struggled alone to ensure that we survive.

New Hope

It was in that terrible state when HALEA Youth Support Centre hear about me and they gave me a new lease of life. They were ready to take me back to school, pay my fees and other requirements and take care of the baby in whatever little way they could. I stay far away from the school but they partly contribute to my transport and upkeep. I am extremely grateful to HALEA and to my school too, especially my lovely headmaster and teachers who have taken me back as their very own child. Thanks to Mrs. Sarah Kyasooka and thanks to you all, I am now in primary five and 16 years old. My baby is now 2 years. I would want HALEA to at least help me achieve my future goals and complete my education at a degree level. I have no one else to support me to study and attain university education. Previously I wanted to become a doctor but because of what happened to me in 2011, I would want to become a

police woman so that I can use the law to arrest criminals like those who defile children and rapists and ensure that they are heavily punished so that other children may live a happy life. The sad thing is that the man who defiled me was never seen again and I wonder how the police failed to arrest him. I have hope that justice will be done at one time and it is my wish that no more young girls go through the nasty experience I went through. However, I strongly have hope that my future will be bright. It is this hope that keeps me going strong every other day.

EDITOR'S Note: HALEA Youth Support Centre managed to take Patience back to school and we are following up her Aggravated defilement case, CRB 991/2011 filed at Wandegaya Police Station, and the shameless defiler a one Suudi Balyeku has been on the run since 2011 and is on a WANTED LIST. Help us find him, save other girls from defilers like him.

- **Teens Talents Search Competition, September 2013**
- **Keep Kampala City Clean- Sensitization Campaign**
- **Release of HALEA teens songs to the public**

CALL FOR SUPPORT

In January this year, with the Support from HAMU, HALEA carried out a survey on young mothers specifically in Kagugube Parish, Kampala Central Division. Results show that over 100 Teens have babies without support. Many are willing to go back to school especially to get skills that will enable them take care of their babies.

Support HALEA'S Young Mother at School and thoses who want to learn.

To offer fees, scholastic materials or any other support

Kindly Contact:

Tel: + 256 - 772 - 576635

A LAWYER'S TAKE ON RAPE, DEFILEMENT AND RELATED SEXUAL OFFENCES

Namagembe Doreen

According to Section 123 of the (Penal code Cap 120), any person who has unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or girl (above 18 years) without her consent or if the consent is obtained by force or by means of threats or intimidation of any kind or by fear of bodily harm or by means of false representations as to the nature of the act or in the case of a married woman by personating her husband, commits the felony termed rape. Section 124 lays down the punishment for rape as death. Whereas according to section 125, any person who attempts to commit rape commits a felony and is liable to imprisonment for life with or without corporal punishment.

Another sexual offence we need to understand is Defilement. It occurs when one has sex with any girl under the age of 18 years. Section 129 of the Penal Code is of the effect that any person who unlawfully has sexual intercourse with a girl under the age of eighteen years commits an offence of defilement and is liable to suffer death.

Evidence in sexual offences requires Proof of Consent of the victim as a major element, in addition, there must be evidence of penetration and whenever evidence required it must be corroborated by additional independent evidence which connects the accused to the crime confirming some material particulars that the crime has not only been committed but the accused is the one who committed the offence. In the case of KatumbaVs Uganda, court stated that corroboration is in relation to the offence as a whole but not just an ingredient of penetration and that penetration is important in sexual offences however slight it may be its very relevant.

However, the biggest problems come with proving evidence of occurrence of sexual offences. The requirements of consent and penetration are rather hard to prove especially since they contradict with morality. Thus in ApaiVs Uganda when court required the complainant to state whatever took place

at the time of rape, the old woman found it immoral to utter whatever happened before the audience full of her grand children and her own children. Because



the victim feared to speak out the rape ordeal, she simply said, "He made me his wife and worked on me" which the judge refused to understand and instead of holding the procedure in camera the judge set the accused free. This manner of handling sexual offences in most cases encourages commission of more offences.

According to Section 235 of the Penal Code, any person who unlawfully assaults another commits a misdemeanor. The case of Reed V Coker defines an assault as an act towards another inflicting pain and bodily damages by use of unlawful force to the person of another or against his person. Section 236 sets the punishment there to be five years of imprisonment.

In the cases at hand, the two HALEA beneficiaries, namely Lilly and Patience were sexually offended. Both were defiled and assaulted. Legally speaking, any person who commits the above offences against another violates a person's rights under the constitution provisions here after. Article 23 which provides for the right to personal liberty. Article 24 Respect for Human dignity and protection from inhuman treatment [No person shall be subjected to any form of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of punishment]. Article 27 points out the right to privacy, and Article 28 is about fair o hearing. Article 50 of the constitution guarantees enforcement of human rights that have been violated. In our case, HALEA's beneficiaries have a right to present their case in courts of law and the accused will deserve the right punishment which in my opinion should be harsh enough to deter other would be defilers from committing the same crime.

Namagembe Doreen is a member of HALEA, a lawyer and currently a fulltime volunteer at HALEA Youth Support Centre

Life: Is This The Only Life We Have Or There Is Another Life after Death?

Nampeera Peace Faith; Bat Valley Primary school

I HAVE this feeling that life is a mystery whose origin may not be easily explained because of the complication in understanding the genesis of life. Life is like money it can disappear any time. No one knows where money comes from just like life. We meet many challenges in life than we can ever imagine. They include poverty, sickness to mention but a few. Life is good but very difficult to manage since some things in life happen and they make you regret being alive. Sometimes I believe that there is no other life because when you kill a cow and eat its meat, its life ends and this happens to people who are eaten by cannibals. So there is a possibility of life ending here but I am not so sure, I need to learn more. I am happy that HALEA has introduced debates and essay writing in our school, we shall continue discussing and learning many new things which we do not learn in classroom.



Mumbere Isa, Kampala Students Centre

I love science and I believe that everything meaning full must have a scientific explanation. On Earth, I have come to understand that there several myths all most explaining everything and as the word goes, myths can never be accurate, they are full of inaccuracies. Scientists have every thing explanation scientifically out relying lies peddled sources. Sci- everything has capacity get sickly and so this means that there is an end to life. From this



Sci- proven that living has an that can be proven with- on myths and by so many entists say that that has life, to live, grow, eventually die life. From this

basis I am suspicious that life may end here on earth and there is no other life. This means that we must behave well and do good works because there is no other chance to have another life. However, it should not be a reason to behave badly because one thinks that there is no other life.

Nankotwe Zabina Shila, Kampala Student Centre

Life is the gift from God and it was given to all mankind. In actual sense, there is this life we are in and life after death. Although the life after death is complicated to understand and many critics say there is no other life but only this life we have, I am hesitant to follow what others say and instead choose to agree with the bible which informs us that life originated from God and when we die, we shall go to heaven where we shall meet angels and live a better life.

Biblically, life after death is known as everlasting life or external life. Everlasting life is defined as the gift which is got from God. In the bible eternal life is emphasized in many ways, death is defined as the universal passage where one moves from earthly life to spiritual life hence life after death. The faithful ones are said to meet God and live with Him in a glorious external life (Psalms 75). Jesus is the true way to external life (John 14). In Mathew 25 Jesus emphasized that He was preparing eternal life for those who cared and loved others and also the born again people like me will have space in heaven. In a debate we had at school in term one, several students reasoned that there is no life after death and that it is all myths. One student said that he was studying theoretical Geography and he had been told through evolution that man evolved from animals and I had him talk about Darwinism and things like that but I could not understand and could not agree. I challenged him to explain what happens to the spirit and soul of a dead person and he failed to properly explain where it goes. I asked him to explain to me what created that first animal from which man evolved and he failed to explain that too only arguing that those creatures simply appeared on earth and were part of it as long as the world existed.

Is War a necessary Evil?

In that debate, one of HALEA officials encouraged us to apply what he called critical thinking and challenged us to always ask questions in order to understand what is being said. He said that some of what is being taught are myths and cannot be scientifically proven but I still challenged him reasoning that many scientists have testified that there is life after death and many top scientists have talked about heaven and hell and I gave the example of Dr. Ben Cussons among others. I was informed that Scientists are people who study a lot and believe in empirical evidence through carrying out scientific research and cannot believe in myths. Such scientists believe that there is only this life that we have saying that if a person dies, the body remains in the grave and becomes a soil fertilizer! I argued that the spirit and soul goes up to heaven and he said that he did not believe in myths and metaphysics which to him are not entirely true. He reasoned that many people are doing works of a god by creating many things which were never there but I still insisted that God exists and there is life after death. That remains my view and I still believe I am very right even when others object to my opinion.

War, Peace And Development

Is war the best means of handling rebellions, conflicts or is it a right way to use violence to bring about peace?

Namayanja Joweria, Bat Valley

WAR is when two opposite sides fight for a particular thing when there is a right-and wrong side. Whenever there are disagreements between two countries or different groups or individuals, that is a sign of conflict. WAR is not the best way of handling rebellions, and conflicts because they can bring about famine and poverty. For example, during wars, people have nothing to eat because all their crops are destroyed. War brings diseases such as Cholera and death of people because social services such as hospitals, roads have been destroyed. War brings about separation of families because young people are taken to fight in wars. If you doubt my points, simply go to the rural areas of northern Uganda and you will see how destroyed that region is. Many children on our streets are from the war torn areas and they have a lot of problems and many do not go school and instead turn out to be criminals because the war disorganised their families. Therefore I say that wars are not the best way of handling rebellions and conflict, we should always find means to sit together and we discuss our challenges instead of fighting one another.



DakStephen Ruach, P.7, Bright Junior Primary-School

Is war the best means of handling rebellions, rebels, conflicts? Or is it a right way to use violence to bring about peace? First and foremost the term war means a situation in which two or more countries or group of people fight against each other for a particular goal or objective over a period of time. Wars are common in Africa where countries engage in border conflicts with one another and internal civil wars. Wars are mostly brought about by dictatorship, injustice and tribalism in a country. On my behalf, war is not the best means of handling rebellions, rebels and conflicts because of the following views.



Wars can lead to the destruction of infrastructures and increase the number of refugees. Refugees are people who have been forced to leave their homeland by factors beyond their control. These people leave their homeland for a foreign land for protection. On the other hand, wars can lead to famine in a country. Constant wars deny people the chance of living a settled life and growing enough food crops. Therefore, it also affects the country's economy in such a way that the country has to import food for its

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The Meaning and Purpose of Education

population. Hence there will be increased expenditure and less income. As I wind up, I would like to advise you that never use force because force is not an answer, you cannot change people's hearts with guns. Therefore you must choose the right weapon to change people's hearts and that weapon is only the PEACE TALK.

Mbatudde Irene; Bat Valley

NOT every war is a totally bad one. Some wars are not easy to avoid because the other side may refuse to cooperate and join you into meetings and discussions. If there other side refuses to talk peace and continues to kill your people, there is only one chance left, fight them through war so that they can agree to have peace. Look at Joseph Kony and his rebel group of the Lord Resistance Army, for many years they refused to talk peace with our government and President Museveni decided to use war to defeat them and as we talk today, they are very weak and calling for peace talks. I conclude by saying that war can sometimes be the best way of getting peace and at the end of it, wars can unite people, enemies can become friends and new ties can be created.



EDUCATION:

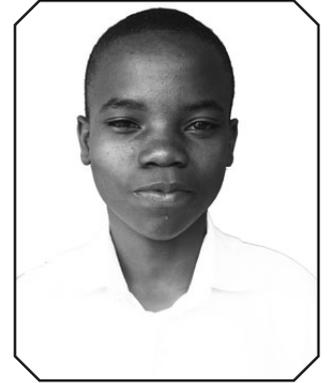
Of What Purpose is Education?

Bwanika Kenneth, Children Corner Junior School

EDUCATION is the teaching and giving skills. Some people are having knowledge but they don't have skills. People who are really educated may get diseases because there are some diseases like HIV/AIDS and cholera which may be avoided if precautions are taken. Educated people are knowledgeable because they know what is bad

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from what is good. Educational institutions such as Schools and universities instil discipline by sending away or suspending someone who does wrong from the school or institutions. Some people can get friends from schools. People who go to schools get smart jobs in future since they get knowledge and skills from there. Education is incomplete and useless if an educated person fails to apply the obtained knowledge for the benefit of the others. An educated person can be useful by teaching people what they do not know or making them understand what they take for granted, explaining to those who do not want to go school how useful education is, and by correcting people's mistakes and sharing knowledge with elders



Educated people are knowledgeable

Yango Emmanuel Modi, P.7, Bright Junior Primary School

Education means a lot to me. First and foremost, the term education means the process of teaching and equipping people with knowledge usually at schools, colleges or universities. The government has promised to spend more on education because it has very many purposes that it contributes to the nation which include the following;



Education helps in the obtaining of useful information and knowledge which one uses to manage his/her life in the future. That is to say it enables the educated people to know what to do and not to do so that they become important people in the country.

Further more, education reduces the number of ignorant people who may get involved in bad practices

The Meaning and Purpose of Education

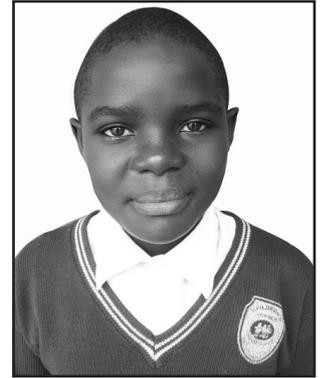
like defilement, kidnapping people and child abuse through empowering them. Education can also help the educated parents and teachers to know the disadvantages of corporal punishments and how they should handle children that are badly behaved so that they can change.

In conclusion, the obtained knowledge can be applied in several ways like applying first aid to the people who have been involved in accidents; the educated people can help to maintain peace and security in the community and it can also help people to know children's rights and protect them.

Nalumansi Victoria, Children's Corner Junior School.

EDUCATION enables people to get good jobs like teachers, accountants, members of parliament and they can apply this knowl-

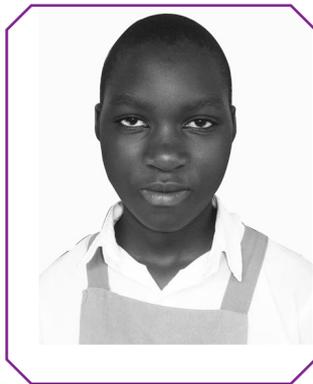
edge being taught to them. Education improves on the standards of living because an educated person can provide everything to his or her family. Education enables people learn different languages such as English, Chinese and French which can help them do business with the rest of the world. No one should be denied the chance to have education because it is our birth right. However, I have seen some teens that are expelled from school indefinitely because they got pregnant, they were caught smoking or breaking out of school to go to music concerts. I think it should be good to allow them complete their studies at that very school by giving them simple punishment but not indefinite expulsion.



Ghosts: Are Ghosts Real Or Fat Imaginations?

Natugonza Janet Maali, P.7B, Bat Valley Primary School

AGHOST; it is claimed is an appearance of a dead person. Ghosts aren't there, such stories are mere puffs/lies. I have heard people saying that if someone's grand parents die their spirits come as ghosts attack the enemies of the dead or even communicate to the relatives. However, those are mere stereotypes. I am a living example, I lost my grand parents but they haven't attacked any family members in form of ghosts. As such the tales about ghosts are mere lies meant to scare people away from the dead.



Kimono Barbra, Bat Valley Primary School

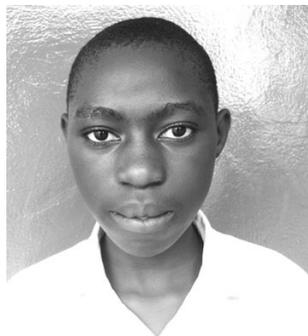
SOME people believe that people go mad because of the influence of ghosts in their families which argument I do not concur with them because I believe madness is a disease that attacks the brain. Some people oppose the view that there no ghosts however, in my opinion ghosts exist since I believe they are the ones that witch doctors use to confuse people about their problems. Witch doctors use ghosts to cast their spells of witchcraft. I have seen films having people possessed with ghost doing all wierd things against humanity. I believe that people who make films do research first before they produce their movies. So when a Movie contains ghosts attacking people, the dead, walking, I think there is truth in what they are showing us.



Can Someone Be Good Without Being Religious?

Kemigisha Maureen 12 years P.7, Children's Junior Corner School.

I BELIEVE someone can not be good to others without being religious because religion leads to moral development and one learns to be conscious to the needs of others. Religion tells people to help the needy and vulnerable. Religious people mind a lot about infrastructural development for example building churches which at times act as homes for the poor people. Religious teachings promote peace and harmony in society by stressing the value of good morals and our churches and mosques have done that a great deal.



Religious beliefs have promoted equality since they are against acts of discrimination among people since people are taught how to accommodate each other's weaknesses. If someone is not religious, he is likely not to see the importance of building churches and mosques yet such facilities can also promote education and people use them as learning centres to enhance knowledge.

I am convinced that some one cannot be useful to society without being religious and worship God because God is the beginning of wisdom. Someone cannot be good to him/her self without being religious because I believe a person first prays and gets strength to do something good, someone first hears religious preaching and learns how to forgive and do something to the community. Religion tells people to help others because by doing so, they expect a reward in heaven.

Shakira Nakawuki, 18 years, Kampala Students Centre.

I BELIEVE that a person can be good without God or without believing in a religion. First we need to understand what religion is and what we understand by God. Religion is a way of faith in

which there is reverence for a god or God and in holliness. It is a belief in the divine or superhuman powers and people express it through following certain rituals. I have been taught that Africans had their gods and the white men also brought their gods. Ours was said to be the small



god and theirs the big god. A god is that Supreme Being who is spiritual in nature and is believed to be in control of the world.

I believe that religion emphasises goodness but there are so many people who confess not to be religious and they are doing good works yet they are not religious. On the other hand I have seen many religious leaders who sexually abuse girls; sodomize boys and recently Father Musaala confessed that he was sodomised by a catholic priest. Many born again pastors have been reported defiling and raping girls and some of them including Pastor Kiwedde have been roundly accused of raping and defiling girls and young ladies who go to his church. This illustrates that not all religious people are good. In conclusion, I believe that goodness of a person does not depend on ones' being religious; it depends on ones' character, upbringing and individual choice. If you are trained to be a murderer, you are brought up in a bad family, you are raised by corrupt and selfish people, you are most likely to do bad regardless of being religious or not. However, when you reason, you can make better choices regardless of being religious or not.

Bwire Rashma, P.7, Bright Junior Primary School

Who says there is no GOD? The bible says such a person is a fool! First and foremost God is the creator of heaven and earth. Well, according to me, God is not all people's creation. "Reality" isn't just what you see but also what you know. I personally believe that the idea of God wasn't created by powerful people to keep oth-

Homosexuality: What Young People Say!!

ers under control but to try letting them know of their origin. Friends, wouldn't you love someone to simply show you the evidence for God's love? There is a purpose in life for our living/existence, I do not know what your purpose for existence is but many things



we know and experience indicate that something of "higher essence" is part of our existence and we are partly made of something more than just Dust. The following biblical teachings inspire me to believe in

God Genesis 2:5,6,7.

God is real because He is and always has been our protector. That's hard for us to comprehend in our limited minds but He is real and created everything including us. The only way to overcome our fears and troubles is to choose to believe that God is good and He loves us and sent us His only son Jesus to come and die on the cross along time ago to take away the bad things we as humans had done (our sins). If we accept Jesus and believe in Him we can be right with God and He can help us be good people.

I conclude by saying that someday when we die, we shall go to heaven and live with god and his son Jesus on condition that we do good things before our death.

Homosexuality: How Can Young People Get saved From Being sodomised?

By Nampijja Justine (17 years), Grace Fellowship High School (S.4)

This is the attraction of people of the same sexual organs for example a man to a fellowman and a woman being attracted to a fellow woman. To stop homosexuality in schools the school leaders should organize sensitization programs to teach the students about the demerits of practicing this bad act.



Government should empower the film industry to promote stations that oppose homosexuality and many students should be taught that if you practice this act, your sexual organs will be destroyed and affect the easy passage of urine and stool in both girls and boys.

In addition to this the counsellors and pastors should advise students to avoid angry arguments or egocentric thoughts (thinking about themselves) and also help others who know nothing to be advised about this bad act is too bad for their health. I think some people are enticed into homosexuality because they are promised money yet there is no money which can replace one's life.

There are so many stories in the media telling us how

men with money force young boys into homosexuality and I condemn such selfish act done by such evil men. Recently, we saw a video clip of one man called Chris Mubiru sodomising a young boy and this was shown on NBS - Real Life Show. This act is too bad and many people condemn sodomites who are now forcing young people into homosexuality.

Whereas I have seen young people who claim to have no interest in teens of their own sex, because of hatred, I think this cannot force them into homosexuality. People should know the purpose of sex that the two people involved must enjoy the act yet the homosexuality stories I have heard, all victims are complaining that their internal organs were destroyed by big men who inserted their penises into their anus. An example of a young man Ema Matovu was also shown on NBS TV and his anus and intestines are completely damaged. This has destroyed Ema's future. I call upon the government to punish all those who force young people into homosexuality but also I plead with homosexuals to stop abusing young people because they are not willing to go into homosexuality.

I conclude saying homosexuality is an illegal act because also God condemns it in the bible in (Genesis 19:1-29) this is seen when he destroyed the two cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Please, hear my prayer and stop forcing young people into homosexuality, give us a choice to decide which kind of sex we should have instead of forcing us using money. Let us live.

Should A Mother Have A Right To Get Rid of Unwanted Pregnancy? Here is my Answer.

Kabalangira Alice Peace, Grace Fellowship High School

Abortion is a crude practice where the mother to be with the help of others or medication forces the foetus out of her womb before it's produced. In my opinion, abortion has two sides, the positive and negative and thus the good and the ugly depending on how you case by case situation.



As a teenager and student, I have noticed several incidences where my fellow peers have fallen victim of abortion because of getting pregnant at the wrong time. At school, it is clearly known that once you get pregnant, there is no room for you and you must therefore be expelled.

Abortion is commonly done by the youth because they don't feel comfortable with pregnancy. The men responsible for the pregnancy in most cases refuse to accept the pregnancy because of the consequences which includes imprisonment for more than seven years. Girls also do not want to get pregnant because it cuts short their enjoyment of life with their boyfriends and because that situation cannot allow them to enjoy, so they decide to abort.

I have observed that young girls between 13 and 18 years love to play sex and keep on playing sex and because they do it recklessly, they end up getting unwanted pregnancies hence forcing them to abort. Whereas it can be a necessary evil, it's equally very dangerous.

Abortion is fatal since it leads to death. Some teens are encouraged by their friends in schools and their peers in the community where they live influence them to do abortion. Abortion is murder if we interpret it from the Biblical point of view. When you read bible's Ten Commandments, it is written as law not to kill. Now if God exist, I wonder what such

people will tell God when they had killed children through abortion.

Abortion also leads to untold psychological torture as a person who has aborted keeps on being haunted by the act she did. I remember studying with a girl who after aborting could not live a normal life since she was always stressed and traumatised. She shared with me that she kept on receiving hallucinations and dreams showing a baby crying and telling her not to kill it.

Abortion is commonly done by the youth

Whereas I condemn abortion, it can be acceptable when it comes to married persons. It is true that abortion is illegal in Uganda but what if a mother of a very young child conceives again before the other one makes six months? If she carries the foetus, the born baby may be health wise affected and the mother may be too poor to afford taking care of the children. I have realised that these days many men do not want to take care of their children so it is better to have less children which if abandoned, a woman can afford to take care of them. This is why I may support abortion when done by married mothers. In conclusion, this is a very sensitive topic which is challenged by biblical theology and as a Christian, I am compelled to obey the bible. However, the critical thinking lessons I have had through HALEA emphasise that in every issue, we have to think it through considering its practical applicability. It is better to judge every issue on its merit.

*Announcement
HALEA Teens talent
search competition is on at
Club Obligato on
7th September, 2013.
Register now.*

Female Genital Mutilation: Should this Practice Continue?

Komwiswa Christopher S.6, Kampala High School

Female Genital Mutilation refers to the removal of the clitoris from the genital parts of a woman or girl basing the act on cultural or any other beliefs held by a given society. It is always practiced by various tribes especially in Uganda and Kenya. In Uganda, it is generally practiced by the Sabinu. Basically, it is practiced by over 2 million people in communities of Africa for example countries like Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti and East African countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that (100-140) million women and girls around the world have experienced the practice/act. Female Genital Mutilation may take place in the 'hospital' but is usually performed without an anaesthesia by a traditional circumciser using a knife, razor or scissors.

It is done by pricking, piercing, and cutting the clitoris using sharp instruments. It is a form of circumcision among the Sabinu people and it's done on girls and women. To those who practice this barbaric practice, female genital mutilation (FGM) marks transition from childhood to adulthood and the readiness to face challenges of adulthood since it is usually done to teenager girls. It is rumoured that it is a source of pride for the candidates and their families especially if the girl bravely endures the rigors of the ceremony.

To those who practice FGM, they argue that it is important as an initiation ceremony due to the following reasons; That it leads to social acceptability because a circumcised girl is then fit to associate with the elders and her opinions can be listened to. To them, it is important for cultural identity, the Sabinu for instance are proud of FGM as a distinguishing mark of their women from other women who belong to other ethnic groups. FGM as by its practitioners is said to ensure pre-marital virginity and inhibits extra marital sex because it reduces a woman's libido.

Whereas those who practice FGM sing its goodness, it has lots of negative consequences especially on the person practicing it. This barbaric initiation has

adverse physiological effects on the girls. FGM for instance causes extreme pain and the wounds can become septic. I have read stories of teens that have died due to profuse and endless bleeding and many others have contracted bacteria that have caused death, sometimes occurring a few weeks after the backward ritual.

Health workers have also pointed out that FGM also leads to serious damage and distortion of the vaginal and the scars thereafter cause difficulty during child birth. It also said that women whose clitoris have been removed cannot be effectively aroused sexually and this means that the vaginal cannot release enough lubricant which implies that they feel a lot of pain during sex and cannot actually enjoy it. It has been said that such women have sex as a punishment because instead of enjoying it, they are feeling pain and such if not rape and marital rape for that matter, I do not know how it should be termed!

Though otherwise, female genital mutilation procedures have got immediate and late complications. Immediate complications are increased when FGM is performed in the traditional way and without access to medical resources. This procedure is extremely painful and bleeding complications can be fatal. Other immediate complications include acute urinary infection, wound infection, septicaemia tetanus and in case of unsterile and reused instruments, hepatitis and HIV/AIDS are possible effects. Medically, it has been proven that FGM spreads HIV/AIDS in a lightning speed only equalled to a bush fire. It systematically leads to so many infections resulting from the knives used and then even through the unhygienic handling of the wound and inadequate medical attention.

When I enquired why certain tribes favour FGM I was told that it was a selfish invention of men who feared that women with their clitoris intact are interested in sex so are likely to have men having sex with them instead of their husbands. This suspicion was increased when wars were at hand and men had to go to war where they would stay for many years and this to them would make their women get other men for sexual satisfaction. So, I am told, to keep

Education or Mis-Education?

their women to themselves alone, these selfish men suggested FMG as a better solution and once it was implemented, they were successful because women without a clitoris cannot effectively enjoy sex and their sex desire is always low as research as shown. However, from a human rights point of view, I say this is not correct because women have a right to enjoy sex and should be free from such pain. I call upon our government to strictly implement the laws against FMG and other criminal acts against women because this takes away their birth rights. Several member states of the United Nations Committee

among which Uganda is a member, called for the ban of the practice. On 21st December, 2012 the UN General Assembly unanimously passed a resolution banning the practice of FGM and therefore it should be stopped. Uganda in an effort to stop the practice passed the FGM Act to fight against the practice. Let everyone understand that Africa is beyond the early man or stone age, every barbaric cultural practice can no longer fit in this twenty first century where people are expected to freely reason and think for themselves.

Education or Mis-Education? What Teens say

By Anagabilila Victor S.6 Science, Kampala High School

Education is the continuous discovery of a person from ignorance. All primates begin learning as soon as they become conscious shortly after birth and cease after death thus is the continuous correction of one's mistakes either once and for all or after a while but progressively.

Unlike religion which makes people have faith for things without question or debate, teaching simply presents facts of life to students for them to consciously compare previous life in social, economic and political encounters with specifically taught principles. After learning has taken place, the hitherto ignorant person, understands how life scenarios are meant to be approached basing on know-how thereby making better and desirable decisions.

“We do not see life as it is but as we are,” said Rogers Miller a famous American Artist of the 70 century. With this in mind, it is right to suppose that the quality of life one lives is subjective to education level attained, since persons acquainted in different fields such as law and religion or the so called fortune telling, birth attendance, witch doctoring and elementary crop farming all acquire knowledge through learning. Even animals learn and in effect, they have the capacity to be educated in specific things for example how to behave while being driven in a car or how to take care of visitors and enemies a like.

Science tells us that human beings are uniquely built with special features that enable us to think and rea-

son and make logical decisions unlike animals and plants etc. Because our brains are built in a special way, even identical twins differ psychologically and have different interests. This is the value of education because it enables you obtain the element of applying criticism and evaluation as well as assessment which you can apply from an informed point of view.

To me, education is simply the continuous discovery of one's ignorance and serves several major purposes, namely; Education prevents one from reinventing the wheel meaning that one does not waste valuable time trying to create or invent what is already into existence.

Learning makes learner's aware of their environment better. When people have interest in nature and their inquisitive enough, education enables them to investigate and conclude rightly. For example in early 1800 century Portuguese sailors could not know what caused Beriberi till they ran short of food rich in Vitamin B12 in their bodies. Thus however practical learning might be, it is necessary that the learner should be aware of the environment. I am also informed that the great scientist, Galileo was killed by priests who opposed his reasoning that the earth is circular! To them, science about the earth's nature could not be true and a messenger of truth was killed because they never accepted his scientific conclusion. It was in the same manner of ignorance that the great philosopher, Socrates was killed by his leaders who could not come to reason with him even when he was impacting critical thinking skills among the people of his generation. This means that due to ig-

Dress Code ! Who Determines It?

norance, many people with progressive ideas can be executed and the truth in what they said can only be discovered when they are long gone, executed like chicken thieves, useless beings!

After learning, one makes better decisions especially if one was introduced to critical thinking. Unfortunately this is not normally done in our schools and we can only get this through debates and brainstorming sessions. Everything logical can attract a logical interpretation and a logical conclusion can be reached if one is willing to use the obtained education effectively. Sometimes there is miseducation when it equips learners with programmed skills and you find educated people behaving like programmed robots at work working without thinking and producing results without reasoning at all. That kind of education is a wrong one and should be discouraged.

Being educated and being learned can mean very different things. Education is good but we should strive to learn and put into practice what we have learnt through education. It is very possible to be educated without being learned. In other words how do you explain the high employment levels in Uganda when people have degrees and cannot put in practice what they learnt at school. Proper education should make one be able to create his or her own job and this is what I can call effective learning which can be ob-

tained through a proper education.

In a nut shell, education and learning walk together. Proper education promotes effective learning and education without practical and critical learning is not what we need to develop. As a science student, I believe in a practical world where all hypothesis and theories should be proven through scientific research which can be empirically proven. I want to immediately put into practice the sciences I have learnt and great thanks to HALEA Youth Support Centre which have given us a chance to promote and discover and rediscover our critical thinking skills. One way to make our type of education useful is by re-evaluating whatever is being taught to discover if they make sense or no sense and to seek ways of making such kind of education relevant to our current and future demands. Education can only be useful if it serves the one getting it and it helps in the further building of the nation and the world at large. Good education should be practical and skill driven as is the case in the fast developing countries such as Japan and China.

Let us Get Real Education
and not Mis Education if We
are to Develop as a Nation.

How should a Decent Person Dress and Who Determines One's Dress Code?

Namyalo Viola, Grace Felowship High School

I have heard several stories about dressing, some saying that girls should not even wear trousers, shirts, miniskirts, leggings, hot pants etc. Many people have complained when they find me putting on somewhat short skirts or jean shorts even when I am going to do dancing lessons at HALEA Youth Support Centre.

Some will shout at you calling you nasty names and others will seduce you demanding sex because they cannot accept any designer fashion you might have put on for a specific purpose. Our government has gone another step forward by proposing banning of min skirts and could not even explain what tantamount to a mean skirt. I



have asked them to explain to us how long should a skirt be and where can a min skirt be judged to be too short to qualify as indecent. In whose eyes can ones dress qualify to be indecent? Does a person wearing a long dress but with a long slit qualify to be described as indecently dressed? Can one's of dress justify the action of lustful men to rape and defile young girls and women?

I believe one can be decent regardless of how he or she has dressed and this depends on the occasion. If you are going to church or school, why should you put on a min skirt too short to reveal your juicy thighs? Again, if you are going to the beach, theatre or you are going to dance or practice dance lessons as I do, why should you force me to put on a long skirt which cannot enable me even to lift my leg? Why should a man's lustful nature be the one to determine how innocent women dress? It is not a constitutional right to have freedom to choose what to

dress at the right time. Should there be a law dictating how I should dress when I am at my compound or within a dormitory?

To me this is pure and simple and I have said it in the debate we had at school in our first term. A decent person is a person who dresses basing on where he or she is going. People should wear their clothes basing on where they are going, different types of clothes work at different times as shown below.

Office wear should be for office and not the beach and dance wear should not be expected at school or

in church. It does not give you licence to rape me because I have put on a min skirt, it is common sense that you should have sex with someone whose consent you have obtained regardless of the manner of one's dress. Whereas it is one's right to dress as you wish, it is important to exercise reasoning because some drunkards and drug addicts may rape you or defile you at night when you put on too revealing dresses and you go into their company. You should do whatever you do mindful of your environment. Life has no substitute, do not forget.

TALKBACK!

Kato Mukasa Writes Back on The Issue of Homosexuality

Background

I am part of several group networks on the internet and one of them was started by Pastor Solomon Male, a well-known critic of homosexuals, a human rights activists and one of the leading homophobic persons in Uganda. On the 11th day of January this year, pastor Male posted a mail to the effect that it challenged the role of born again leadership is as far as fighting homosexuality especially 'aggravated homosexuality' in the country. He pointed out several cases where innocent, young boys have been sodomised by pastors and other persons who are supposed to be their guardians and the born again leadership had not come out boldly to help the victims. In a quickly written response, Dr. Sserwada, the born again leader practically attacked Pastor Male giving all lousy excuses instead of directly addressing the vital issues he (Male) had pointed out. As a humanist, freethinker and human rights activist, I was 'forced' to respond. I was equally glad that Dr. Sserwada also had a rebuttal to my sharp response. Read on:

KATO MUKASA'S RESPONSE TO Dr. SSERWADA.

Dear brothers and sisters on this network

I would have wished to simply read and keep quiet or support from underground in whatever form I would have chosen but the response of Dr. Joseph Sserwada has triggered my early response. Fellow Ugandans, I pity you. I pity you especially those who still have the courage to go to church – especially churches ministered by liars, defilers, rapists, hypocrites and

sycophants'. I pity you who still blindly trust these so – called men of god or rather the Western GOD when actually they are their own gods or GOD as the case may be

Good people, I do not need to believe in a certain god or GOD to understand that something is wrong neither do I need to quote a bible to submit on crucial issues.

I have followed Pastor Solomon Male's endless and hopeless struggle to fight homosexuality in Uganda. I have discussed with him personally, I have invited him to share his knowledge with those I serve and I have told him openly how I do not entirely agree with him especially on a generalized homophobia. I do not believe (even when I am straight) that heterosexuals must be too homophobic such that emotions blindfold their capacity to think. For instance, I do not see the need to have the Anti-Homosexuality Bill because it is not necessary, the current law as it is – is enough to punish anyone who rapes, defiles or has carnal knowledge of another without his or her consent. Why bring a law that will stop researchers like me to interact with homosexuals, talk or write about homosexuality. Why bring a law that will punish parents, teachers, and local leaders for not reporting people who happen to be gay? Even when these people have not committed any crime? Where there is consent between grown-ups, what will the government be looking for in people's bedrooms?

That is where we disagree with some homophobes including pastor Male sometimes but I am happy he is not in for the Kill the Gay Bill. I entirely agree with Pastor Male when he brings out the subject matter: 'Forced homosexuality'. He does not use the very

Talk Back: Radical Approach on Homosexuality

term exactly but it impliedly reveals the same. Here are accusations, with young boys (imagine they were your sons, brothers, relatives, friends), forcefully sodomised by men of god/God who were in the first place supposed to be their protectors. Worst of all, these so called men of god/ God have the courage to take videos as they sodomise the forced boys and take them- (who knows where) for allegedly economic gains!

You are free to disagree with me but I have a feeling that there are genuine homosexuals out-there, a people whose sex orientation is that way but why would someone record his act of love making when he is forcing the other party to have sex? Is this necessary? So, do we get the feeling that some of these rapists, defilers, sodomites are in a dangerous business and it is the same foundation on which their churches are based? Recruit more young boys, pretend to help them, sodomise them, sell videotapes abroad, make more money and expand the church? Can this be true? Yes, there is a high possibility that this may be true! Much evidence than mere prattle must be gathered to reach such a conclusion.

ON PASTOR SSERWADA

This brings me to Dr. Joseph Sserwada. I have respect for this man especially as an entrepreneur but I believe he has failed as a leader of the born again church. Perhaps, I may be wrong but it appears he already has a side he is with because as he says: 'As a constant victim of Moses Male's unfounded scathing attacks in both the electronic and print media, and I believe, and will continue to be as I envisage, what does he expect me to do? His email does not provide an appeal, a request or prayer! What is Moses Male asking all and sundry to do?'

What does the above quotation tell you? That Dr. Sserwada has a biased mind and cannot approach this matter with a free mind. What is disturbing though, he will remain claiming to be a man of god, sent by a GOD but with such emotions, who can trust such a leadership?

I have also painfully observed that whenever Pastor Male points out some of these flaws in the church, these people ask him to mention his church, his followers, his associates, his friends, his mentors? Wait a minute, does this have anything to do with standing up for what is right? So, does this imply that people with independent or minority minds cannot challenge what the majority believes to be true? What if all the

so-called associates are doomed or lack direction or the courage to point out what is wrong?

Thanks to Pastor Male for not even having a flock to lead in form of a church. The accused pastors would be framing him or at least saying he wants to attract people to his church. We at least know that church is a serious business in Uganda and hundreds of these so-called pastors are pure entrepreneurs. I hope that Dr. Sserwada will be humble and honest enough not to disagree with this naked fact- at least!

To a free thinker, Dr. Sserwada makes no point at all. I want to encourage this good doctor to open his heart, mind and soul and find some iota of truth in what pastor Male is saying. You know some of the victims talk to them and prove if they are telling lies. If you are not part of the exploiters, go ahead and research about their wealth and their nature of calling. True, Pastor Male is homophobic but this cannot entirely rule out the fact that he may be pointing out the bitter truth about lustful pastors. If some of your pastors are naturally gay, I have no personal problem with it but let them leave our children, yes, I mean our young boys alone. If they are sodomites for money's sake, let them reconsider their motive and save our nation from promoting homosexuality as a business venture. A sex orientation cannot be promoted, it's natural, it flows within your blood. At least no one taught me how to be a heterosexual and I guess, no one will have to teach it to my children.

Let's face it and we all know it; some people and especially top pastors are practically above the law. They have government support after all, they support the ruling class to win votes and the top leaders are not ready to sacrifice them. Yes, if some of these pastors are sodomites, the government is fully aware but it is caught in a web and it becomes impossible to bring them to order.

WAY FORWARD:

WE MUST yearn to find the truth. Pastor Male has done his part, he may be wrong because excessive homophobia tends to blind one's judgement on the subject but we must dig deeper. The likes of Dr. Sserwada will blame him for writing to us, the non-believers, the politicians, the traders, the 415 people on this network but they are forgetting that sodomy is real and boys are coming out to testify. If all was fake, what would the boys expect to get from a pastor Male who cannot even afford to feed them for a single day? It is the pain the boys are having,

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it is the zeal the likes of pastor Male have exhibited to defend the vulnerable, the helpless when people like Dr.Sserwada chose to look the other side. Let Dr.Sserwada and colleagues begin to take care of the sodomised boys, take them to hospital, feed them, educate them instead of blaming pastor Male for pointing out their pain.

Let us support pastor Male in the court battle but evidence must be at hand. The allegations he makes points to grave crimes and must be supported by direct and substantial evidence. Pastor Male can utilise the services of pro borno lawyers. Can pastor Male make use of the Legal Aid organization? When it comes to protection of children's rights, HALEA will be ready to partner with you. We are here to protect the weak and vulnerable. Whatever the case, let us all say, NO to promotion of homosexuality, no to promotion of homophobia and no to protecting people who sodomise our innocent ones. Let us keep in touch friends. Feel free to disagree and we shall get a perfect way forward. Blessings.

Kato Mukasa is the Executive of HALEA. He is a Humanist and Human Rights Activist, based in Kampala -Uganda.

DR. SSERWADA RESPONDS TO KATO MUKASA

Dear Mr Kato

Interesting reading you provided! I shall limit this to you! Your avowed belief in free thinking humanism exonerates me from your judgement of lack of leadership acumen as indeed anybody on the other side would conclude. Good enough, I never claimed I was a champion, nor a jack of all trades! If I win some and lose some, so goes life!

Unlike you, Solomon Male is still a practicing Christian who must be guided by the Bible, at least until he denies it. That binds him to the standards so set by God, (not god or gods) and whether you are a sympathizer or friend, we will still shove that truth down his throat!

The solution is in fellowship not in civil or human courts, and from his recent experience, no one knows this better than him. Those responding to this email in privacy still demand that I rally other leaders to bring order to this situation and I believe they too mean well. So, there is a choice to make. No one denies that Moses is a man of God! No one denies

that he is zealous for righteousness! No one would support cheats and fraudsters anywhere near them. But defend as you may, Moses is in AREAS OF DISCIPLINE totally out of order! Not for WHAT he is addressing but for HOW is handling the issues! HE LACKS WISDOM IN HANDLING MATTERS OF ECCLESIASTICAL, NATIONAL OR EVEN UNIVERSAL MAGNITUDE.

Moses, inevitably turned his otherwise beautiful ministry into an unfacilitated 'Christian' Police Station! Follow his press reports, talk shows and comments. He accuses the Uganda Police of incompetence! He accuses Uganda's courts of laws and magistrates of injustice! Every church is a den of thieves and liars! Every pastor is a cheat! Every Member of Parliament is a coward! Every radio station, especially if they have not provided him airtime, is a voice of the devil! All churches, traditional, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Catholic are a bunch of self seeking dens of hypocrites. The only institution he, understandably, has never attacked is the Anglican Church which evidently sponsors his campaigns. Moses just despises everybody except his sponsors.

He takes no advice. Look, he just got these legal notices and immediately shot them on a public email fraternity that includes as many of our friends as it does those bent on mockery and ridicule for our God and the body of Christ. Moses is self-sure he is an angel! He acts as though he lives in the next bedroom to God's! HIS OPINION IS WHAT SHOULD WORK.

"Self-conciet and understanding are incompatible" Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) [Count Lev Tolstoi] Russian novelist, moral philosopher, mystic poet. There is a battle for the soul of our nation going on. Uganda and the Church cannot afford erratic approaches to its diverse enemies. I suggest you talk to him to seek reconciliation with those he has offended, first. Even atheists know they make mistakes and seek for forgiveness. Moses makes no mistakes. He waits for no opinion. He is too fast, even for God! In the alternative, you must pledge to give your financial offer should he be fined! Will you provide legal defense for Moses in court? If he gets convicted, would you share his sentence?

Mulongovamu kusaaga!
Dr Joseph Serwadda, Leader of the
Born Again Faith - Uganda

Remembering The Life Of A Great Man- Henry Morgentaler - The Abortion Doctor

Career

Henry Morgentaler was a medical doctor, a humanist and human rights activist of the Jewish origin. He received his medical education from the Université de Montréal, graduating in 1953. After receiving his Canadian citizenship, he practiced medicine in the east end of Montreal. He started as a general practitioner in 1955 but increasingly specialized in family planning, becoming one of the first Canadian doctors to perform vasectomies, to insert intra-uterine devices, and to provide birth control pills to the unmarried.

On October 19, 1967 he presented a brief before a House of Commons Health and Welfare Committee that was investigating the issue of illegal abortion. Morgentaler stated that women should have the right to

a safe abortion. The reaction to his public testimony surprised him: he began to receive calls from women who wanted abortions. Robert Malcolm Campbell and Leslie Alexander Pal wrote, "Henry Morgentaler experienced the [abortion] law's limitations directly in the supplications of desperate women who visited his Montreal office." Morgentaler's initial response was to refuse: "I hadn't expected the avalanche of requests and didn't realize the magnitude of the problem in immediate, human terms. I answered, 'I sympathize with you. I know your problem, but the law won't let me help you. If I do help you, I'll go to jail, I lose my practice—I have a wife and two children. I'm sorry, but I just can't!'"

For a time he was able to refer the women to two other doctors who did abortions, but they became unavailable. There was no one to whom he could send them, and some of them were ending up in



the emergency department after amateur abortions. He has said that he felt like a coward for sending them away and that he was shirking his responsibility. Eventually, in spite of the risks to himself—loss of career, prison for years or for life—he decided to perform abortions and, at the same time, challenge the law. He knew from other doctors and from newspaper reports that women in Montreal had died from incompetent abortion. He knew that the women were

determined to get abortions in spite of the danger to their health and lives. He knew that he could prevent those unnecessary deaths. And so he determined to use civil disobedience to change the law.

In 1968 Morgentaler gave up his family practice and began performing abortions in his private clinic. At the time, abortion was illegal except for cases in which continuing a pregnancy threatened the life of the pregnant woman. On August 26, 1969, an amendment to the Criminal Code legalized abortion in Canada if performed in a hospital after approval of a Thera-

peutic Abortion Committee. There was, however, no requirement for a hospital to set up a committee and only about one-third of hospitals did, leaving many areas without legal abortion, forcing women to travel and inducing barriers and delays. Some committees never met. Even if they did, they never saw their "patient" and yet her fate was determined by their subjective opinions. In addition, there was no appeal of a TAC's decision. In effect, the system was grossly unfair. Morgentaler's abortions remained illegal under that new law because he did not submit them in advance to a TAC for approval; they became legal in 1988 when section 251 of the Criminal Code (now known as section 287) was found to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada.

After Quebec stopped prosecuting him in 1976, Morgentaler opened an abortion clinic in Ontario. In spite of prosecutions, other provinces followed. In 2003,

Special Feature: Dr. Henry Morgentaler's Life

he was able to close his Halifax clinics because a doctor that he trained was now doing abortions at a local hospital, QEII Health Sciences Centre.

Judicial battles

Quebec

In 1969 Morgentaler opened an abortion clinic in Montreal. He said that he applied for status as a model abortion clinic and proposed to the federal and provincial governments that abortions could be safely done outside hospitals. He recounts that neither the provincial nor the federal government was interested. Each said it was the other's responsibility. No one came inspect the clinic. Instead, they sent the police. On June 1, 1970, Montreal city police raided Morgentaler's clinic and laid several charges of performing illegal abortions. The first case did not come to trial until 1973; in the meanwhile, women's groups organized in support of him and he continued to perform abortions. In 1973, the doctor stated that he had performed 5,000 safe abortions outside hospitals, demonstrating that a hospital setting was not necessary.

To summarize, between 1973 and 1975, Morgentaler was tried three times in Montreal for defying the abortion law; each time, he raised the defence of necessity, and each time he was acquitted. Each time, the jury took less time to reach their decision to acquit: at the third trial, they took one hour. This is called Jury nullification—the refusal of juries to enforce a law that they perceive to be unjust.

Each charge was brought to trial separately. At the trial of the first charge in 1973, Morgentaler was defended by Claude-Armand Sheppard. Sheppard presented the "defence of necessity"—as a doctor, Morgentaler had a duty to safeguard the life and health of the women who came to him for abortions, which outweighed his duty to obey the law. After hearing some of those women as witnesses, the jury acquitted him.

The province appealed the acquittal. In a move lit-

erally without precedent, the jury's acquittal was overturned by five judges on the Quebec Court of Appeal in 1974, who substituted a conviction. The doctor appealed his conviction to the Supreme Court of Canada but the court upheld his conviction in a 6-3 decision, stating that the danger to women was not immediate. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison and began serving his sentence in March, 1975.

In 1975, under Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, the Canadian Parliament changed the law so that an appeals court could not overturn a jury acquittal, although they could order a new trial. This is known as the Morgentaler Amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada. The Quebec government set aside their first conviction and ordered a new trial on the first charge. Morgentaler was released to await trial.



In 1975, while he was in prison, the Ministry of Justice for Quebec laid a second set of charges against him and he was acquitted by another jury. He was, however, already in jail. A political cartoon at the time showed a prison guard pushing Morgentaler's food tray into his cell and saying, "Congratulations, doctor, you've been

acquitted again!" The Ministry of Justice appealed this second acquittal but this time, the Quebec Court of Appeal unanimously upheld the acquittal (January 19, 1976).

In defiance of legal custom, Morgentaler was not released on parole after serving 1/3 of his sentence, six months. In total, he served ten months, suffering a heart attack while in solitary confinement, after which he was released to hospital. It was reported that the Liberal Justice Minister for Quebec, Jérôme Choquette, was deeply involved and interested in prosecuting Morgentaler until he was removed from the portfolio.

In January 1976, the federal Justice Minister, Ron Basford, started a third trial against Morgentaler, on the first set of charges. On 18 September 1976, the trial ended in an acquittal by a different jury. This was his third jury acquittal in Quebec.

In 1976 the Parti Québécois took power in Quebec.

Special Feature: Dr. Henry Morgentaler's Life

They realized that the abortion law could not be enforced if juries would not convict, so they dropped the remaining charges. On 11 December 1976, the new Justice Minister, Marc-Andre Bedard, dropped the charges against Morgentaler and other doctors and announced that there would be no further trials for clinic abortions in Quebec. This was just in time to prevent a fourth Morgentaler trial from starting on Monday.

Bedard called the anti-abortion law unenforceable. From that point on, Quebec refused to enforce federal law prohibiting abortions by qualified medical personnel. Bedard emphasized that police would continue to identify and charge unqualified, backstreet abortionists. Federal Justice Minister Ron Basford said that Quebec had made a just and fair decision that was proper to provincial authority. Quebec Justice Minister Bedford asked Federal Justice Minister Basford to amend Section 251 of the Criminal Code.

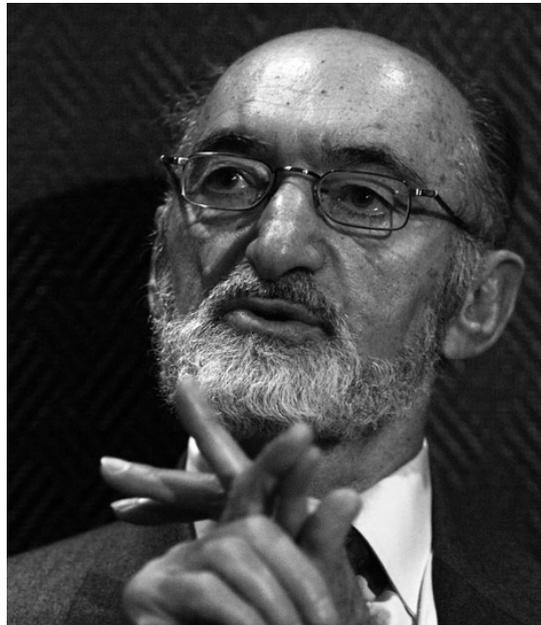
Later in 1976 the Attorney General for Quebec announced that thenceforward abortions performed by doctors in free-standing clinics were legal in the province. In 1976 Morgentaler went to the Supreme Court of Canada in an attempt to overturn the country's abortion law in *Morgentaler*

v. The Queen but was unsuccessful. In 1982 the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was enacted as part of the Canadian Constitution. The Charter was relevant to Morgentaler's later court cases.

In 1996 Morgentaler wrote "The Moral Case for Abortion." In it, he gives the reasoning that guided his actions from the first abortions in Quebec and fueled his defence of necessity in providing women with abortions. This was, in essence, the reason that Quebec juries would not convict him: Have all these people forgotten that women used to die in our countries from self-induced or quack abortions, that unwanted children were given away to institutions where they suffered enormous trauma that took the joy of life away from them and made them into anxious, depressed individuals with a grudge against

society? Have all these people forgotten that an unwanted pregnancy was the biggest health hazard to young fertile women and could result in loss of fertility, long-term illness, injury, and death? While no precise figures exist, it is estimated that approximately 4,000 to 6,000 Canadian women died from illegal abortions between 1926 and 1947. This lesson was reinforced in 1990 by the Conservative attempt to re-criminalize abortion. A Conservative federal government, led by Progressive Conservative Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, introduced Bill C-43, which would punish doctors with prison terms if they performed abortions for women whose health was not at risk. It passed the House of Commons by a close

vote of 140 – 131 in a blaze of publicity. It was not yet law, but within a week a 20-year-old university student bled to death in residence from a self-induced coat hanger abortion. A teenaged girl was injured in a botched back-alley abortion. These casualties of unwanted pregnancy received considerable publicity and abortion rights demonstrations were held after the death of the student, protesting Bill C-43. The bill was defeated in the Senate by a tie vote in early 1991 and the casualties of illegal abortion ceased.



Death threats, assaults, and bombings

There were many instances of anti-abortion violence against Morgentaler, his staff, his patients, and his colleagues. Anti-abortion violence is described by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service as single-issue terrorism. Death threats against Morgentaler were frequent. In the 1980s, a reporter noted that the stack of death threats for a single month was six inches thick. In 1983 a man attacked him with garden shears outside of his Toronto abortion clinic. Judy Rebick blocked the attack and Morgentaler remained unharmed. Augusto Dantas was charged with assault and with possession of a weapon dangerous to the public good. On July 29, 1983, protestors attempted

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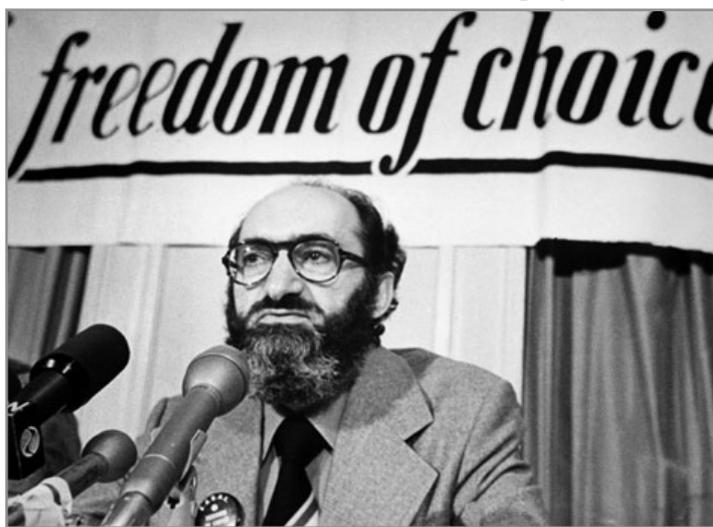
to firebomb his clinic; the clinic suffered only minor damage, but the neighbouring Toronto Women's Bookstore was nearly destroyed.

In May 1992, the Morgentaler Clinic on Harbord Street in Toronto was firebombed during the night by two people (caught on security camera) using gasoline as fuel and a firework to set off the explosion. The next day, clinic management announced that the firebombing failed to prevent any abortions, since all scheduled abortions were carried out in alternative locations. No one was hurt but the building had to be demolished. The Women's Bookstore next door was also damaged, specifically the women and child-birth section. On the day after the firebombing, Morgentaler came to inspect the damage and a crowd of abortion-rights supporters appeared at the clinic with signs that read, "Just Say No to Bombs" and "Honk for Choice." As a result of the arson, the Ontario government decided to spend \$420,000 on improved security for abortion clinics.

At the time, all four free-standing clinics in Ontario were in Toronto. The government wanted to gather information about activities by pro-life sympathizers; at the time, law enforcement agencies in Canada did not collect statistics about harassment and violence against abortion providers, their clinics, or their clients. After sniper attacks on other doctors such as Garson Romalis and Hugh Short (see Anti-abortion violence), abortion providers in Canada were aware that their own lives could be in danger from anti-abortion assassins with high-powered rifles.

The murder of Doctor Barnett Slepian in Buffalo on October 23, 1998, also by a high-powered rifle, reinforced the threats. Abortion doctors wore bullet-proof vests and pulled their curtains to prevent assassins from shooting into their homes. Morgentaler was quoted as saying, "I know of anecdotal evidence that some doctors are considering that they might not be able to continue. It's a very bad situation." He said that he would go on performing abortions. Morgentaler believed that the attacker was an Ameri-

can and that the attacks were an unwanted byproduct of the vitriolic, religiously fueled abortion battle in the United States. He stated, "In Canada, you have fewer religious fanatics, there is much less violence in Canada and it's a much more tolerant society." In response to the stabbing of Garson Romalis in 2000, Morgentaler noted that some doctors in Ontario, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland had stopped doing abortions. "For years, we have been living in the shadow of the doctors being killed", said Morgentaler. "This violence is a sign of frustration, rage and moral bankruptcy in the anti-abortion movement."



Other legal troubles

In 1976, the Disciplinary Committee of the Professional Corporation of Physicians of Quebec suspended Morgentaler's medical licence for a year as a result of his conviction for having performed an illegal abortion. As he operated outside hospitals

and without a Therapeutic Abortion Committee, all his abortions were illegal. According to Catherine Dunphy's 1996 biography of Morgentaler, the committee "commented on 'an attitude which is primarily directed to protecting his fees. No really valid interview is held before proceeding with the abortion. This behaviour confers a mercenary character on the doctor-patient relationship. This committee is incapable of reconciling this behaviour with the humanitarian concern that the accused invoked throughout his defence.'" In 1973, on the basis of Morgentaler's public claims that he had performed thousands of abortions, the Quebec Ministry of Revenue ordered him to pay \$354,799 in unpaid income taxes. Morgentaler settled out of court a few years later, paying \$101,000.

Honours and awards

Morgentaler was the first president of the Humanist Association of Canada (HAC) from 1968 to 1999.

Special Feature: Dr. Henry Morgentaler's Life

He remains the organization's honorary president. The HAC bestowed on him its Lifetime Achievement Award on August 3, 2008 in Toronto, Ontario, during its 40th anniversary celebration convention, the largest Humanist convention in the nation's history.

In 1973 Morgentaler was one of the signers of the Humanist Manifesto. The American Humanist Association named him the 1975 Humanist of the Year, along with Betty Friedan, author of *The Feminine Mystique*.

On June 16, 2005, the University of Western Ontario conferred an honorary Doctor of Laws degree upon Morgentaler; this was his first honorary degree. This decision by UWO's senate honorary degrees committee generated opposition from Canadian pro-life organizations. 12,000 signatures were acquired on a petition asking the UWO to reverse its decision to honour Morgentaler and several protest rallies were held, including one on the day the honorary degree was bestowed. A counter petition, supporting the UWO's decision, gained over 10,000 signatures.

On August 5, 2005 Morgentaler received the Couchiching Award for Public Policy Leadership for his efforts on behalf of women's rights and reproductive health issues. The Award was given by the Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs at its 74th annual summer conference. The Couchiching Award for Public Policy Leadership is presented annually to a nationally recognised Canadian who has demonstrated public policy leadership that results in positive impact on Canada or a community within Canada, often in the face of public opposition. [In part, the citation reads

The women's movement of the 1960s found in Dr. Morgentaler a person who understood that women's equality could not be achieved within the existing restrictions on medical services for reproductive choice. In offering women access to necessary services that faced considerable restriction elsewhere, Dr. Morgentaler used both his professional status and personal skills to fight for women's rights, while placing himself at risk. His actions have brought about fundamental changes in Canadian law and to the health care system and in so doing dramatically affected for the better the lives of Canadians from coast to coast.

The Canadian Labour Congress recognized him on May 28, 2008 with its highest honour, the Award for

Outstanding Service to Humanity. The CLC's description reads: Morgentaler, 85 and frail, accepted the award from the Officers of the Canadian Labour Congress and thanked the unions for standing with him through his many years of struggle to secure for women the right to control their own health and their own bodies. Choice and freedom.

On this occasion, Morgentaler said, "We must remain vigilant in defence of a woman's right to choose, because there are still too many legislators and health care providers out there who are not pro-choice and too many women who continue to have their health put at risk because they are denied access to safe abortion services in a supportive environment – twenty years after Canada's abortion laws were struck down."

In 2010 Morgentaler was nominated for a Transformational Canadians award as a person who has "made a difference by immeasurably improving the lives of others." The news item points out, "In Canada, a woman can have an abortion without fear of prosecution or imprisonment – for the simple reason that there is no abortion law. For more than 20 years, that state of affairs has set us apart from the rest of the developed world. Canadian women enjoy the right to safe and legal abortions largely because Henry Morgentaler fought a long battle on their behalf. For his trouble, the unflappable Dr. Morgentaler stood trial, languished in prison, and received numerous death threats. What drove him to take such risks? "The realization that a terrible injustice was being done to women and the conviction that it was necessary to change the situation to provide help for those who needed it," replies the retired physician via email."

Order of Canada

Morgentaler was named a Member of the Order of Canada on July 1, 2008. He was recognized "for his commitment to increased health care options for women, his determined efforts to influence Canadian public policy and his leadership in humanist and civil liberties organizations." [Abortion-rights activists applauded the decision, saying Morgentaler put his life and liberty on the line to advance women's rights, while pro-life groups strongly criticized the award, saying it debased the Order of Canada. Feminist and author Judy Rebick told the *Globe and Mail* that it

Special Feature: Kasese Floods

was time Morgentaler was honoured for his long battle. She said, “Dr. Morgentaler is a hero to millions of women in the country,” she said. “He risked his life to struggle for women’s rights ... He’s a huge figure in Canadian history and the fact that he hasn’t got [the Order of Canada] until now is a scandal.”] On the matter, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said he would rather see the country’s highest civilian award “be something that really unifies” and “brings Canadians together”, while Liberal Party leader Stéphane Dion said, “Dr. Morgentaler has stood up for a woman’s right to choose to for his entire career, often at

great personal risk”, and asked Canadians to respect and celebrate the decision.

In 2006 Morgentaler had to stop performing abortions after undergoing a heart bypass surgery. He continued, however, to oversee the operation of his six private clinics. In May this year, Dr. Henry Morgentaler died.

(Sourced from Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, the neutrality of this article is still disputed)

TEENS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES ON THE KASESE FLOODS

Mumbere Duncan:

I am a pupil in Primay Seven class at Kasese Humanist Primary School and my home area is Kanyaruboga, Bulembia Division found in Kasese District.

It was on 1st May of 2013 , evening time when I was at our home on a rainy day that some bad news happened when Nyamwamba River busted and flooded causing water to pass near the road near our home. During this time, my Father who is a Teacher in Bundibugyo was planning to go in Bundibugyo and since that day was labour day he planned he will go the other day.

The river soared slowly and as the waters was beginning to rise, my mother and dad was trying all they can preparing us to escape from Kilembe and I saw people running for their dear lives, cars were also being loaded with domestic items to Kasese town, I saw people with their animals and I heard the noise being made by River Nyamwamba which

was being caused by the flowing waters and stones hitting against each other. When the waters were increasing, we shifted to the higher grounds carrying very light house hold items we managed and with my own eyes, I saw the water passing via the road and crossing to the area where our house was located and people were yelling to each other, houses were falling, people were running any where they



feel they will get relieved and sadly our house was also swept in the floods including our wooden beds. That night we slept on a home of a relative on the hill side for a day. The following day we joined other people from Kilembe who were being relocated at Kasese Primary School in Kasese Town as displaced persons and after a few days, my dad shifted us to Base Camp where he is renting a single room where our family is currently staying. I am happy that the management at Kasese Humanist Primary

School has helped some of my sisters to study freely at Kasese Humanist Primary School without paying fees. My sisters were studying at Bulembia Primary School in Kilembe.

Special Feature: Kasese Floods

Thembo Kamanzi

I am a Primary Seven pupil at Kasese Humanist Primary School and my home area is Namhuga Village in Kilembe.

My area was less affected by the floods as it lay on the other side of Nyamwamba River valley but what I saw on that day was unbelievable. Our house is located some few metres from Kilembe Mines Hospital and on that day, the weather was very dull and very early in the morning was Labour Day in Uganda.

The rains poured from morning to evening, my parents who are crop cultivators on that day did not go to the gardens to plant and stayed at home all day long. Mum operates a kiosk along the Kilembe road near the hospital but on that day she opened her stall at 3 P.M but she came home running alerting us to vacate the area as River Nyamwamba had started to rise and that people were running for dear lives so this made my dad, I plus my sister get scared and were thinking for what to do next. Our dad ran to the road side and could not believe his eyes. However the water levels did not cross the tarmac road and to our side so we were not affected at all but the relatives on the other side were affected badly. The Kilembe Mines Hospital was flooded while the houses for the hospital staffs (doctors and Nurses) were all swept in the floods. The waters were filled with jerry cans, tree trunks, leaves, animals and people's belongings seen floating. The hospital patients were also seen running away from the hospital and the following day the hospital was closed.

Right now the water levels have gone down and flooding is no more but the Kilembe area was badly destroyed as stones, rocks and debris can be seen littering everywhere in Kilembe and Nyamwamba River valleys. I wonder how can a loving father cause such a disaster if at all he exists.



Muhindo Lilian

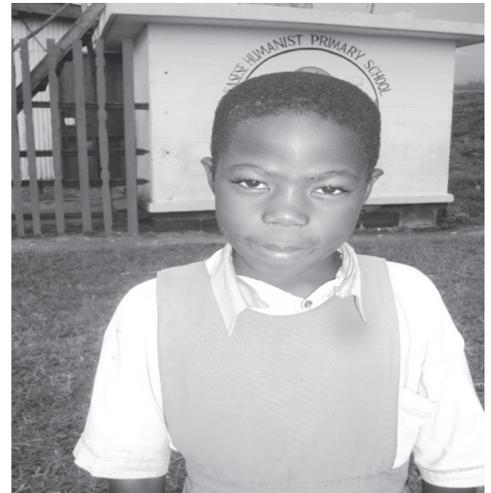
I am a P4 child a student of Kasese Humanist Primary School. I come from Road Barrier which is situated along Kilembe Road.

Our home is situated very far from Nyamwamba River but we were surprised when the river waters came and swallowed up houses where we stay.

It all began by raining slowly in the morning, the rain intensified and as it approached evening hours, River Nyamwamba was very noisy, this caused us to get concerned only to notice that water is every

where, we tried to close the doors on our house but this couldn't stop the water from entering, many of the household items were destroyed, our pit latrine got damaged and sunk inside and all the crops in our garden was submerged with water and after some days all the crops were covered with mud.

My father brought a vehicle put us and our damaged belongings on a pickup and we escaped to Kasese where we are still staying up to now.



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SHOULD THE CULTURAL PRACTICE OF WOMEN BEATING CONTINUE?

Grace Fellowship primary school

Kisakye Agnes P.7 13 years

It is a barbaric belief and practice by many traditional men who think that without beating a woman a man cannot be a real man in a home. I have seen women being beaten by their husbands within their communities and the husbands keep on justifying their backward actions to what used to be done by their fathers back home. People should know that women are people too, women have equal rights like those enjoyed by men and no one should be above the other. Beating up a woman does not show that you are a real man but it shows how fake a husband you are. It can lead to divorce, so please avoid this backward cultural belief.



During our school Debate, this topic divide us. Boys still supported women beating yet girls objected. Boys urged that it their right to be the Leaders of their families yet girls reasoned that in a home wife and husband are equal.

HUMANISTS SHOULD STAND UP TO MOB JUSTICE.

Lukyamuji Joseph

When one is a citizen or national of an African country like Uganda one finds oneself hard split on priorities of societal issues to pursue since almost every sector is flawed, wanting and needing attention and vigilance. Such is the dilemma that many an African Humanist find themselves into. Its not easy having to run up and down reminding authorities to abide by the laws, to do what their duties obligate them to, to stand up for the marginalized, to speak out what many at conscience know is true and right but dare not say so, to seek justice for rape and defilement victims and so on.

Open Talk Magazine:

Kenema Jackline P.6, Grace

Women beating is pure violence against the woman and all her rights are violated through the beatings. I have had some women who still think that if a man does not beat you, he does not love you but I wonder which kind of love that can be got after inflicting pain on another, causing injuries that may even lead to death. If beating a woman is the best way of showing love, then I will tell my future husband that I do not want such type of love. Love means good health, respect, care, tolerance and fairness. It means listening to one another and I can not see how beating me can make me love such a violent man. It is wrong for men to take women as their property and such is the reason why men beat women because they think they own them. I want to tell boys and men that we are not assets to be purchased and abused as men wish. Whoever dreams the past dream of women beating, they should know that that is no longer good and the new age demands that talking about a problem is better that using violent means. Whoever still thinks that being a woman is a good think is simply ignorant of the current realities, that is a sign of ignorance and backwardness.



It is such a situation that many vigilantes at the Humanist Association for Leadership Equity and Accountability (HALEA) find themselves in day in and day out and at the end of it all are exhausted with the voluntary workload and frustrated by considering themselves as not having done enough in some cases. Its against such a background that I write this opinion piece for just how many things have I had to put aside and have to inform you that Mob Justice is one of the greatest threats to Humanism and free thought in general in this land of ours dubbed the 'Pearl of Africa'.

Humanists Should Stand Up To Mob Justice.

Ugandans in nature are a tolerant lot as can be seen with their ability to tolerate all manner of dictators and political injustices down memory lane and this can be attributed to the behavioral traits of the Baganda the ethnic group upon which this country's foundations were laid. By the time the white man came, the Baganda and other centralized societies around them were already at a level of civilization that hardly a white man of then ever described them as savages. They were welcoming to foreigners and for the most their biggest punishment was banishment from society to a culprit and even till now they take it as a big punishment to announce one of them who annoys them that he isn't a Muganda. To them telling one he isn't a Muganda and probably telling the respective clan elders to disown one is big enough punishment and will there for even allow such a person to continue living among them but despising him or her.

Very many years down the road and Ugandans who had all along been known for civility have slowly turned into savages whose day light actions are unexplainable. One only needs to sit on any TV news especially the vernacular versions and one will understand what am talking about. A mob will descend on a thief who has stolen just a single hen and in a few seconds 'send the person back to his creator'. In another case a person accused of stealing a motor bike will face a similar fate. Those who are lucky enough to escape with life will get a through beating that ends with what one is accused of stealing being wrapped around one's neck. Imagine getting a though beating from a mob and after that a pig or goat is tied around your rope and you are then matched to the police station with a whole village following behind while you get random slaps, kicks and lashes along the way! May I there for ask if such a society still deserves the tag 'civilised' on them?

Problem is one could think that the people who carry out such ferociousness are illiterates and ignoramuses who have probably not heard anything about human rights and human dignity but wait a moment..... the Presidential spokesperson a one Tamale Mirundi spends two hours everyday for five days openly advocating for mob justice. So if a Presidential press secretary can delve into such bogusness. How then



can you blame the village folk? He by the way is not the only one, even the newsmen are a mob in their own class. Rarely will they say a victim is alleged to have done something but will usually report a story in such a format that the audience will perceive the mob victim to indeed be guilty of the crime one is accused of having committed.

Which then brings me to the threat that mob justice poses to free thought. When one considers the fact that many of the re known advocates for human freedoms paid the ultimate price one then has to have reason to fear when you are a free thinker like me and my friends. Mahatma Ghandi, Abraham Lincoln, JF

Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X....the list is endless. If one has ever engaged in any debate on homosexuality on a Ugandan forum and at that that you were not for homos harassment you probably have encountered moments of fear. You just need to discuss with Ugandans homophobes on line and you will realize that if the discussion wasn't on line but at a venue somewhere such a person would foolishly try to or stab you before a viewing audience. Of course its always an intellectual discourse victory in such moments for no one ever goes nuts if one can win the argument. Its always after realizing that their views and perspective of things aren't strong and don't measure up to the opposite ones that people lose sense and go wacky and mad.

I do there for think that Humanists have an obligation to fight mob justice which is a great impediment to rational debate and reasoning for many as they fear community mob backlashes. Since we are in the information age people are going to depend less and less on hear say and seek to arrive at the truth through intellectual discourses ,arguments and discussions to determine rationale. Such a day will be fruitful to free thought only if the individual members in the community have assurance that though they may be hated and despised by their close of kin, friends and community-their personal safety is guaranteed by law and society behavior. This should be our call.

Lets Agree To Disagree,

Lukyamuzi Joseph is the Current Chairperson, HALEA.