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## The Aftermath — Two Media Angles

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In the aftermath of the recent election the media, along with the rest of the society, are scrambling to make sense of it all. This has led to some interesting approaches and news stories. I recently was asked by *TIME* magazine and *The Wall Street Journal* to comment on the issues of same-sex marriage and abortion in the aftermath of November 4.

Michael Lindenberg of *TIME* wanted to talk about what the election meant for the issue of same-sex marriage. His questions came right after proponents of gay marriage, stung by their defeat on California's Proposition 8 vote, appealed to the court to overturn the amendment.

He reported:

*The request is directed at the same court that in May issued one of the most sweeping declarations of fundamental gay rights in U.S. legal history, making same-sex marriage legal by a 4-3 vote. The Republican-dominated court could decide by the end of this week whether to rule on the request for a stay or send it to a lower court first. But whatever the merits of the legal challenge, the court will face enormous pressure as it deliberates.*

*"If the California Supreme Court were to issue a ruling that would invalidate the will of the people, the consequences for the court would be momentous," the Rev. Albert Mohler told TIME over the weekend. Mohler, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and one of the nation's leading Evangelical voices, called such a "usurpation" hard to fathom. Imagine, he said, how much more controversial Roe v. Wade would be now had the court issued the decision after more than half the states had held statewide elections on the issue. "Tuesday's rulings have made it much more costly for any court to reach a conclusion in favor of gay marriage," he said.*

I stand by that statement. The California Supreme Court is expected to respond to the question within the week, and that will tell us a great deal about where this issue now goes in California.

In a fascinating twist, Lindenberg reports that some gay rights activists now want the issue to be dropped in favor of other priorities. He reported on a phone call that included more than 100 activists and legal scholars who support same-sex marriage. "The mood was dour," he revealed. But this is the really interesting part of this section of his article:

*Longtime gay rights advocate Dean Trantalis of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and others on the conference call expressed concern that the gay rights movement had become too focused on marriage, and is now paying the price in other more critical areas. "Marriage was never our issue," Trantalis said. "It was thrust upon us by the other side, and they've done a very good job of beating us up over it.*

What is Dean Trantalis saying here? Is he saying that opponents of same-sex marriage "thrust" the issue upon gay rights activists? The "other side" forced the issue? I have no idea what he could be talking about here. Defenders of natural marriage did not force this issue upon anyone.



I do understand what he means when he says that “the gay rights movement had become too focused on marriage.” It was this movement that made marriage the flash point, hoping that acceptance of same-sex marriage would break down remaining barriers to the full normalization of homosexuality within the society.

Stephanie Simon of *The Wall Street Journal* wanted to talk about the abortion issue. She is certainly correct to point out that the pro-life movement (which she calls the “anti-abortion movement”) “was dealt sharp setbacks in last week’s election.”



Not only was a pro-abortion candidate elected President, but all three state ballot questions related to abortion were shot down. Ms. Simon describes the divide now evident between those in the movement who still intend to work for the outlawing of abortion and those who now call for a softer approach, hoping to reduce the number of abortions through social programs and counseling.

As she reported my comments:

*“It could be we’re at a tipping point in this culture,” said R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. “Ignoring the obvious will not help.”*

Count me among those who believe that we cannot now step back and negotiate how many abortions we are willing to settle for in order for this issue to just go away. I reject the argument put forth by those who say we should now just step back and accept legal abortion on demand as a permanent reality and move on.

My friend Mark Dever put that argument in its place in his comments included in the article:

*“It’s like saying, ‘Let’s work to make sure they kill fewer Jews in the concentration camps this year;’” said the Rev. Mark Dever, a pastor in Washington D.C.*

Who could live with that? We should rejoice when any mother chooses to keep her child, but this is not where we can stop. Fewer abortions is not good enough.

These articles indicate something of the soul-searching that has begun among those on all sides of these contentious issues. This is no time to take a sabbatical from attention to these crucial questions.

