

## IN MY OPINION

Caroline Porter

# Ignoring those cries for help

"And who should we blame for this? Hmmmm? Maybe---SATAN?"

Asked by "The Church Lady," Saturday Night Live.

Nothing angers me more than parents who abuse their children and irresponsibly put them in harms way. Angering me further is the ding-bat idea that having babies should be haphazard and unplanned, and not a result of a careful, thoughtful decision of the two parents.

Terrible accidents do happen, and no one should be blamed, but this trial of Andrea Yates, who killed her five children, has practically gotten me to the point of throwing inanimate objects at the television. I mean, here is a mother who carefully and methodically planned to kill her children and carried it out so thoroughly she chased her oldest son around the house to kill him. The visualization of this scene, the terror this poor child must have felt to have his own mother trying kill him, is almost more than I can take.

And we worry about birth control and abortions. There isn't a day that goes by that there aren't several stories in the news about parents or close adults killing children. Whole families are wiped out. These are children who have friends, brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles, teachers, people on this earth who have grown to love them. And because of a parent who never should have had a child in the first place, they lead miserable lives of mental and physical pain, which may come to a violent end.

In the case of Andrea Yates, there was only one sane parent in that family. Or maybe, none at all. When I think of the father of those five children blubbering to the news media about the deaths of his children, I get nauseated. What we have

learned is that Andrea had severe depression after the births of the last three out of five babies. She was suicidal and was treated for post partem depression.

Now, if you knew that having a baby would throw your unstable spouse into a suicidal tailspin, what common sense conclusion would you make? Well, how about not having any more babies? Anyone ever think of that? An Aunt of the father said the rest of the family was not as aware of Andrea's problems because he was so "protective." Protective? My idea of a spouse being "protective" is not continuing to have unprotected sex which most likely will result in the birth of another baby, after which the spouse will become more suicidal and increasingly mentally ill. One doesn't have to be a doctor or psychologist or even have half a brain to figure out this one.

Here is a woman whose pleas for help were ignored and pushed aside until the worst possible event could happen. Now everyone is trying to blame the doctors, the mental institution, even the female members of the family for not foreseeing this or doing something about it. Actually, the main solution was not to have any more children. Did anyone have the guts to suggest that? Or did some of our man-made religious practices get in the way?

It boils down to the fact that the life of Andrea Yates was not important enough to her husband for him to either refrain from sex or use birth control. Do you suppose he figured that out, after the death of his five children and his wife's incarceration? I doubt it. He and his family are being lauded for "supporting" Andrea after she's done such a terrible deed. I'd say that support is way-too-late.

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