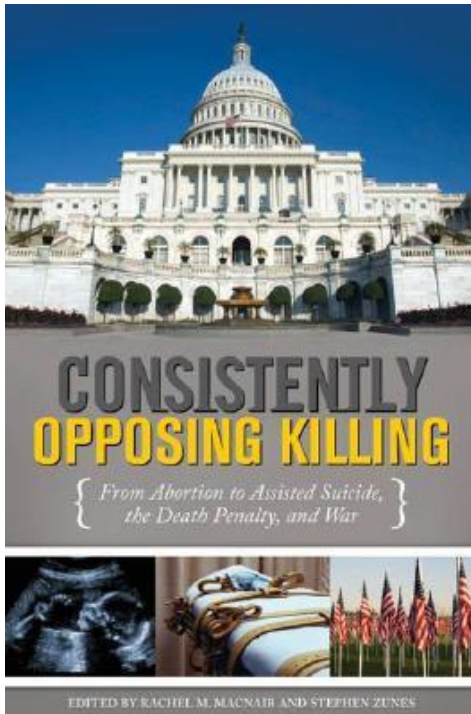




2008 Activities Report

In 2008, Consistent Life worked energetically to change the mind of the community to a consistent ethic of respect for human life. We have seen a great positive change, with widespread new awareness of the consistent life ethic vision.

Publications



A big step forward was the publication of *Consistently Opposing Killing*, edited by Consistent Life Vice-President Rachel MacNair and consistent life supporter Stephen Zunes. This remarkable collection has articles by such consistent life ethic luminaries as Mary Meehan, Nat Hentoff, Carol Crossed, Mary Krane Derr and James Kelly, as well as by MacNair and Zunes.

Anti-death penalty activist Sr. Helen Prejean said of this book:

The societal wounds of racism, poverty, and a penchant for using violence to address problems are intimately connected to the death penalty, to war, to the killing of the old and demented, and to the killing of children, unborn and born. If more people were familiar with the consistent life ethic, as expounded in this book, then the voice of all unseen vulnerable people would be better heard.

This book joins other fine books by MacNair that advocate for the consistent life ethic, including *Perpetration-Induced Traumatic Stress: The Psychological Consequences of Killing*, *Working for Peace*, and *The Psychology of Peace*. All these have contributed to the awareness of the consistent life ethic in the academic and the popular mind.

The Feminism and Nonviolence Studies Association announced the publication of another book by MacNair, *Achieving Peace in the Abortion War*. Work on the book was finished in 2008. It was released in January 2009.

Academia and Scholarship

A major effort by Dr. MacNair was dealing with the American Psychological Association's Task Force on Mental Health and Abortion. The APA appointed task force members who were strong pro-abortion advocates with

no anti-abortion counter-balance, a bias which showed in the final report.

Consistent Life sent letters of concern to the entire APA Council, and encouraged others to do the same; the letters were acknowledged at the Council meeting which approved the report. Though the bias still remained, Dr. MacNair did serve as 1 of 19 academic reviewers for the first draft and many of her suggestions were in fact taken into account in the final report. Consistent Life has a unique perspective that is helpful to audiences such as this.

IISA

Consistent Life has a research arm, the Institute for Integrated Social Analysis (IISA), directed by Dr. Rachel MacNair. The purpose of IISA is to increase the quantity and quality of research on matters pertaining to the consistent life ethic and the connections between issues of violence from abortion and euthanasia to the death penalty and war.

In 2008, IISA carried out *The Heated Debates Survey*, in which respondents rated five arguments on war, the death penalty and abortion. There were 352 respondents, well distributed by gender, age and views. To sum up: the consistent life argument helped move pro-choice peace people and pro-life war supporters to more opposition to abortion and war, respectively. Hence, our argument that the ethic strengthens the case rather than watering it down finds empirical validation for those cases.

Gatherings and Conferences

Consistent Life has been a presence, advocating for our vision, at a

variety of conferences and gatherings, promoting peace and justice issues among prolife folks, and respect for life among peace and justice folks, and the consistent life ethic to all.

Board members and supporters of Consistent Life took part in many events during the year. Our message has great visibility now with the striking table display and table runner, new in 2008, promoting our vision. The table displays, distribution of printed materials and our ads in programs and packets have presented the consistent life ethic to many thousands of people.



CL table-top display and table runner

The following are some events in which CL was represented:

January

- President Bill Samuel and Tony Masalonis carried the consistent life

banner at the March for Life in Washington, DC.

- We had fliers in the packets of both the Students for Life of America Conference and the Cardinal O'Connor Conference on Life in DC near the time of the March for Life.
- Dr. Richard Stith participated in a meeting at a Congress member's office on January 22 with the Parliamentary Network for Critical Issues (a group that monitors human rights abroad). He also joined the D.C. March for Life and the Democrats for Life of America breakfast.
- Ross Heckmann participated in the West Coast Walk for Life, with a Consistent Life Table at the Walk's Info Faire.
- Mary Rider and her family carried consistent life ethic signs and put out flyers and website information. at the North Carolina March for Life.

March

Bill Samuel took part in the Evangelicals for Social Action conference, *The Scandal of Evangelical Politics – Toward a Biblical Agenda*, in Wynnewood, PA, where he staffed a CL table.

April

Rachel MacNair staffed a table and distributed CL materials at the 4th Annual Peace and Justice Expo in Omaha, NE.

May 30-June 1

Dr. Rachel MacNair and Dr. Richard Stith took part in the University Faculty for Life Conference at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI. Both have been powerful advocates for the consistent life ethic in the university and academic areas.

July

- Carol Crossed attended the *Convention for the Common Good* in Philadelphia organized by CL member group Pax Christi and other groups.
- Ross Heckmann staffed a combination Consistent Life/Democrats for Life booth at the 3rd Annual National Latino Conference.

August

Dr. Richard Stith advocated for CLE at a meeting with pro-life leaders from all Central American countries.

September



Rachel MacNair (with *Consistently Opposing Killing* co-editor Stephen Zunes) speaking at the Peace and Justice Studies Association *Building Cultures of Peace* conference in Portland, OR.

Also in September, we had a full-page ad in the program of Fellowship of Reconciliation's *Festival of Peace* in Nyack, NY.

November

- Rachel MacNair took part in the Call to Action Conference in Milwaukee, WI. Dr. MacNair reported that she had many instant converts to the consistent life ethic, and that people are more ready to hear us.
- Mary Rider joined the School of the Americas Watch, *Vigil and Direct Action*, where she and her family

carried Consistent Life Ethic Signs and put out flyers and website information on our table. So many were taken that she had to reproduce more.

Media Work

- We ran full page ads in *The Progressive* and *Sojourners* on the book *Consistently Opposing Killing*, with quotes from such writers as Mary Meehan, Nat Hentoff, Scott Rains and Daphne de Jong.
- Board member Richard Stith has spoken on the consistent life ethic on radio shows, including one on December 15 on WVLP, and has advocated on blogs, such as *The Mirror of Justice*.
- Vice President Rachel MacNair did two radio shows in the spring of 2008, one defending the anti-abortion view to an anti-war host and one defending the anti-war and anti-death penalty view to an anti-abortion host.

Transition Document

The Obama-Biden Transition Team asked for input from individuals and groups. Consistent Life responded with a short paper sent to the Team presenting a number of policy suggestions.

We asked that the Obama-Biden Administration consider this question when reviewing options for policies in all areas: Would this policy enhance the dignity, affirm the worth and increase

the well-being of humans at all stages of life and in all circumstances? Specific ideas included: abolish the death penalty, oppose forced abortions, support women having children, and much more. You can read this document on our website.

Civil Disobedience

In August, 2008, Board member Mary Rider went joyfully to jail for 15 days after being sentenced for praying during a North Carolina execution. She considered that sentence an honor. Her husband and daughters had previously been arrested in an anti-torture demonstration.

Board member Scott-Schaeffer-Duffy, was arrested at the Federal Building for praying for an end to the Iraq War. His wife Claire was arrested in January for a witness at the Supreme Court against torture.

Susan B. Anthony Birthplace

In 2006, Board member Carol Crossed purchased the house in which Susan B. Anthony was born. In 2008, the work of renovation and preservation was finished. The house will now be a museum dedicated to Anthony. The house has collected a remarkable array of Anthony's work, including the most complete file of her publication, *The Revolution*. The house will set forth her holistic view of human rights, which included her anti-slavery views and her support for the rights of the unborn.



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