



Société canadienne du
syndrome de Down

Dear Editor,

With regard to Pamela Fayerman's Article - BC's regulations that women must wait until they are 40 for publically funded amnio diagnostic testing in order to determine if an unborn fetus has Down syndrome...

I'm left with an unease that borders on terror.

It's hard to imagine a time when great populations of learned and civilized citizens could be convinced that Jews were the root of all economic and civic hardships, and that that these learned doctors, scientists and community members could set out to systemically eliminate an entire population of people...

It's impossible that there was a period in recent history where an entire nation (perceived to be the most powerful in the world) could determine that citizens of African descent were "sub human" enough to require separate schools, separate neighbourhoods, and even separate drinking fountains...

We could never be convinced that the best methodology to social assimilation would be to remove aboriginal children from their families, separate them from loving and culturally rich communities in order to teach them to be less native.

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have recommended that all pregnant women be offered prenatal testing regardless of maternal age. Information is powerful and important for perspective mothers and families. However, information without consideration and respect for the quintessential humanness and important contributions of citizens with disabilities is not progress it's bias. Families who welcome babies with Down syndrome report that information given to them prenatally has been outdated, inaccurate, profoundly dark, and filled with coercive messaging so powerful that strangers have the audacity to ask them ... "Didn't **you know**-your baby was going to have Down syndrome?"

Even if you don't love someone with Down syndrome or any other prenatally predictable disability-you ought to care about this. Down syndrome is the canary in the coal mine. **We will all** manifest some trait or characteristic that will be considered socially undesirably -even socially costly-at some point in our lives.

If you think this obscene race toward perfection will not affect you-You are wrong.

As Pastor Martin Niemöller said..." And then... they came for me... And by that time there was no one left to speak up."

Krista J. Flint
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