

OPPOSING ABORTION IS NOT ENOUGH

Bill Donohue

Having good intentions is no guarantee that noble ends will be reached. This is as true for raising children as it is for crafting laws. Similarly, reaching the right conclusion is not a sufficient condition for justice. To wit: Abortion is the intentional killing of innocent human beings, and as such, opposition to it commands that we acknowledge this verity as the principal basis of our position.

No one knows this better than Amherst scholar Hadley Arkes. He articulates the right legal objections to abortion better than anyone, and that is because he does not skirt the basic biological, and moral, issues involved. His latest piece on this subject is published in the May edition of *First Things*, ably run by Rusty Reno. To read it, click [here](#).

Why is abortion wrong? It is wrong because it violates the natural law, the common sense ideas of right and wrong that are inscribed in the hearts of every human being.

I remember reading an editorial in the *New Republic*, a prominent liberal magazine, many years ago that sided with the conclusion of *Roe v. Wade*—abortion should be legal—but nonetheless objected to the Supreme Court being the deciding agent. That decision, it said, should have been made by the Congress. Fine. But if lawmakers do not base their judgments on the natural law, there is little to cheer about. That is what Arkes is getting at.

Unfortunately, many conservatives have adopted the thinking of the *New Republic*—turn the issue back to the states. What would that resolve? That's the end of our moral obligations? If abortion is morally wrong, why should we be satisfied that

some states will sanction it and others will not? Would we find it agreeable if some states allowed racial discrimination and others did not?

Arkes is a member of the Catholic League's board of advisors. He is leading a weeklong legal fellowship studying constitutional law that is geared toward young attorneys. It promises to be a blockbuster.

Sponsored by the James Wilson Institute, it will be held in Washington D.C., July 30-August 4. Law students, clerks, and recent law school graduates are especially encouraged to apply. Each fellow will receive a \$1,000 stipend to help defray travel expenses. Accommodations, meals, and entertainment will be provided.

Candidates must apply by May 3. See JWInst.org for more information or call Garrett Snedeker at (202) 822-8119.