

from religious addiction. Also, counselors could be certified as "Humanist, Moral, and Ethical Counselors" who can serve a large portion of society that is struggling with these issues. Humanist counselors would be legally entitled to deal with these issues just like any member of the clergy. As Wendell Watters points out in *Deadly Doctrine*, "As a result of this cautious attitude toward clinical implications of their theoretical approaches, health clinicians often function like boxers wearing straightjackets. They pretend that they are concerned only with health and not with ethical belief systems, whereas in

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**"One can have a degree in psychology and still be irrational, superstitious, and unaware of one's own conditioning."**

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reality, most of the interventions they make are value-laden." If not most, then certainly many of these mental health clinicians are religious and are promoting the very pathology that is described in *Deadly Doctrine*.

The Humanist Moral and Ethical Counselor would carve out a new

legal niche, where at least 10 to 15 percent or more of the population can have an empathic and rational ear from a humanistic worldview. I can't think of another place that would be safe and sane to which clients can turn when confronted with religious and nonreligious moral dilemmas.

If we go in this direction, we can expand the humanist movement.

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## And Now—Psychiatric Wards for Born-Again Christians Only

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### Edmund D. Cohen

From 1988 until August 1992, one could—if one took the time to watch—see the tragic consequences of deep indoctrination in fundamentalist Christianity unfold on Pat Robertson's "The 700 Club." Sheila Walsh Miller, a literate, witty, impeccably groomed, and very attractive Scottish woman in her early thirties, was Robertson's "700 Club" co-hostess and the hostess of her own half-hour talk show, "Heart to Heart." These programs aired "back to back" every Monday through Friday morning on the Family Channel. Miller thought herself called to a "ministry of transparency," and often disclosed some of the most intimate details of her travails leading the Christian life. "Heart to Heart" was an especially fascinating window on the conservative church subculture, replete with interviews with the authors of the latest Christian books and performances by the latest Gospel rock musicians. Miller, herself, was a recognized Gospel rock star. Her singing could easily be mistaken for Enya. Frank Zappa once told me that he admired Miller's fine musicianship very much.

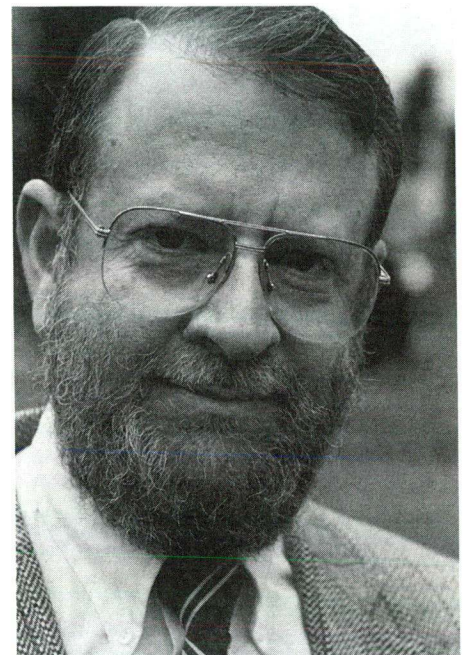
Finally, without an explanation

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**"A specialized, parochial, mental health treatment industry for the twice-born has arisen. It has become the most active and fastest developing segment of the contemporary conservative church subculture. Among born-again all over North America, the traditional coping strategies of denial, secrecy, and keeping up a good front are collapsing."**

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Miller disappeared from "The 700 Club" for several weeks, and her talk show went into reruns. On October 21, 1992, Robertson took a few minutes to explain that Miller had become "physically and emotionally exhausted," that she was under a physician's care, and that she would be gone for "a protracted length of time." He offered a prayer for Miller to be "healed in body, mind and spirit" and announced that the following Monday "Heart to Heart" would be replaced by another show.



On November 2, 1992, Miller reappeared on "The 700 Club"—not as co-hostess but as "special guest." Then the "ministry of transparency" took a horrendous turn, as Miller described what had happened:

Miller: It's not quite been R and R. It's been kind of more intense than that, and probably more serious than that. I—I think for about a year I knew that I was really in trouble. I remember last New Year's Eve saying to Norman [her husband, an aggressive Christian music promoter], "If I make it through this next year, and I'm still standing at the end of it, I'll be amazed." And I don't think he quite knew what to make of that. It was more an internal thing. I felt like I was really struggling. And in July of this year, it just all

fell apart.

Robertson: What were you struggling [with]—was it the past, was it the terrible schedule of concerts?

Miller: I think it was everything. . . . It was things I'd never dealt with in the past, to do with my father. It was marital issues that I had never resolved, and it was the ridiculous schedule, so that you never deal with anything. You just keep going, and you stay busy, and you help everybody else and you never deal with what's going on in your own life. But it all came to a head . . . and I didn't know where to go for help. . . . I did some really bizarre things . . . and in July, I left my home. I left my husband. And the pressure and strain of that—of the guilt, of feeling like I'd let the Christian community down. You know . . . when you've talked about marriage, and then your own crumbles—how can you deal with the shame of that?

So, I had a breakdown, and I ended up in a Christian clinic—for a month. And it was kind of crazy, to go from one day being on "The 700 Club," where they do your hair nice, and your make-up and clothes, to checking into what effectively was a psychiatric ward, where they took my hair dryer and my make-up away—you know—in case I hurt myself—where I wandered around in a bathrobe—where I was reduced to nothing. And yet, in the midst of my darkness—I discovered God loved me! . . .

And I remember one of the doctors—it was a Christian place—and he said to me, "Isn't it like God, that he would bring you to prison to set you free?"

This was the last live appearance of Sheila Walsh Miller on "The 700 Club," where problems like her own and worse are purportedly healed—instantly and permanently—by supernatural intervention every day.

Stories like Miller's have become so commonplace that a specialized, parochial, mental health treatment industry for the twice-born has arisen. It has become the most active and fastest developing segment of the contemporary conservative church subculture. Among born-again all over North America, the traditional coping strategies of denial, secrecy, and keeping up a good front are collapsing. Instead, the widespread prevalence of substance abuse, mental disorders, sexual deviance,<sup>1</sup> etc. in the pews—long brewing beneath the sur-

face—is now being forced out into the open. The same psychological effects that made the conservative church movement strong and cohesive during the seventies and eighties now so overtax those who are caught up in it that a breaking point has been reached.

Until recent years, only the theologically least conservative in any given church were interested in mental health. Church-related mental health materials consisted merely of repackaged secular psychology (usually a few years out of date), with no more than lip-service paid to Christian theology.<sup>2</sup>

In the seventies, approaches to mental health treatment embodying fundamentalist theology came to the fore. Calvinist purists who believed their own rhetoric too well began the biblical or "nouthetic"<sup>3</sup> counseling movement, rigorously applying the Bible's devotional instructions to personal counseling.<sup>4</sup> Since such purists regard science as ultimately irrelevant to the Bible's view of humankind, the biblical counseling movement rejected everything about the secular mental health professions, and never sought rapprochement with psychiatrists or psychologists. So far as biblical counselors are concerned, psychological problems are spiritual problems, and if a troubled individual can only be led to a closer, more obedient relationship with Jesus, everything else will come right.

In my own research on the born-again, I found out that behind their facade of euphoric calm, people marinated in the Bible and surrounded by the born-again church subculture tend to be *depressed*, and suffer from a sort of *generalized emotional distress* partaking of anxiety, worry, and fear. The way that Bible indoctrination brings about depression is complex. To put it in the smallest possible nutshell: for the prescribed prayer and devotions to achieve their intended altered state of mind, much effort must be expended to suppress thoughts and feelings considered inappropriate for a saved person. Pro-social or neutral interests and desires that conflict with the religious agenda come to arouse as much guilt as genuinely anti-social ones for the Bible-believer. By thwarting the normal

process of valuing people and things—of making emotional investments in them—by laboring to constitute an imaginary and fictitious being as the primary recipient of his or her affections—the Bible-believer makes himself or herself depressed. Being constantly at war with one's natural and normal emotions wears a person out.

The causes of the generalized emotional distress, however, are obvious, and just what people commonly suppose they are. That distress is grounded in salvation doubt and nagging fears about what will happen after death.<sup>5</sup>

Variations of biblical counseling pervaded the born-again movement in the seventies and early eighties. All but the smallest conservative church bodies and parachurch ministries developed their own materials to teach biblical counseling.

Alternative approaches that syncretistically mix contemporary mental health lore with born-again theology also developed and progressed in the seventies and eighties. These have surged ahead in the last ten years, largely displacing biblical counseling. They now constitute the born-again movement's leading edge.

One of the born-again's brightest rising stars—indeed, the only up-and-coming high profile born-again leader who does not project an outrightly disreputable or bumpkinish image—Christian psychologist James C. Dobson, Jr., Ph.D., is a practitioner of such a mixed approach.<sup>6</sup> Dobson's "Focus on the Family" ministry disseminates his books on child-rearing and other mental hygiene topics, as well as his syndicated radio programs, broadcast on hundreds of Christian radio stations. Dobson and the Reagan-era White House domestic advisor Gary L. Bauer have built Family Research Council, once an obscure conservative "think tank," into a major Washington lobby promoting the stock Religious Right agenda.

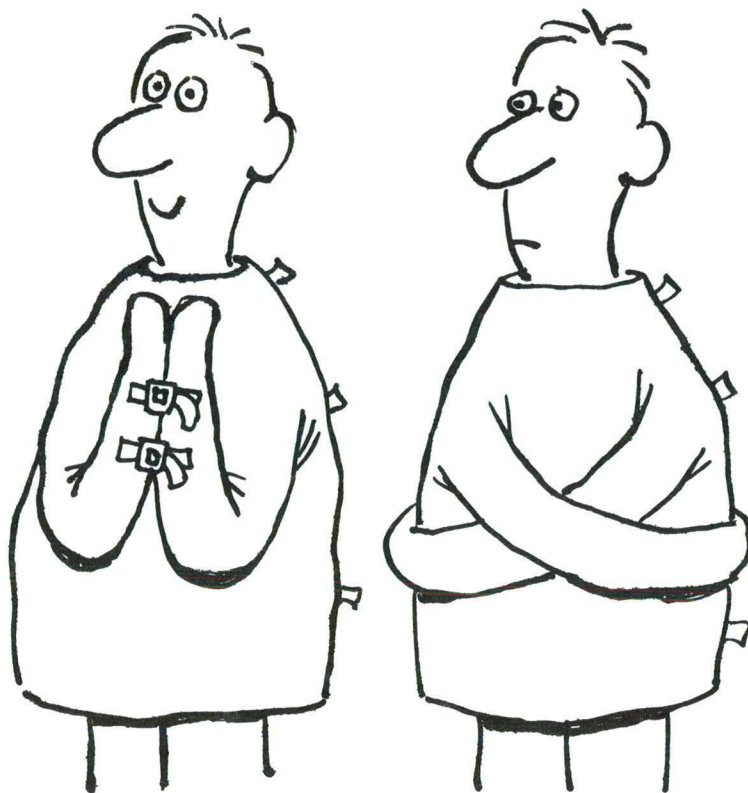
Two disturbing themes recur with Dobson. The first involves his position as the leading critic of permissiveness and proponent of spanking in child-rearing. If one reads Dobson's books<sup>7</sup> in isolation, one finds psychological insights taken from B. F. Skinner and E. L. Thorndike. Dobson's much criticized

advice on squelching children's undesired behavior by force is tempered by common sense exhortations to have patience and respect. There is nothing particularly wrong with it, the way it reads on paper.

One must see and hear Dobson, as well as read him, to get the true picture. What is wrong comes through clearly in the videotape, "The Strong Willed Child: Shaping the Will Without Breaking the Spirit."<sup>8</sup> In it, Dobson spoke to a large crowd assembled in a sports arena. The nervous laughter, cheers, and applause greeting Dobson's graphic descriptions of spanking—not to mention the time when his mother beat him with a girdle laden with metal stays and garter hardware—convey a message radically different from his mere words. He played to his fans' inordinate preoccupation with controlling their children, and their exaggerated fears of the breakthrough of impulses in their children and themselves. The atmosphere was laced with hysteria—mean-spirited bordering on sadistic—and Dobson worked the crowd like the consummate mixed-message demagogue that he is.<sup>9</sup>

The other recurring theme is the aggressive intellectual dishonesty with which Dobson pursues the question of whether or not pornography causes sex crimes. In 1985, then-Attorney General Edwin Meese convened a presidential pornography commission stacked with right-wingers to obtain a result different from the earlier Nixon-era presidential commission that found no causal connection between pornography and sex crime. Dobson and the other commissioners—including fellow sexual purity crusader Father Bruce Ritter of Covenant House—railroaded the desired conclusion through, despite the obvious failure of the evidence to support it.<sup>10</sup>

Just before serial sex murderer Theodore Bundy was executed in January 1989, he sat for a videotaped interview with Dobson. The handsome, manipulative psychopath—so skilled at telling his interlocutor whatever he or she wanted to hear—recited how the pornography he had consumed compelled him to commit his crimes. After all, favorable press might have gotten Bundy a reprieve. In Bundy's considered opinion, none of his woes would ever



*Don  
Dobson*

have occurred if society had just kept the pornography away from him. Dobson mounted a publicity campaign, touting this as proof of the elusive causal connection. The episode got Dobson the first seriously negative press of his career, and diminished contributions to *Focus on the Family* for a time.<sup>11</sup>

By far the most striking contemporary development within the born-again Christian subculture is the rise to prominence of fundamentalist Christian psychiatric inpatient programs. The first of these was Palmdale (California) General Hospital, where both Jim and Tammy Bakker were treated in 1977.<sup>12</sup> Three such programs, Minirth-Meier Clinics, Rapha, and New Life Treatment Centers, have grown rapidly into large, multi-state health care businesses. These have become major influences on the larger conservative church subculture through books and videotape teaching packages. It is common for the latest book in Thomas Nelson Publishers' Minirth-Meier Series, or the latest book by Robert S. McGee, founder of Rapha, or Stephen Arterburn, chairman and CEO of New Life Treatment Centers,

to be a Christian bookstore bestseller.<sup>13</sup>

When I began assembling literature from these programs, I found in them an unexpected and crucial validation of my own work. The born-again treatment providers' renditions of the psychological disorders they treat corresponded exactly to my rendition of psychological disorders Bible indoctrination fosters. Depression, which had been at the top of my list, was also at the top of all of theirs. Near the top were "worry," "stress," and "anxiety," along with the prevalent culture-related problems, such as substance abuse, eating disorders, incest recovery, PTSD, etc.<sup>14</sup>

The most influential of the programs is Rapha, with a chain of twenty treatment centers and hospital programs in Texas, Georgia, and Florida, and plans are to rapidly expand into all principal U.S. population centers. In the first five years after its founding in 1985, Rapha treated more than seven thousand patients. Its television commercials and "Rapha Hour" radio program leave no doubt that inpatient hospitalization paid for by health insurance is the main product it is organized to sell. In dulcet

tones, Pat Boone or Ben Kinchlow encourage “all who are heavy laden” to call Rapha’s 800 telephone number for more information. The radio program, begun in January 1990 and aired primarily in markets where Rapha facilities are in operation or being organized, consists of discussions with Rapha’s professionals, interviews with satisfied former patients sounding suspiciously like “testimonials,” and listener call-ins. The program is essentially a full-hour “infomercial,” promoting inpatient treatment and instructional materials.

The ironies surrounding Rapha begin with its name. Early in any presentation, Rapha representatives proudly define the biblical Hebrew verb *rapha*, “to heal,” as in Exodus 15:26, “the Lord that healeth thee.” However they never bring up the homophonous Hebrew noun, *rapha*, “giant” or “fearful one.”<sup>15</sup>

The clients of Rapha, Minirth-Meier, and New Life would no doubt be chagrined to find out how much of their parlance is lifted directly from secular mental health sources. There is much talk about “self-esteem,”<sup>16</sup> “addiction,” “co-dependency,” and “dysfunctional families.” The overall approach closely resembles Aaron T. Beck’s Cognitive Therapy. Psychological and theological jargon are mixed indiscriminately, with the evident aim of ameliorating the most severe results of Bible indoctrination just enough so that the overall structure can remain standing. These programs, like the born-again subculture generally, put out an unending stream of invective against “humanists,” “secularists,” and “liberal intellectuals.”<sup>17</sup> That makes their resort to distinctively secular and humanistic methods, and their finessing that crucial point with their followers, ironic.

The many instructional books generated by these three programs are contrived to appear scholarly by including elaborate references to theological sources, while failing to credit the secular sources for their key elements.<sup>18</sup> Throughout this literature, willful omission of appropriate references to “secularist” or “humanist” sources runs rampant. The main gimmick simply consists of administering secular mental health treatment, but attributing any

beneficial result to the religious devotions of born-again Christianity. The religious aspect of these programs takes all the credit if anyone gets better, when the borrowings from the despised secularists—snuck in through the back door—are undoubtedly the active ingredients. If that were not true, then biblical counseling would have been a successful approach, and nothing more would have been needed.

Academic dishonesty aside, the first impression these programs’ materials make is one of the commendable candor as to the prevalence of substance abuse and mental disorders among the faithful. By incorporating popular psychology, conservative Christianity is made to seem very open-minded and mainstream. The hidden implications were slow to dawn on me. But on reflection—particularly about the drastic departure from past

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**“The mixing of biblical devotions and psychology presents the same problems as the mixing of Genesis and paleontology to get so-called creation science.”**

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practice these innovations represent—I see that fundamentalist leaders must surely be experiencing extreme turmoil in their ranks to be driven to ventilate these ills so openly. The resounding reception the speakers, books, and tapes from these programs have received in church circles is a symptom of acute needs unsatisfied by traditional religious devotions.

All the while, Christian leaders remain too full of their own rhetoric to understand how fragile their movement really is, and how limited in its ability to withstand such candor. For the average pew-sitter, church is really an attempt to turn carefully managed happy appearances into reality through wishful thinking. The illusion that born-again Christians have an inner strength, a peace, and a joy—that their spiritual and psychological ills, if not their physical ones, are supernaturally healed—has been absolutely crucial in the spread of the born-again movement in recent years. For the conservative church to begin portraying itself as so full of mental

health problems that it needs its own dedicated psychiatric treatment infrastructure is an obvious nonstarter when it comes to attracting unchurched people to get involved in church!<sup>19</sup> Also, the notion that born-again Christianity is a complete, self-sufficient *Weltanschauung* has been pivotal to the born-again resurgence of the 1970s and 1980s. The need for additional, imported material to help compensate for something lacking, erodes that cherished premise.

Steven Arterburn and Jack Felton<sup>20</sup> provide a fascinating and surprisingly unguarded look into the contemporary born-again mental health scene in *Toxic Faith: Understanding and Overcoming Religious Addiction*.<sup>21</sup> The title plainly implies a skeptical book—perhaps along the lines of *Deadly Doctrine: Health, Illness and Christian God-Talk* by Wendell W. Watters. Instead, Arterburn and Felton attempt to explain away the myriad terrible individual outcomes of involvement in born-again churches as an addiction to excessive and compulsive church participation. At one point, they label it as “churchaholism.”<sup>22</sup> They explain:

When people are admitted into New Life Treatment Centers, they rarely identify their problem as religious addiction. They come to us depressed, anxious, or with some other major dependency that has gained control of their lives. As we work with them, we often find that below the presenting problems are layers of family dysfunction, toxic faith and religious addiction.<sup>23</sup>

Arterburn and Felton tell anecdote after anecdote as bizarre and tragicomic as the ones in Austin Miles’s *Don’t Call Me Brother*.<sup>24</sup> At the end of *Toxic Faith* there is a twelve-step program for curing “religious addiction,” and a twenty-question true-false test, measuring whether or not one is a “religious addict.” If one answers three or more of the questions “yes,” then one should call the included 800 phone number to enroll in the nearest New Life Treatment Center.

If one rejects their dogmatic premise that biblical doctrine and devotions cannot be injurious, Arterburn and Felton’s book becomes an unwitting

indictment of born-again living. They seem oblivious to their method's far-reaching implications. By making contemporary mental health lore the controlling criterion, having that lore determine what the Bible demands or does not demand from born-again believers, the basic principle of trusting and obeying the Bible is reduced to a farce. For example, Arterburn writes:

In working with people in need of psychiatric care, I have seen some very depressed mothers who let their children be abused because they didn't think they could counter the head of the house. It was too late and their children had been badly hurt before they realized that was not what God wanted. The realization that they could have done something to stop the abuse produced severe depression and emotional turmoil. Their desire to be submissive was poisonous to themselves and to their families. Their faith was also destroyed because they questioned how God could allow those things to happen.<sup>25</sup>

Arterburn takes very unfundamentalist liberties with Scripture by claiming ". . . that was not what God wanted." This is a subject where the Bible is completely unequivocal. Mere danger that one's children or oneself may be traumatized, maimed, or killed by a violent husband is no proper biblical ground for the believing wife to leave her husband or to disobey him.<sup>26</sup> Any other conclusion simply stretches the biblical language beyond its elastic limit. The supposed unimportance of earthly life and the steadfastness commanded of the Christian in expecting relief in the afterlife alone form the context of that Draconian biblical principle, ". . . [L]ean not unto thine own understanding. . ."<sup>27</sup>

Ultimately, the new born-again Christian mental health professionals are in the business of granting dispensations—indulgences—from the many Bible teachings that are too formidable for contemporary people and that make the strain of being a modern born-again too great. If defeating and disabling the more detrimental effects of born-again doctrine and devotions is good, then abandoning those doctrines and devotions altogether—sweeping

aside the phony theological issues so that the real personal and ethical issues could be focused on more clearly—would be even better. Within the limitations of the born-again church subculture, the incomplete liberalization offered by the born-again mental health professionals is better than nothing.

Although a fascinating constitutional case will inevitably come out of the abuse of civil commitment for mental health treatment in order to conduct what amount to court-enforced religious programmings, my concern is not along church and state lines. Also, I have seen no evidence that the treatment administered by the new born-again Christian mental health professionals is any less good than that of their mainstream counterparts. I perceive no horror story emerging about the conduct of new born-again Christian mental health professionals. Nevertheless, there are compelling reasons for taking a strong stand against them. I am afraid that, after the born-again churches have taken those hapless people's money out of one pocket in exchange for making them sick, these programs take more out of the other pocket—and the pockets of the rest of us as well, indirectly, through the health insurers—to undo in part what the churches have done. Also, to a naïve believer, a practitioner clothed in the authority of medical science and supernaturalistic antiscience at once is a highly overbearing (and historically unprecedented) authority figure. That calls into question the ordinary believer's ability to give informed consent to anything in such a setting. The checks and balances that operate in the mainstream mental health setting are missing in the church-anointed one.

Mainstream mental health professionals are understandably slow to take a position against these new players, who belong to the same professional societies as they do, are licensed by the same governmental authorities, apply to the same insurers for payment, and who appear to be doing no immediate harm. But there is a fundamental issue about the nature of psychiatry and psychology that will eventually have to be joined. The mixing of biblical devotions and psychology presents the same problems as the mixing of Genesis and paleon-

tology to get so-called creation science. The aspiration of improving the mental health disciplines' scientific basis goes out the window if such a conglomeration of natural science and supernaturalistic antiscience is considered tolerable. The credibility of the mainstream professionals involved suffers if they thoughtlessly welcome as equals practitioners who think it a high, moral virtue to ignore scientific data when it disagrees with religious doctrine. Where is the outcry that such a subversion ought to elicit from leading psychiatrists and psychologists?

## Notes

1. Sheila Walsh Miller often said that to her personal knowledge, sexual deviance of every kind is rampant in the churches she frequents. Her constant presentation of the "testimonies" of people who have been sexually victimized within their church communities had the effect of desensitization, building up the viewers' ability to be confronted with such horrors and not have it dawn on them that these might signal something fundamentally amiss with their churchly way of life.

On the February 12, 1990, "Heart to Heart," Miller told the following story: "I have a friend—a Christian businessman [whom] I respect tremendously—and he joined Sex Addicts Anonymous because he needed help. And he said to me [that] when he went along, he expected it all to be old men with raincoats. A large percentage of the people there were Christian businessmen. Why are we, as a church, so messed up?"

On the April 24, 1990, "Heart to Heart," Miller told of her friend who is an executive of a hotel chain that was host to a convention of Christian businessmen, and found that the attendees to that convention watched far more extra-cost "late-night, steamy movies" than regular business travelers did. That agrees with a report in *Reason*, October 1989, p. 20: "A survey of hotel bills from last year's National Religious Broadcasters Association convention found that 80 percent of them watched an X-rated movie in the privacy of their rooms. Just doing a little research on the enemy, we suppose."

2. The well-known, nominally evangelical doctoral programs in Clinical Psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary and Biola University were founded on the premise that the Bible and secular psychology could be reconciled, or "integrated." The psychological "integrationists" have never been a major influence in the larger born-again subculture. The books of Clyde Narramore and the counseling and inpatient programs sponsored by Robert Schuller Ministries also exemplify a theologically "minimalist" approach.

3. After the New Testament Greek word, *noutheteo*, to admonish or warn.

4. Biblical counseling first appeared in the form of John Broger's "Self-Confrontation" training program. The standard work is Jay E. Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.,

1970).

Bill Gothard's Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts is a parallel development. Gothard holds massive week-long "seminars" in large auditoria and sports arenas in every major population area at least once each year. Because Gothard wisely avoids publicity outside born-again circles, he is little known to the general public. But he is every bit as important a figure within the movement as Jerry Falwell or Pat Robertson.

5. The cause is not a mystery to the person suffering from it, as is the case in phobias. The believer merely becomes increasingly critical of himself or herself, for not being able to be happy despite this morbid preoccupation. Mainstream mental health professionals, in their reticence about discussing religion with their patients, often misdiagnose the born-again's fearfulness as phobia.

6. On Dobson's rise to national prominence, see Laura Sessions Stepp, "The Empire Built on Family and Faith," *The Washington Post*, August 8, 1990, p. C1; Peter Steinfeld, "Why Psychologist Without a Pulpit Is Called Religious Right's New Star," *The New York Times*, June 5, 1990, p. A22; also Robert Jay Lifton and Charles B. Stozier, "Waiting for Armageddon," *The New York Times Book Review*, August 12, 1990, p. 1. In 1991, Dobson moved his base of operations to Colorado Springs, Colorado, where more than fifty right-wing Christian organizations have their headquarters. These organizations combined to campaign for the passage of the anti-gay Amendment 2, in 1992. An ugly atmosphere of divisiveness and hostility in the local community has resulted. See Steve Rabey, "Focus Under Fire," *Christianity Today*, March 9, 1993, p. 48, and Dirk Johnson, "Rise in Christian Right Divides a City," *The New York Times*, February 14, 1993, p. 24.

7. Dobson's main books on child-rearing are *Dare to Discipline* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1970) and *The Strong-Willed Child* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1978).

8. Waco, Tex.: Word, Inc., Educational Products Division, 1979. The tape has been shown in churches extensively, and is readily available in nearly any Christian bookstore that rents videocassettes.

On Sheila Walsh's "Heart to Heart" television show on February 15, 1990, a Dobson disciple, Christian psychologist Mels Carbonell, was the guest, promoting a Christian home do-it-yourself children's personality assessment kit, based on an obsolete and long disused psychological test developed by secular psychologists. Repeatedly and revealingly, Carbonell misquoted Dobson's catch-phrase, "shaping the will without breaking the spirit," saying instead, "breaking the will without breaking the spirit."

9. An even more potent scene of descriptions of punishment together with harangues about the God-decreed duties of children to obey parents and wives to obey husbands welcomed by a roaring, screaming crowd, can be witnessed at a Bill Gothard meeting.

10. See generally, Philip Nobile and Eric Nadler, *United States of America v. SEX*, (New York, N.Y.: Minotaur Press, Ltd., 1986).

11. Note how the current fundamentalist furor for censorship keeps coming back to the notion that the purveyor of pornography rather than the criminal offender is the party responsible for sex offenses. That way, church people can readily accept the "testimony" of the revealed sex offender who claims that the pornography he took

in made him commit the offense, excuse him, and keep him in the fold. The cynical valedictory that Dobson obtained from Bundy is typical of such "testimonies."

12. The Palmdale program's mastermind, psychologist Fred Gross, now operates a similar program at another hospital, in Buena Park, Calif. Another born-again Christian psychiatry pioneer figured in Jim Bakker's life during his 1989 criminal trial. Dr. Basil Jackson, a senior psychiatrist from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, whose credentials include a Menninger Clinic residency, a long list of publications in establishment psychiatric journals, and a hospital superintendency, practices an odd mixture of psychoanalysis and Charismatic Christian ministry. Jackson befriended Bakker, and appeared on two of the last television shows Bakker mounted from Orlando, Florida, before the fraud trial began. Jackson helped select the jury for Bakker's disastrous trial.

As the prosecution's case was commencing, Bakker began to suffer from sleeplessness and panic attacks. Jackson was summoned, and gave Bakker Xanax, a powerful medication often prescribed for those symptoms. Because its side-effects include delirium, Xanax is a controversial medication. Bakker suffered what, from Tammy Bakker's subsequent description of it, appears to have been a delirious episode, which was still going on when the famous pictures of him, disheveled and distraught looking, being led off to the lock-up by federal marshalls were taken. The tall, husky white-haired man in transparent-rim glasses, seen in those pictures walking behind with his hand on Bakker's shoulder, was Jackson.

I regard those pictures as the most important single media image of conservative Christianity of recent years, surpassing the tearful Swaggart whimpering, "I have sinned. . .," and Jerry Falwell going down the PTL water slide in a three-piece suit. What makes the image so important is how it undoes all that has ever been said about Christians facing adversity—even martyrdom by lions in the Roman arena—confidently and nobly.

13. I.e., 200,000 to 300,000 copies.

14. I was particularly struck by the scant mention of schizophrenia in the programs' brochures. The Minirth-Meier and Rapha brochures are completely silent to schizophrenia. (What few references to schizophrenia I have encountered in those programs' books are accompanied by wrong information.) No inpatient psychiatric operation can possibly avoid encountering schizophrenia frequently. Since one cannot indoctrinate a schizophrenic, I suppose the fundamentalist psychiatrists are content to parcel them out to secular facilities. It would seem that only prospective patients with processes of attention and cognition intact enough for them to read their Bibles and pay attention to sermons need apply!

15. E.g., Deut. 2:20 or 1 Chron. 20:8.

16. But along with the popular psychology notion that people need to overcome past experiences that have unreasonably lowered self-esteem, the doctrine of original sin is also inculcated, i.e., that there can be no honest self-esteem except as a saved person, "justified" by God.

17. The full-color brochure that Rapha sends with its first response to an inquiry prominently displays this kudo in the largest type found in the brochure: "Rapha is a watershed in the American wasteland of mental health care—a supplier of Living Water into the desert of psychological skepticism and humanism. Susan

A. Salladay, RN, Ph.D./Medical Ethicist."

18. Cf. Frank Minirth, Paul Meier, and Don Hawkins, *Worry-Free Living* (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989), and Robert S. McGee, *The Search for Significance* (Houston, Tex.: Rapha Publishing, 1987).

19. The annual Rapha luncheon has become a major event at the Southern Baptist national convention each June. It has drawn overflow crowds each year.

It is fascinating to screen the videotapes of these luncheons, where past presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention and other celebrity pastors come forward trying to outdo one another with lurid stories of substance abuse, mental illness, incest, etc. in pastors' and missionaries' families, and in their churches generally. To hear them tell it, these maladies are ubiquitous and epidemic in their ranks.

In 1989, the featured Rapha luncheon speaker was Adrian Rogers, who spoke on "Depression in the Ministry." In 1990, William J. Bennett, President Bush's drug czar gave the featured address, and intimated that the ultimate cause of drug abuse is Satan. For this, he deservedly received bad press. He said that drug abuse is "a product, one could certainly agree, of the Great Deceiver. The Great Deceiver everyone knows. . . . Many, many people in treatment have described to me their version [sic] of crack, simply as calling it, 'the devil.' . . . This has come up too often—it has occurred too much, too spontaneously, too often in conversation to be ignored."

20. A prominent fundamentalist pastor and marriage counselor from Orange County, California.

21. (Nashville, Tenn.: Oliver Nelson Books, 1991).

22. Arterburn, Felton, *op. cit.* p. 119.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 192.

24. (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1989).

25. Arterburn and Felton, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71.

26. Matthew 5:38-48; 10:28; Luke 6:27-38; 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 7:4-16; 11:3-10; Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18-19 and 1 Peter 3:1-2.

27. Proverbs 3:5.

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*Edmund D. Cohen was a born-again Christian who broke with Pat Robertson. Both a lawyer and a Ph.D. in psychology, he is the author of Mind of the Bible Believer.*

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