

Family Education Trust

(Family and Youth Concern)

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Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill threatens to impose politically correct dogmas not in the public interest, argues national family charity

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There is a very real danger that certain professions – including healthcare – will become no-go areas for people who refuse to submit to a completely new moral code, warns the Family Education Trust.

On the eve of the House of Commons debate on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill, the Trust's director, Norman Wells, has spoken out against prescriptive legislation and policies that are increasingly squeezing people of moral and religious principle out of various caring professions and roles. Mr Wells notes:

“Over the past 40 years, we have witnessed wave after wave of permissive legislation. It has never been easier to obtain an abortion or a divorce, young people under the age of consent have no difficulty in accessing contraception in complete confidence, homosexual couples can adopt and foster children and, through the Civil Partnership Act, legal recognition has been given to same-sex relationships. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill represents a further example of permissive lawmaking with its removal of the requirement to consider the need of a child for a father before granting IVF treatment and provisions allowing for the construction of animal-human hybrids, the creation of ‘saviour-siblings’, and the increased use of embryos in stem cell research.

“But now we are beginning to see a new phenomenon. No longer content with permissive legislation and standards, our social engineers are becoming increasingly prescriptive as they seek to impose their permissive attitudes and standards on those who have so far resisted them.”

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Trustees: Arthur Cornell MEd F.Coll.P (Chairman); Betty, Lady Grantchester; Dr John Guly MB BS DMJ;
Eric Hester BA (Vice Chairman); Dr Joseph Lim BPharm, MRPharmS, PhD; Simon J Ling MA FCA (Hon Treasurer);
Mrs Valerie Riches (Founder President); Dr Trevor Stammers BSc FRCGP; Robert Whelan MA Director: Norman Wells FRSA

Sponsors: Professor John Bonnar MA MD FRCOG; The Viscountess Brentford OBE; Peter Dawson OBE BSc FRSA;
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In the course of tomorrow's Commons debate, Liberal Democrat MP and honorary associate of the National Secular Society, Evan Harris, will be proposing an amendment to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill aimed at requiring all doctors and pharmacists to prescribe or provide the full range of contraceptives and emergency hormonal birth control. It is the intention of the amendment that those who are unable in good conscience to facilitate the provision of treatment that has the potential to operate after conception has occurred should be presented with a stark choice: act against your conscience or seek alternative employment elsewhere.

In his article, published in the latest issue of the Family Education Trust's quarterly periodical, Mr Wells cites cases where people have been forced out of business and denied the opportunity to serve as magistrates or foster carers simply because they are unable in good conscience to subscribe to new politically correct dogmas. Mr Wells argues:

“To put it at its simplest, for four decades, we have tolerated, permitted and even promoted policies that cause harm, but until recently no one has been forced to do anything against his or her conscience. In the past we have been content to call good what centuries of Judaeo-Christian influence has regarded as evil; but now we are beginning to call evil what has historically been recognised as good. Not only are we embracing a new morality, but increasingly we are seeking to impose it by force of law.

“And what are the consequences of this? Is our permissive-turned-prescriptive approach contributing to a more caring and compassionate society? Not at all. We desperately need more public-spirited people to care for the most needy and vulnerable, yet these are the very people we are currently in danger of turning away when we place unacceptable limits on the exercise of freedom of conscience.”

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Family Education Trust is an independent educational charity, without any religious or political affiliations, committed to promoting stable family life and the welfare of children and young people.

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