

# A Book of HUGS



by Dave Ross

Give your Valentine a hug that lasts . . .

Upstairs in the Book Dept.

**UO**  
BOOKSTORE

13th & Kincaid  
Mon-Fri 8:15-5:30  
Sat 10:00-3:00

Textbooks 686-3520 • General Books 686-3510 • Supplies 686-4331

# LOVE



# TO READ

Roses are red,  
Violets are blue,  
A special gift book  
Reads, "I Love You."

Valentines that last,  
Upstairs in the Book Dept.

**UO** 13th & Kincaid  
BOOKSTORE Mon-Fri 8:15-5:30  
Sat 10:00-3:00

Textbooks 686-3520 • General Books 686-3510 • Supplies 686-4331

sally hodgkinson

## editor's note

Kathleen Phillips wishes her son Randy, a 4½-year-old with Down's Syndrome, had never been born. And she's suing her doctor for \$5 million, holding him responsible for Randy's "wrongful birth."

Kathleen, if she had known the child she was carrying would be born severely retarded, would have aborted him. "He's going to suffer for the rest of his life. I'm going to suffer for the rest of my life too."

Better off dead. Wrongful life. A life not worth living. Ironically, as technology enables doctors to save infants that once would have died and to make handicaps less severe, there are more questions about the "validity" of those lives.

Sixteen years ago, my brother Kelly was born two months premature. Medics rushed the gasping infant from Pendleton to a hospital in Walla Walla, Wash., that had the technology to save him. On the way he quit breathing three times; part of his brain died from lack of oxygen.

In medical terms, he has cerebral palsy. In real terms, he can't walk without crutches; his legs don't always work well; and his motor control is a little off. He has undergone several operations, countless hours of therapy and years of "being different."

Before attending public school, Kelly went to Eugene's Easter Seal School for severely handicapped children. The school's atmosphere overflowed with life. It had to. The kids wrestled with painful therapy, bodies that wouldn't work and simple tasks that were frustrating. But the kids knew that death can only be overcome by life; tears by laughter; sorrow by joy; and pity by respect.

So they kept fighting, even against the odds. Tracy had spina bifida — and was expected to die by the age of 10. Zach was spastic and communicated by typewriter — plunk! plunk! one key at a time.

Kelly says handicapped people are better off alive. Rightful lives. Lives with meaning.

"Any life, basically, is worth living," he says.

Some don't agree. Many physicians and scholars have advocated letting severely handicapped newborns die—children who would live with help. Several cases have been documented where parents and doctors have let a child die because he was handicapped. Others have sued for "wrongful life" or "wrongful birth."

"When public opinion is prepared for it, no child should be admitted into the society of the living who would be certain to suffer any social

handicap," says philosophy and humanities professor Millard Everett, quoted in *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*, a book authored by theologian Francis Schaeffer and U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop.

"The discussion of life must be brought back to where it belongs — not to emotional, extreme examples, not to selfish questions of rights, not to expedience, and certainly not to economics," say Schaeffer and Koop. "The matter should be discussed in terms of right and wrong."

Koop, a pacesetter in pediatric surgery, says to let a child die because he may be severely handicapped is a "discrimination just as deplorable as those based on race, creed, color or sex."

"One must decide for whose benefit is the decision to withhold treatment from a child with severe birth defects," says John Robertson, a physician at the University of Wisconsin medical school. "Is no life better than one of low quality? The person to ask is an individual who has a disabling birth defect."

"I don't think I'm handicapped," Kelly says. "Everyone's handicapped. Some physically, some mentally, some emotionally and some all three. I don't let myself worry anymore."

Kelly has faced a lot in 16 years. Advice: "You could walk if you really tried." Fear: "You're going to end up in a wheelchair if you don't do your exercises." Bitterness: "I hate these stupid crutches." Alienation: "Of course he's lonely. Kids don't want to play with someone who can't run or play like they can."

And questions; always questions: "What's wrong with your legs?"

Kelly says he has felt more accepted as he has gotten older. The stares and whispers that used to hurt him, are now shrugged off.

"It doesn't bother me. I'm going to live with it all my life," he says, adding that there are advantages to being handicapped: "I can't get drafted."


He looks forward to a career in radio communications. "But without equal opportunity, I'd probably have to stay home and stuff envelopes. That's not something I want to do." He hopes to get married and if he has children, they'd probably be normal because cerebral palsy isn't hereditary.

But if his wife was pregnant with a child who was handicapped — mentally or physically — would he want the child aborted?

"Of course not. I wouldn't kill him just because he's different. That's just stupid."

EMU Beer Garden  
Friday, Feb. 12  
4-7 p.m. EMU Dining Room

EMU Cultural Forum  
presents  
**Gregg Tripp**  
in an afternoon of  
**Hot Rock-n-Roll**



Only 600 tickets will be available  
Free tickets given out at the EMU Main Desk

## staff

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during finals week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co.

News 686-5511  
Advertising/Business 686-3712  
Classifieds 686-4343  
Production 686-4381

Editor  
Sally Hodgkinson

Managing Editor  
Gabriel Boehmer

News Editor  
Harry Esteve

Assistant News Editor  
John Healy

Photo Editor  
Bob Baker

Graphics Editor  
Max DeRungs

Editorial Page Editor  
Cort Fernald

Sports Editor  
Steve Spatz

Associate Sports Editor  
Jeff Dickerson

Entertainment Editor  
Matt Meyer

Night Editor  
Debbie Howlett

### Associate Editors:

ASUO  
Dane Claussen

Community  
Marian Green

Departments and Schools  
Debbie Howlett

Features  
Caroline Petrich

Higher Education  
Ann Portal

Politics/Environment  
Ron Hunt

### General Staff:

Advertising Director  
Darlene Gore

Classified Advertising  
Sally Oljar

Production Manager  
Ann Peterson

Controller  
Jean Ownbey