A microscopic view of several embryos, likely zygotes or early-stage embryos, showing their characteristic spherical shape and internal cellular structures. The embryos are rendered in a reddish-pink hue, with some showing more defined internal patterns than others. They are scattered across the frame, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background.

EMBRYO TRANSFER:

MORALLY NEUTRAL OR INTRINSICALLY
EVIL?

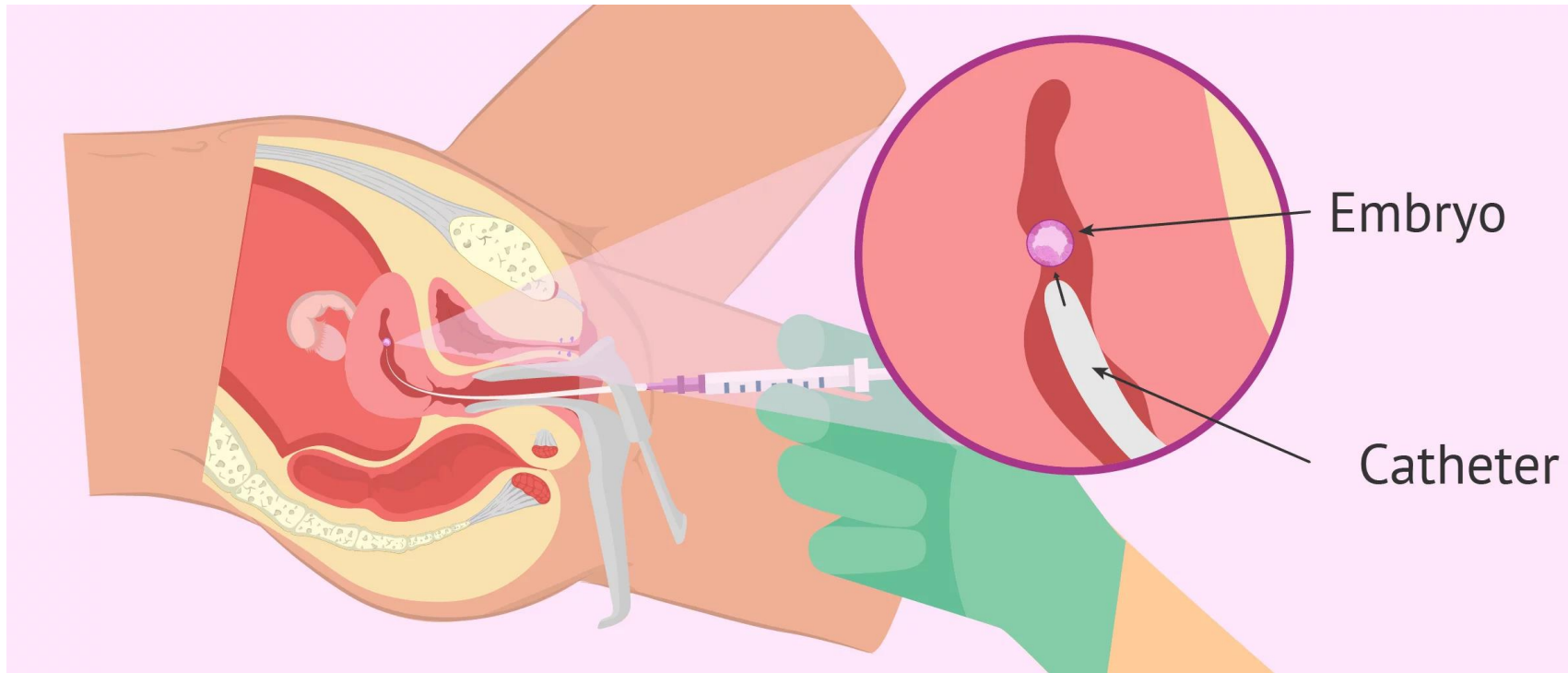
CHARLES ROBERTSON, PHD

EVERY CHILD A GIFT – DONUM VITAE (1987)

- “...the fruit of human generation, from the first moment of its existence, that is to say from the moment the zygote has formed, demands the unconditional respect that is morally due to the human being in his bodily and spiritual totality. The human being is to be respected and treated as a person from the moment of conception; and therefore from that same moment his rights as a person must be recognized, among which in the first place is the inviolable right of every innocent human being to life.” (DV I.1)
- “As with all medical interventions on patients, *one must uphold as licit procedures carried out on the human embryo which respect the life and integrity of the embryo and do not involve disproportionate risks for it but are directed towards its healing, the improvement of its condition of health, or its individual survival.*” (DV I.3)

DIGNITAS PERSONAE (2008)

- “...all techniques of heterologous artificial fertilization, as well as those techniques of homologous artificial fertilization which substitute for the conjugal act, are to be excluded. On the other hand, techniques which act as *an aid to the conjugal act and its fertility* are permitted.” (DP 11)
- “The Church moreover holds that it is ethically unacceptable to *dissociate procreation from the integrally personal context of the conjugal act*: human procreation is a personal act of a husband and wife, which is not capable of substitution. The blithe acceptance of the enormous number of abortions involved in the process of *in vitro* fertilization vividly illustrates how the replacement of the conjugal act by a technical procedure – in addition to being in contradiction with the respect that is due to procreation as something that cannot be reduced to mere reproduction – leads to a weakening of the respect owed to every human being.” (DP 16)
- “The proposal that these embryos could be put at the disposal of infertile couples as a *treatment for infertility* is not ethically acceptable for the same reasons which make artificial heterologous procreation illicit as well as any form of surrogate motherhood; this practice would also lead to other problems of a medical, psychological and legal nature. It has also been proposed, solely in order to allow human beings to be born who are otherwise condemned to destruction, that there could be a form of “*prenatal adoption*”. This proposal, praiseworthy with regard to the intention of respecting and defending human life, presents however various problems not dissimilar to those mentioned above. All things considered, it needs to be recognized that the thousands of abandoned embryos represent *a situation of injustice which in fact cannot be resolved.*” (DP 19)



THESIS: EMBRYO TRANSFER IS ALWAYS WRONG

- “From a moral point of view a truly responsible procreation vis-à-vis the unborn child must be the fruit of marriage” (DV II.A.1)
- BUT hasn't procreation already occurred?

MICHAEL HANBY – TECHNOCRACY AND THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

- “These technologically generated exceptions have occasioned a radical rethinking of the relationship between the affective and material parts of the human being; it has resulted in the invention of new natural archetypes, and the tacit reinvention of the fundamental realities of man, woman, mother, father, and child because of what we can do under lab conditions...There would have been no need to isolate an analytically discrete moment of conception, accurate to the fraction of a second, from a continuum of events that include the embrace of man and woman, the new embryo’s step by step development, his eventual birth, were it not for our ability to dissociate, analyze, intervene in, and manipulate the various stages of that process.”



<https://www.firstthings.com/media/future-of-catholicism-in-america-michael-hanby-on-technocracy>

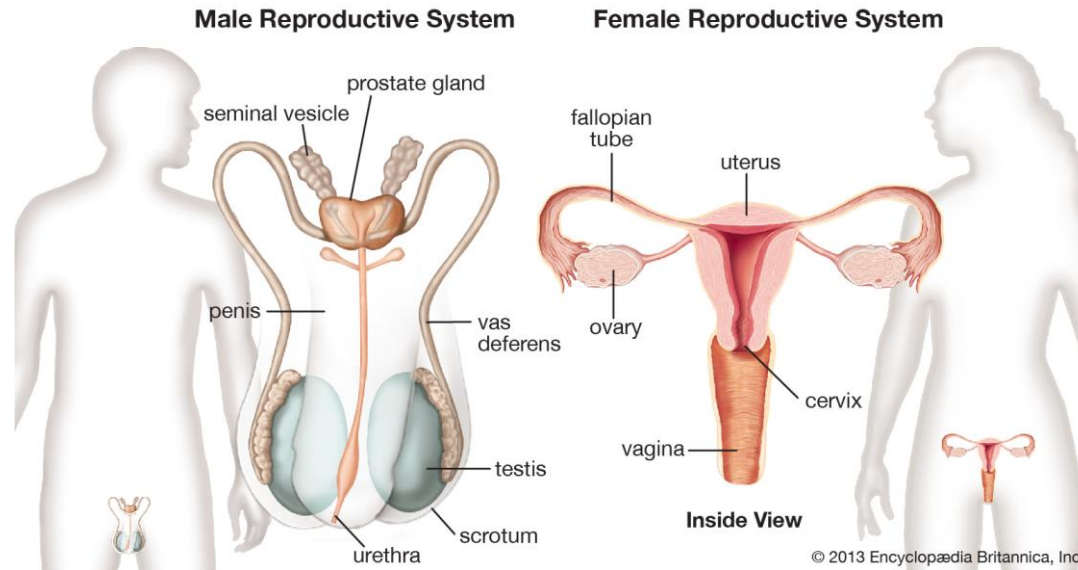
NATURE – FROM WHAT IS MORE KNOWN TO US TO WHAT IS LESS KNOWN



- Birth is what is first known to us
- Nascor, Nasci, natus – to be born
- Cognates:
 - Natura – nature
 - Nativitas – nativity/birth
 - Praegnans – pregnant, in a pre-birth state
- The Nativity of the Lord is a true Human Nativity – what is not assumed is not redeemed

ACTIVITIES AND ORGANS *PER SE* ORDERED TO BIRTH

- Deposition of sperm in vagina
 - Penis, urethra, Cowper's gland
- Traveling of semen
 - Vas deferens
- Production of seminal fluid
 - Prostate gland & seminal vesicles
- Sperm Production
 - Testes, scrotum, epididymus



- Gestation and birth
 - Womb/uterus, birth canal
- Reception of seed
 - Vagina, cervix, uterus
- Release of ova
 - Fallopian tube
- Formation of ova
 - ovaries

- We have a natural inclination to all of these activities
- That inclination is called the generative power/capacity/faculty

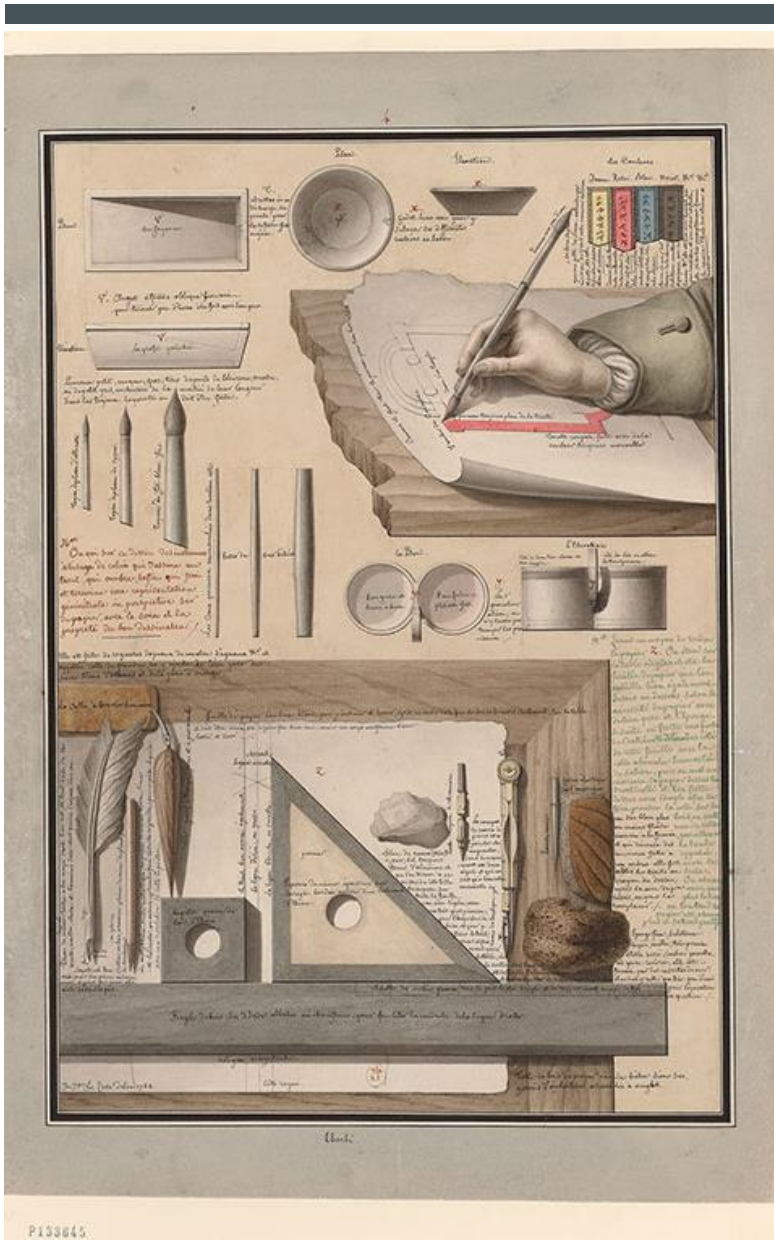
THE GOOD OF THE SPECIES IS A COMMON GOOD

- ...the act of generation is ordained to the good of the species which is a common good. But a common good is ordainable by law whereas the private good falls under the ordination of each person. And so, although in the act of the nutritive power, which is ordered to the conservation of the individual, each person can determine for himself the food suited to himself, nevertheless, to determine how the act of generation ought to be does not pertain to each, but to the legislator, whose office is to regulate concerning the propagation of children.
(*Quaestiones Disputatae de Malo*, Qu. 15, art. 2, ad 12)



DISCOVERY OF THE RULE

- “...the end for the sake of which something comes about is also said to be a principle. For the good, which has the notion of being the end in that which is to be attained, and the bad in things to be avoided, are principles of cognition and motion, just as they are in all things that act on account of an end. For in natural matters, and in moral and artificial ones, demonstrations are especially taken from the end.” *In Metaphysicorum*, lib. V, lect. 1, n. 14.
- “...some motion is called natural because nature inclines to it. But this happens in two ways. In one way, such that the whole is perfected by nature, without any operation of the apprehensive power, as to be moved upward is the natural motion of fire, and to grow is the natural motion of animals and plants. In another way, a motion to which nature inclines is called natural even though it is only perfected through apprehension, since, as has been said above, the motions of the cognitive and appetitive power are reduced to nature as into its first principle.” *Summa Theologiae*, Ia-IIae, qu. 41, art. 3c
- “...that to which nature inclines, but which is completed by means of free choice, is called natural, as the acts of the virtues are called natural; and in this way matrimony is natural, for natural reason inclines to it in two ways [i.e. to offspring by way of animal inclination and to fidelity by way of rational inclination].” *In Libros Quattuor Sententiarum*, lib. 4 d. 26 q. 1 a. 1 ad 4



THE HUMAN PURSUIT OF THE END

- The means to be employed in pursuit of the end are species-specific
- The end is mature offspring: “nature does not only intend being in the offspring, but perfect being” (*Summa Theologiae*, IIIa, Suppl., qu. 41, art. 1, ad 4)
- Maturity in humans needs long formation in the virtues, so what is per se suited to this end is morally obligatory



CERTITUDO PROLIS – CERTITUDE OF OFFSPRING

- “It is natural to men that there be in them a certain solicitude for certitude of offspring, which is necessary for this reason, that the child needs long enduring direction from the father. Therefore, whatever things impede certitude of offspring are contrary to the natural instinct of the human species.” (*Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, ch. 123, n. 5)
- Guaranteed *only* by exclusive, natural, coitus.

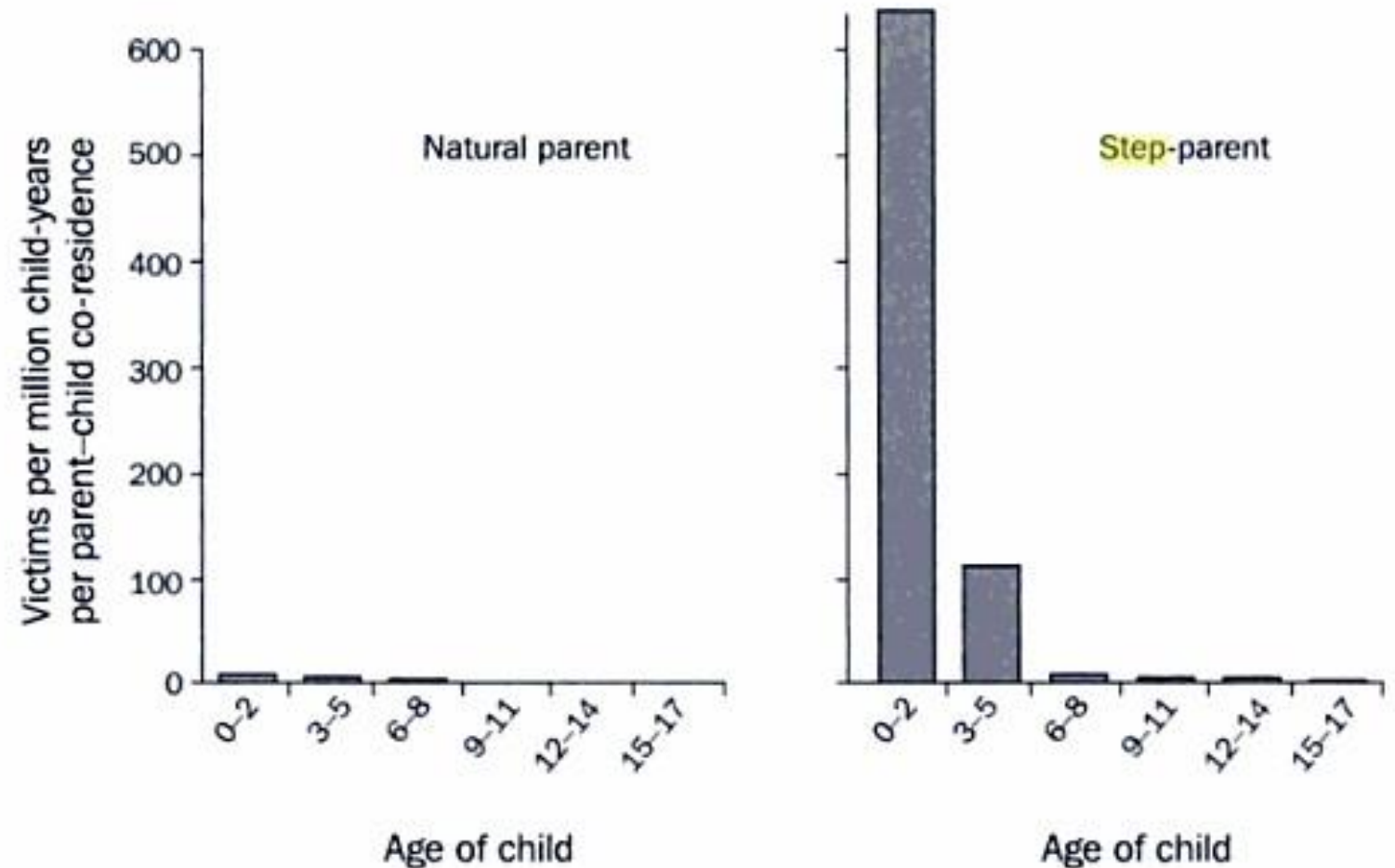


Figure 10.8 Risk of a child being killed by a **step-parent** compared with a natural parent in relation to the child's age (from Daly and Wilson, 1988a)

NATURAL SEX CAN'T BE EVIL IN ITSELF

- “Natural inclinations are in things from God who moves all things. Therefore, it is impossible that the natural inclination of some species be toward that which is evil according to itself. But there is in all perfect animals a natural inclination to carnal conjunction. Therefore it is impossible that carnal commingling be evil according to itself.” (*Summa Contra Gentiles* III, ch. 126, n. 3)
- “But the generation of man would be in vain unless there follow the due nutrition, for the generated would not perdure without this due nutrition. Therefore the emission of semen ought to be so ordered that there can follow both a suitable generation and the education of the begotten. From which it is clear that every emission of semen done in such a way that generation cannot follow is contrary to the good of man. And if this is done on purpose, it is necessary that it be a sin. But I say this about the way from which generation cannot follow according to itself, as every emission of semen apart from the natural joining of male and female; on account of which a sin of this kind is said to be contrary to nature. But if generation is not able to follow from the emission of semen by accident, as if it should happen to be the case that the woman is sterile; on account of this the act is not contrary to nature, nor is it a sin.” (*Summa Contra Gentiles* III, ch. 122, n. 4-5)





GENUS: UNLAWFUL INTERCOURSE

- Moral species taken from object of act (i. e., the “matter about which”)
 - Single person free from parental authority - Fornication
 - Person under the authority of a spouse – Adultery
 - Single person under parental authority – Seduction
 - Relative – incest
 - Unwilling Person – Rape

DONUM VITAE REVISITED

- “From a moral point of view a truly responsible procreation vis-à-vis the unborn child must be the fruit of marriage”
- “For human procreation has specific characteristics by virtue of the personal dignity of the parents and of the children: the procreation of a new person, whereby the man and the woman collaborate with the power of the Creator, must be the fruit and the sign of the mutual self-giving of the spouses, of their love and of their fidelity. The fidelity of the spouses in the unity of marriage involves reciprocal respect of their right to become a father and a mother only through each other. The child has the right to be conceived, carried in the womb, brought into the world and brought up within marriage: it is through the secure and recognized relationship to his own parents that the child can discover his own identity and achieve his own proper human development. The parents find in their child a confirmation and completion of their reciprocal self-giving: the child is the living image of their love, the permanent sign of their conjugal union, the living and indissoluble concrete expression of their paternity and maternity. By reason of the vocation and social responsibilities of the person, the good of the children and of the parents contributes to the good of civil society; the vitality and stability of society require that children come into the world within a family and that the family be firmly based on marriage. The tradition of the Church and anthropological reflection recognize in marriage and in its indissoluble unity the only setting worthy of truly responsible procreation.”



SUMMARY

We have a natural inclination to:

- Coitus
- Certitude of offspring
- Care of the child
- Cling to other parent

Use of generative power has as its morally proper object **only one's spouse**

The Rule: Spouses rightly order themselves to birth only by use of marriage (i.e. the marriage act)

This rules out any procedure by which a woman is ordered to birth apart from marital coitus

We simply do not have the authority to transgress this rule, no matter how good the result may be