

issues of freedom.

## Health Care

Comedian Jimmy Kimmel sent an associate out onto a Los Angeles street corner with a microphone to ask passersby a simple question: Which do you like better, Obamacare or the Affordable Care Act? The overwhelming majority said they didn't like Obamacare, but thought that the Affordable Care Act was a good idea. Most did not know that they were the same thing. After all, different names typically refer to different things.

How did they get the negative impression of “Obamacare”?

After Obama was elected in 2008, but before he was inaugurated, he had a pollster do a survey of which provisions for his health care act would be most popular. A group of those provisions came in between 60 and 80 percent in popularity. They were the familiar ones: no preconditions, no caps, your college-age child can be on your plan, and so on. These became the main provisions of the plan. The assumption was that if all the main provisions were popular, the whole plan would be popular. In other words, the popularity of the plan should depend on the popularity of the provisions of the plan.

No conservatives attacked those popular provisions. There was no conservative movement in favor of preconditions or caps, or against having your college-age child on your plan.

Instead, conservatives understood that politics is a matter of morality and decided to attack the plan on moral grounds. They chose two moral domains: Freedom and Life. On Freedom, they attacked it as a “government takeover.” On Life, they said it contained “death panels.” And they repeated “government takeover” and “death panels” over and over, month after month. And every time the president said “It is not a government takeover,” he used the words *government takeover*, which activated the idea of a government takeover in the brains of listeners, thus reinforcing the conservative attack.

The conservatives also never used the name Affordable Care Act. Instead, they invented their own name—Obamacare, taking the emphasis off the