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RECYCLED PROPAGANDA

An Analysis of Planned Parenthood Federation of America's Annual Report (1999-2000)

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Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) released its annual report in December 2000. Its budget has soared. Its abortion business has skyrocketed. Its extremist agenda continues.

While its 1998-1999 report was consumer friendly, colorful, and appealing, the 1999-2000 report is quite lackluster. The *1998-1999 Annual Report* was a mere 21 pages long, but the *1999-2000 Annual Report* consists of two sections totaling 31 pages.

Stories—Fact or Fiction?

The 1999-2000 report is entitled “Behind Every Choice is a Story...” Gloria Feldt, PPFA’s president, begins the report by writing: “Behind every choice is a story. Throughout this report, you’ll find the stories of women that fuel our passion for what we do.” The “stories” praise Planned Parenthood. As is typically the case with PPFA, the stories (with one exception) are anonymous.

Feldt concludes her remarks by describing Planned Parenthood apologists as “champions of liberty and justice, choice and access” and by stating that PPFA’s “vision [is] inspired by stories” saying that the organization’s mission is “the most important in the world.” The sad truth is that Planned Parenthood actually believes that its mission of total sexual license and abortion on demand *is* the most important pursuit.

Recycled Nonsense

In her introductory remarks, Mary Shallenberger, PPFA’s chairman, writes: “I became a volunteer because Planned Parenthood advances those causes I care about most deeply.” The three noted by Shallenberger are “women’s empowerment, environmentalism, and reproductive freedom.”

While anyone familiar with Planned Parenthood’s mission understands Shallenberger’s reference to Planned Parenthood’s concern about women’s empowerment and reproductive freedom, one has to wonder about her mention of “environmentalism”—a word heretofore not mentioned as part of PPFA’s mission or policy statements. Perhaps the fact that the some of its annual reports are printed on recycled paper is a signal that PPFA is advancing environmentalism—or maybe it is because PPFA’s website includes links to environmental groups. More likely, however, Shallenberger mentions environmentalism in an attempt to connect with those environmental groups that share a common abortion agenda with her organization.

Who’s Helping?

After a whopping increase of 300,000 donors reported in the *1997-1998 Annual Report*, the number of reported donors has remained at 700,000 for the past two years. The number of Planned Parenthood volunteers and staff, however, is down from 23,000 to 21,000.

The total number of affiliates in 47 states and Washington, D.C., continues to decrease (down to 127 from 132 last year). The number of PPFA “health centers” is up to 875, an increase of 25 over last year. This increase in “health centers,” coupled with a nearly ten percent increase in the total number of clients, appears to support the contention that the merging of affiliates is not a sign of weakness, as some pro-life groups have contended, but one of strength achieved through restructuring to create a more effective and efficient organization.

There appears to be an increase in the number of high profile individuals promoting Planned Parenthood’s agenda. The PPFA Board of Advocates has nearly 300 leaders in the “arts and entertainment industry whose public support for the PPFA mission is extremely valuable.” Specific mention this year is made of John Irving, Jane Fonda, Paula Poundstone, Audra McDonald, Laura Dern, Julianne Morre, Sarah Jessica Parker, Della Reese, Blythe Daanner, Sally Kellerman, Marisa Tomei, Mary J. Blige, Joan Osborne, Deborah Cox, Christina Ricci, Michael Jai White, and Julia Stiles. Reference is also made to Planned Parenthood’s outreach at 282 concerts which resulted in “more than 10,000 new activists and members of Vox [Voices for Planned Parenthood] and the Responsible Choices Action Network.”

Sadly, it is reported that the PPFA Pro-Choice Religious Network now has nearly 2,000 members who have begun a new reproductive rights initiative to indoctrinate and mislead those in seminaries.

Politics, Politics, Politics

Recruiting more than 120,000 activists in 1999-2000 who “can be called to action quickly via telephone and e-mail,” PPFA continues to increase its power base through its Responsible Choices Action Network. A national advertising campaign featuring Kathleen Turner, chairman of PPFA’s Board of Advocates, was placed in twelve popular magazines “to recruit Responsible Choices Action Network activists.” By calling upon these activists to lobby Congress and by “making use of the stories women tell [PPFA] about their lives,” PPFA boasts of its victory in attaining an increase in federal tax dollars (Title X) to subsidize its activities.

Promoted by comedian Al Franken, the “first-ever in-person *and* virtual day of lobbying on behalf of reproductive health legislation” was held in March 2000. Planned Parenthood staff, volunteers and donors who were in Washington, D.C. for the PPFA Annual Conference, visited 250 offices of senators and representatives. Other reported activities were:

- filing an *amicus* brief in *Stenberg v Carhart*;
- challenging “restrictive abortion laws in Idaho, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, and Wisconsin”;
- obtaining a “permanent injunction against Florida’s mandatory parental notification law”;
- “successfully [lobbying] Congress to prevent unnecessary restrictions” on fetal tissue research; and
- filing a “groundbreaking lawsuit in federal court against a private employer, charging that the failure of the employer to cover contraception in its employee health plan constitutes a discriminatory employment practice, in violation of Title VII of the federal Civil Rights Act.”

Proud of What They Do

PPFA admits to having committed 182,854 abortions in its own affiliates and 166 in offsite contract facilities. In addition, through its international service division, Family Planning International Assistance (FPIA), PPFA proudly reports committing 1,305 abortions in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as 2,908 in Africa. In a curious departure from past years, the number of abortion referrals made by affiliates are not listed.

PPFA emphatically claims that, “Widespread use of EC [emergency contraception] will drastically reduce the number of unintended pregnancies...” If this were true, one must legitimately ask why, with 112,807 “emergency contraception” kits distributed by Planned Parenthood in 1999 (an increase of 56.6 percent from 1998), did the number of on site abortions in the same year *increase* by 8.5 percent?

PPFA reports that it approved “six new medical abortion services” (not identified). It also launched a “massive program to help prepare its 127 affiliates” to offer the abortion drug mifepristone.

Do What We Say, Not What We Do

PPFA writes that it “is working to incorporate medically accurate sexuality information in the schools, in community centers, and on the World Wide Web.” Yet, Planned Parenthood continues to disseminate inaccurate information and make use of descriptive terms that are anything but medically correct. On its website for teens (teenwire.com), an article by Susan Yudt entitled “Healthy Breasts” includes the following text: “You may have heard that abortion causes breast cancer. There’s absolutely no medical evidence to back that up.” This emphatic statement is an outright lie.

It is unconscionable that PPFA is allowed to get away with these semantic gymnastics that mislead young girls into believing that abortion does not increase their risk for breast cancer. In the same article, the author refers to breasts as “the twins.” Another article is entitled, “Boobs: An Owner’s Manual.” Has not Planned Parenthood long claimed that we should use the proper medical terms when referring to parts of the human body?

PPFA writes that, “Adolescents, in particular, need accurate and straightforward information about sexuality and prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, such as HIV.” Why, then, on teenwire.com does Planned Parenthood soft-pedal the risk of contracting HPV (human papilloma virus)? One has to either do a search for “HPV” or look through an article on cervical cancer to finally find the following information: “Always, always use condoms for protection. While condoms may not eliminate the risk of transmitting the HPVs associated with cancer, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends condoms for risk reduction.”

Why are not teens told that risk *reduction* is just not good enough? Why did Planned Parenthood choose not to join Rep. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., in his effort to require warning labels on condoms indicating that they do not prevent the transmission of HPV?

Where is the straightforward information that encourages teens to choose chastity as the option that is truly best for them? (This concept, of course, is addressed by Planned Parenthood only in disparaging terms.) Instead, teens are exposed to articles containing half-truths and are encouraged to engage in “responsible” behaviors, which in reality are setting them up for pain and suffering.

One such article found on teenwire encourages “outercourse”—a word coined by Planned Parenthood apologists. Planned Parenthood defines “outercourse” as a “second kind” of “abstinence” that “includes lots of sex play and is more open to possibilities, as long as partners don’t have vaginal, oral, or anal

intercourse.” The article is entitled, “Outercourse: Abstinence for Experts.” The message here, of course, is that engaging in outercourse is considered “abstinence” and a good choice for teens.

The annual report indicates that teenwire.com receives “150,000 visits a month and more than 400 personal inquiries a week. What a tragedy that so many teens are given such poor advice—advice that helps Planned Parenthood build its consumer base but damages the lives of young people.

More Distortions and Arrogance

PPFA reports that it published a new edition of its *Manual of Medical Standards and Guidelines*, “which establishes for affiliates stringent medical protocols that are regarded as standards for the health care industry.” (No mention is made of groups that would concur this self-assessment.) Included were new guidelines for “screening, evaluating, and managing breast cancer; menopausal services; fetal tissue donation; and the management of emergencies for medical and surgical abortion.”

As a breast cancer survivor, it seems to me that PPFA must explain to the public why it boasts about its guidelines for “evaluating and managing breast cancer” when there is no evidence that such activities take place at any of its 875 facilities. Is there even one certified oncologist on staff at any Planned Parenthood facility or is any one of its 875 centers a certified mammography facility?

Although clinical breast exams were performed on 1,100,901 women in 1999 (down 1.9 percent from the previous year), no “breast care/mammography” services were provided. In fact, only 9,382 women were referred out for such services. Is it not logical to expect a “health center” that is supposedly designed to meet the special needs of women to provide such services? Could it be that a reference to evaluating and managing breast cancer is another ruse of Planned Parenthood’s public relations gurus—a ploy that can also help to attract corporate, foundation and taxpayer funding?

PPFA likes to be thought of as a “health care provider” rather than its actual role as the largest single committer of abortions in the United States. Yet the number of primary care clients was down 26.3 percent in 1999 (from 27,320 to 20,136). The number of prenatal clients was 19,281—a very tiny portion of its business. Adoption referrals declined again—from 4,892 in 1998 to 2,999 in 1999.

It’s Just Not Enough

PPFA enjoyed another financially successful year. Total revenue for fiscal year 1999-2000 was \$627.2 million, with 35 percent generated from clinic income, 30 percent from government grants, 28 percent from private sources, and seven percent from The Alan Guttmacher Institute and “other.”

With total assets at the end of the fiscal year of \$578.6 million, the “PPFA Board of Directors and the membership in March 2000 overwhelmingly approved launching a five-year \$300 million Federation-wide Campaign” designed to:

- inspire and activate the silent majority of pro-choice supporters, elevating the power of their voices to influence policy choices;
- make it untenable for anyone who is not quintessentially pro-choice to win elective office;
- create an environment in which people can talk about healthy sexuality and have information and services available, enabling them to make responsible choices
- reduce health care disparities, especially among the disenfranchised, by creating new models for providing services and by expanding in area that currently lack reproductive health care services; and

- improve the Planned Parenthood business/information technology infra-structure.

Media Awards

This year's Maggie Awards for exceptional media coverage of reproductive health issues went to:

- MTV/Kaiser Family Foundation for the documentary, *True Life: I Need Sex, Rx*;
- *Teen People* magazine, for articles on sexual and reproductive health;
- Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation Web site;
- Mike Peters, cartoonist, for contributions to the field of reproductive health;
- *3rd Rock from the Sun*, NBC, for "Sex and the Sally," episode;
- *The West Wing*, NBC, for pilot episode;
- *Woman: An Intimate Geography*, book by Natalie Angier;
- *The Vagina Monologues*, play by Eve Ensler;
- Judy Mann, columnist, *The Washington Post*, for advocacy for women's health issues;
- *Hello Birmingham*, song by Ani DiFranco; and
- *The Cider House Rules*, a film by John Irving/Miramax (Walt Disney owned).

Media Love Affair

One of the most accurate and yet arrogant admissions in the *1999-2000 Annual Report* concerns the media. PPFA writes:

The media is the public's primary source of information on reproductive rights issues, and PPFA is a primary—and highly respected—source of information for the media. Through thousands of interviews with newspapers, magazines, radio, and television, PPFA advocates for reproductive freedom, defines the debate, places issues in their historical and social context, and corrects distortions circulated by anti-family planning, anti-choice extremists. Planned Parenthood was mentioned in thousands of media stories in the last year.

Is it any wonder that the general public is so misinformed? People dedicated to disseminating the truth find this to be a painful reminder of why it is so difficult to educate the masses.

Extremist Conclusion

Once again, pro-lifers are lumped together and referred to as "extremists" in PPFA's annual report. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines "extremist" as holding views that "deviate drastically and fundamentally from conventional or traditional beliefs." All one has to do is visit plannedparenthood.org and teenwire.com to determine who really fits the extremist label.

With the willing assistance of the entertainment and news media and through the use of the Internet, Planned Parenthood continues to force its extremist views of sexuality and abortion on society—especially the young. It continues to give lip service to the importance of parents teaching their children about sex and yet, if a parent chooses to teach in opposition to the Planned Parenthood's mantra, they are branded intolerant religious fanatics.

Planned Parenthood continues to wield its power and influence in the public square to gain access to our children. It is not an exaggeration to say that Planned Parenthood sees itself as the *ultimate* authority on matters of sexuality. Those who value and defend the sanctity of human life; those who recognize the Godly nature of marriage; and those who defend the rights of the family must continue in their veracious

opposition to this behemoth organization. It is time for *us* to define the debate, place issues in their historical and social context, and correct distortions circulated by Planned Parenthood extremists. We must reach out to those in our own spheres of influence with the truth and pray that minds and hearts will be changed.

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