

Dear Pro-Life Partners,

February 15, 2026

Shenanigans & Chicanery

My husband gave me a bright pink mug awhile back that says, “You are the She to my Nanigans.” I love it! I think it captures the essence of our relationship. It’s even fun to say! 😊 We think of shenanigans as silly and mischievous acts or harmless pranks. The word was a clue in one of my crossword puzzles recently, and the answer was “antics.” This may be the common and accepted definition; however, the actual definition may be a touch more sinister. According to Webster, a shenanigan is an activity or behavior that is not honest or proper—a deceptive or questionable practice or conduct. American Heritage describes shenanigans as “playful” or “nonsense,” but also “an underhanded act or deceitful remark. This is a problem. Like the person who insults you, then says, “Just kidding!” This type of veiled, low-grade, subtle deception can be more harmful than an honest slap in the face. It encourages us to dismiss or disregard another’s otherwise hurtful words or actions as harmless.

The abortion industry has been guilty of agenda-driven shenanigans for decades and is quite good at it. So much so, that it has graduated to chicanery without most of the world noticing. Chicanery refers to deception by use of trickery, subterfuge, or sophistry (a plausible but false or misleading argument). It uses mean or unfair strategies to perplex a cause and obscure the truth. We saw this with Bernard Nathanson, former abortion-rights advocate turned anti-abortion activist, when he greatly inflated statistics to support the back-alley abortion narrative. We saw this first hand when Amendment 3 came crashing through Missouri, ready to save women from certain death from their lack of abortion access. Creating a crisis in order to solve the crisis. How fun!

The term “Machiavellianism” was coined to describe this phenomenon, based on Niccolò Machiavelli’s book *The Prince*. It embodies the philosophy that the end justifies the means, replacing absolute standards of right and wrong with subjective reasoning that the rightness of an action is based on whether the consequence or end result is “good.” Good being defined as benefiting the actor. Machiavellianism refers to capitalizing on a crisis, whether created or coincidental, to consolidate power and control. Power is impatient. If a crisis does not naturally present itself, one must be fabricated, so that the perpetrator can swoop in to save the day. The instigator of said crisis is usually more interested in ruling the people than serving them because power is also greedy. This usually entails making a promise to solicit support, then breaking that promise to advance an agenda. History is rife with examples. Our present culture is dripping with it.

Planned Parenthood has proven to be masterfully and dangerously Machiavellian. Pregnancy, a natural function of a woman’s body, has been deemed a cultural crisis, a matter of life and death, an ill in need of intervention—by those who wish to “remedy” it. Under the virtue-signaling guise of “women’s rights” and “health care, PP will stop at nothing to promote its obsession with death in pursuit of power and purse strings. It embraces the Machiavellian view that “One who deceives will always find those who allow themselves to be deceived.” I exhort you to be informed and guard your mind. Be steadfast, vigilant, and alert to the shenanigans and chicanery around us because “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

Even so...I still like my mug. 😊

Partnering with You for Life! Linda Verhulst, MRL-WR

