

Hobby Lobby

by Ann Bogle

Praise to *Civil Liberties News*, publication of the American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota. I am scheduled to volunteer at the ACLU-MN booth at the Minnesota State Fair this year and am looking forward to it. Nevertheless, I feel out of the loop re: Hobby Lobby, a craft store chain. I read in an interfaith newsletter that Hobby Lobby had fired a woman worker who had requested unpaid leave when she was four months pregnant. That case was described by the interfaith newsletter as Hobby Lobby's religious hypocrisy. In general, I have had the question: Are employers required to pay for the birth of newborns? Birth is much more expensive than any form of birth control. In my days as a low-paid employee, \$5/hour when minimum was about \$3.50 and \$18K/year, one job offer I received in the publishing industry in New York, two single-owner business employers informed me that their insurance premiums were \$2K per year higher if they employed fertile women than premiums they paid for men. I wish the debated subject could focus on condoms, in frankness. Condoms are instantly reversible as birth control; they prevent the potential spread of sexually-transmissible infections; and they are mutually consensual. Users of condoms are aware that no conception has taken place. In human rights, a man and a woman may marry and bring forth a family. It is a civil right in the U.S. but not a human right (as far as I know) to raise a child singly without the knowledge of the other parent, the father in natural circumstances or either parent in clinical circumstances. I see Ruth Bader Ginsburg's photo floating the Internet. One wonders if she is actually agreeing to be represented in venues such as *Salon* or if her photo is merely in use as a symbol of "women's right to choose." Women's right to choose is rather bogus. Choice, as I think of it, has turned out to be suitable as the brand name of a dog food. Women disallowed to have children may be more like pets. *Roe v. Wade* means that the doctor decides and it seems unrelated to abortion's legality; it has been a form of gag order for women, who it is

presumed have zero interest in bringing forth children. To me, belonging is a better basis for understanding how a natural family comes about: Two people meet and feel belonging, and a child takes place. Under the Affordable Care Act, must companies finance child birth, that is very expensive and may involve surgery and hospital stays? Is contraception merely a cheap way out of comprehensive reproductive health care? Is it truly the case that women are disinterested in becoming mothers? Is it truly the case that employers welcome women employees' opportunity to have children? Should the costs of child birth only be attached to the mother's health insurance policy with her employer? Please submit your ideas.

