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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (pages 321-346) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- Should Religion Be Evicted from the Public Square? -- Are Our "Values Conversations" Sufficiently Open and Free? The University as a Test Case -- Is the Concept of Human Dignity Useful, Useless, or Dangerous? -- Legalizing Euthanasia: Evolution or Revolution in Societal Values? -- Is Every Life Beautiful? -- How Might a Problem - a Crisis Pregnancy - Be Converted to a Mystery, the Gift of Life? -- How Might the Involvement of "Applied Ethics" in Law Affect Our Societal Values? Ethics as "First Aid" for Law -- What Questions Are We Asking in Contemporary Cultural Values Conversations, and What Messages Are They Communicating? -- Appendices. A. The Best Teacher I Ever Had Was My Father, George Patrick Ganley -- B. Three Statements on Academic Freedom -- C. Use of the Concept of Human Dignity in Four International Instruments -- D. The Declaration of Montreal.
Sommario/riassunto	"Our physical ecosystem is not indestructible and we have obligations to hold it in trust for future generations. The same is true of our metaphysical ecosystem--the values, principles, attitudes, beliefs, and shared stories on which we have founded our society. In Bird on an

Ethics Wire, Margaret Somerville explores the values needed to maintain a world that reasonable people would want to live in and pass on to their descendants. Somerville addresses the conflicts between people who espouse "progressive" values and those who uphold "traditional" ones by casting her attention on the debates surrounding "birth" (abortion and reproductive technologies) and "death" (euthanasia) and shows how words are often used as weapons. She proposes that we should seek to experience amazement, wonder, and awe to enrich our lives and helps us to find meaning. Such experiences, Somerville believes, can change how we see the world and live our lives, and affect the decisions we make, especially regarding values and ethics. They can help us to cope with physical or existential suffering, and, ultimately put us in touch with the sacred--in either its secular or religious form--which protects what we must not destroy. Experiencing amazement, wonder and awe, Somerville concludes, can also generate hope, the oxygen of the human spirit, without which our spirit dies. Both individuals and societies need hope, a sense of connection to the future, if the world is to make the best values decisions in the battles that constitute the current culture wars."--
