

Inside...



A different approach to youth suicide

p. 2

New Film, Sex, Drugs & AIDS, Draws Fire

"This film will tell you what you need to know so you won't get AIDS," says Scott, an AIDS victim, in the opening scene from the new and highly controversial film called *Sex, Drugs, & AIDS*. The film is currently being promoted in schools nationwide as a means to educate youth about AIDS and AIDS prevention.

But, according to parents who have previewed the film, the hotly-debated movie not

only misses the mark and provides students with possible misinformation, the film also conveys the message that the average teenager is sexually promiscuous and that homosexuality is not a deviant lifestyle.

Parents from states including Vermont, Iowa, and California are protesting loudly about the "shocking" contents of the film which include graphic comments about anal sex, an actual New York street scene featuring close-up shots of two teenagers "shooting up" drugs with needles, and a discussion about condoms and birth control among attractive, sexually active teenage girls in a dance studio. Critics said the girls' scene gives teenagers the impression that "normal" teenagers are sexually promiscuous.

Parents are also concerned about the possibility that the film may mislead adolescents by telling them, "Relax, you don't have to worry about all the things you share with people, like food, make-up, toilet seats, and telephones."

The three dominant messages of the 18-

See *Film* page 4



Actress Rae Dawn Chong

Parents, School Board Work Together to Produce Strong Pupil Rights Policy

Parents and school board members alike are proud of a new pupil rights policy in Sequim, Washington. The just-approved policy, which guarantees enforcement of the Federal Pupil Protection (or Hatch) Amendment at the local level, is the culmination of 10 months of work and negotiations between local citizens and school officials.

"The ultimate significance of the policy," said citizen leader Robert Brownlee, "will be the end of the use of psychological therapy in the classroom and a return to the instruction of basics."

"We believe Sequim has seen its last public hue and cry over therapy in the classroom," he said. "Although it will take a long time, therapy is out of the classroom."

The Federal Pupil Protection Amendment requires schools to obtain prior, written, informed parental consent before students participate in nonacademic testing or treatment designed to probe students' beliefs and feelings, or affect students' attitudes and behavior, regarding subjects such as private family information and sexual behavior.

Cooperation, not confrontation

The Sequim School Board adopted the local version of the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment on April 7. At the same meeting, the Board also established an Office of Ombudsman, comprised of two school board members, to handle the initial proceedings for any complaints under the new policy.

The new policy sets forth the following guidelines: "We, the Board of Directors of Sequim School District 323, would like to go on record as being cognizant and in compliance... [that] all teachers shall stress the importance of the cultivation of manners, the fundamental principles of honesty, honor, industry, and economy, the minimum requisite for good health, including the beneficial effect of physical exercise and the worth of kindness to all living creatures. We stand behind the belief it is the responsibility of every teacher in our district to impress upon the students the 'principles of patriotism' and to teach them to truly comprehend the 'rights, duties, and dignity of American citizenship.'"

The policy continues, "We wish to make a strong statement in favor of continued academic excellence in our Sequim schools and to entrust to the parents the prime responsibility for moral and spiritual training for their children. As such, we are totally supportive of the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S. Code, Par. 1232-H and the regulations thereto 34CFR, part 98, commonly known as the Hatch Amendment. It is further our desire to preserve the rich heritage which is ours, preserved by our Founding Fathers and handed down to us with inalienable rights and freedoms provided by the Constitution of the United States of America."

Mr. Brownlee said the effort to establish the local policy began ten months ago when he attended a school board meeting and addressed the parents and school board members concerning the use of globalism in local schools. According to Mr. Brownlee, the board's response was very defensive.

Following that meeting, Mr. Brownlee and other citizens became concerned that the parents and school board members were becoming polarized in regard to parents' concerns about nonacademic, psychological exercises in the classroom.

As a result, Mr. Brownlee took action. He wrote and submitted evidence to support a "White Paper" to school board members citing the history and purpose of the Pupil Protection Amendment, the need for policy enforcement in Sequim and Washington State, and recommendations for the establishment of an Ombudsman Office, and an index of laws and court decisions pertaining to parental and pupil rights.

He also shared his copy of the book *Child Abuse in the Classroom* with school board member David Blake. Mr. Blake read the book and subsequently helped establish a "Fact Finding Committee" to investigate the history and status of the Pupil Protection Amendment.

The Fact Finding Committee concluded this spring that the Sequim School District must comply with the Pupil Protection Amendment.

With the adoption of the Pupil Protection Amendment as school policy, a violation by school personnel becomes a violation of school policy, and that violation comes under the immediate jurisdiction of the School Superintendent and the school board. Immediate corrective action can be taken, including disciplinary measures, if deemed necessary.

Mr. Brownlee said this rapid response system corrects a major deficiency in the Federal law which often requires many months of investigation and paperwork.

He added that the establishment of the Ombudsman Office is an important component of the enforcement mechanism because this office will initially investigate complaints out of the public eye.

Mr. Brownlee said another "key to the success in Sequim" was that proponents of the policy publicly noted how such a policy is also in the best interests of the teachers.

Teachers, proponents said, need to be aware of the laws governing the schools and parental and pupil rights in order to remove themselves from the threat of litigation.

"We believe that through cooperation, rather than confrontation, based upon extended knowledge of the present educational issues and laws of the land, and the establishment of an Office of Ombudsman to solve problems as they arise, our educational system will once again deliver a superb product to society," he concluded.

Bennett: Expand AIDS Testing



Secretary of Education Bennett

Blood testing for AIDS should be expanded and even required in certain situations in order to protect the public health, according to U. S. Secretary of Education William J. Bennett.

Secretary Bennett publicly stated his recommendations for dealing with the AIDS crisis on April 30 to an audience of students at Georgetown University in Washington, D. C.

The Secretary told the Georgetown students he thinks "there is a good case to be made for proposals to make testing a requirement for hospital admissions, to make it a requirement for securing marriage licenses and for those seeking admission to this country, and to require an AIDS test for all persons convicted of a crime upon punishment, and prior to release."

"There are strong arguments for more testing," said Secretary Bennett, "both for the sake of acquiring epidemiological knowledge and for the sake of protecting individuals. And there are strong arguments for considering superseding, in certain circumstances, the principle of confidentiality. After all, confidentiality, even in the medical profession, does not outweigh all other considerations."

The Reagan administration official noted that the American Medical Association's Principles of Medical Ethics "recognizes that a physician may reveal otherwise confidential information if this is necessary to protect the welfare of another individual or community."

The issues of more testing and suspending confidentiality are public policies which require

"honest, open, and thoughtful debate," said Secretary Bennett.

"I believe such a debate would lead us to reject, for example, the California law that makes it illegal to divulge results of AIDS tests to anyone without written permission. This law, as I understand it," said Bennett, "means that a doctor delivering a baby cannot tell other medical personnel, including the child's pediatrician, that the mother has AIDS, and that the baby may be at risk, unless the mother consents."

Schools should teach hows and whys of abstinence

The Secretary also addressed the role of the schools in preventing the spread of AIDS. He defended his previous and widely-publicized statements that students must learn about the benefits of abstinence until marriage and fidelity afterwards.

"Indeed, I have said, and I will say again, that with regard to sex education, it isn't enough to tell kids just to say no. Given the culture in which our children grow up, saying no — thinking no — may require their being able to draw upon reserves of moral stamina that it is up to us, the adults, to instill in them," he said.

"The important point is that urging abstinence is not simply a matter of talking one's finger in children. You don't talk to young people about their sexuality either by denying that they are sexual beings, or by asking them to deny their own obvious interest in sexuality."

Secretary Bennett suggested, "We need to give children good reasons, fortifying reasons, for saying no. AIDS is one such reason, and a powerful one. Preventing teenage pregnancy is another. Not getting involved in situations beyond children's emotional and psychological capacities is still another.

"But if we can talk to the young about the physical and the psychological dangers of sexual promiscuity, we can also talk about the positive reason for self-control.

"These reasons have to do with the formation of a mature character, including a mature sexual character. They have to do with the value an individual places on his or her self, and with the larger purposes of his or her life. They have to do with our commitment to that bedrock institution of our society, the family."

EDUCATION BRIEFS

Virginia parents and citizens participated in five simultaneous public hearings held throughout the state on April 27 to protest a proposed revision of the state Family Life Education program which includes sex education. Pro-family speakers in each locality urged State Board of Education members to mandate that the revised curriculum advocate abstinence from sexual activity as the only "safe sex" and recommended behavior for students, especially in terms of students' emotional, physical, and economic well-being. At the Norfolk hearing, a representative of the National Organization for Women requested that pro-family supporters refrain from applauding for one another, but her request was ignored.

An unusual coalition of liberals and conservatives reached a consensus that schools should take positions on right and wrong behavior, abandon "values neutral" teaching, and impart civic virtue, at a conference sponsored by Norman Lear's People for the American Way (PAW) on April 3 in Washington, D.C. Conference speakers included White House Domestic Policy Advisor Gary Bauer, former U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel Bell, Norman Lear, and California Superintendent of Schools Bill Honig. According to a *Washington Post* (4-4-87) report, "a range of educators" at the conference agreed that schools should unambiguously teach that lying, cheating, stealing, and other behavior is wrong. PAW founder Norman Lear said that, while he denounces the effort by fundamentalist Christians to put prayer back in schools and remove some textbooks from the schools, he does concede that they have a point when they "talk of failures in our educational system, the erosion of our moral standards, and the waste of young lives." California Superintendent Honig said, "We have not done a good job in the last 15 years in teaching values. There has been a belief that pluralism means you can't take a stand. That is death to our young people."

The "Condom Rag" will not make it to the top of the song charts because Illinois Governor James Thompson prohibited use of the new jingle immediately after its debut at the state capitol, due to widespread outrage and criticism from citizens. The jingle was part of a \$450,000 taxpayer-funded AIDS Awareness program conducted by the Illinois Public Health Department. The theme of the "Condom Rag" is that using condoms is "safe" and "fun." Following presentation of the jingle in Springfield, Governor Thompson banned use of the "Condom Rag," saying "it's garbage... everyone will think we are lunatics." Earlier this year, the Missouri Public Health Department had to destroy copies of its new pamphlet, "Condom Sense," after state officials called it offensive.

Back in Charge: Parents and Public Education is the theme of a one-day conference on May 30 sponsored by California Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund. Dr. Melvin Anshell, noted psychoanalyst, author, and lecturer on the dangers of early sex education, will be the lead speaker at this conference "for those who are concerned about standards of behavior, moral choices, and values in public classrooms." The conference will take place at the Marriott Hotel near the John Wayne Airport in Orange County, and the full-day registration fee is \$27.50. For more information or registration, call (714) 640-0955 or (213) 998-2761, or write to P.O. Box 50106, Long Beach, CA, 90516.

Education Reporter (ISSN 0887-0608) is published monthly by Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund with editorial offices at Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002, (618) 462-5415. Editor: Catherine Sutherland. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the persons quoted and should not be attributed to Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund. Annual subscription is \$25. Donors of \$25 per year or more will receive it free. Back-issues available for \$2.50. Second class postage pending at Alton, Illinois.

One Professional's Approach to Teen Suicide: prohibit 'suicide talk,' focus on life, not death

Professor Joy Johnson has a unique and successful approach to preventing teen suicide. It's unique because her approach prohibits the use of the words "suicide" or "death" from any discussion with troubled teens. It's successful because, to date, 100 percent of her young clients are alive today.

In order to prevent and reduce teen suicides, Professor Johnson contends that teenagers must first understand that they do not have the right to take their own lives. Instead, the noted family therapist recommends that teens need to understand that they have many good reasons for living, that suicide is an act of cowardice, and that suicide is not even an option.

Professor Johnson, M.A., is an associate professor at the Jane Addams Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Illinois in Chicago, as well as an author, lecturer and private consultant with Joy Johnson and Associates. Professor Johnson works with troubled teens both in one-on-one private sessions as well as in school and group settings across the country. She presented her successful strategies for dealing with depressed and suicidal youth at a conference on Preventing Teen Suicide sponsored by the Illinois General Assembly in the State Capitol in April.

'Suicide talk' not allowed

Professor Johnson's positive and constructive approach to preventing teen suicide differs from the many suicide prevention programs being used in schools today which focus on students' negative feelings and behavior and which encourage open discussion about suicide and ways to commit suicide.

Professor Johnson told the conference attendees that her work with troubled young people is based on the foundation that she values all human life, and that "kids need to know how beautiful life is." "My patients know that I value human life," at the outset of our program, she said.

The sociologist said that she often begins her work with young people by telling them that "suicide is not an option because you [the teenager] don't have the life experience to make that decision. You don't have that right."

Rarely, if ever, does Professor Johnson use the word "suicide" when dealing with teenagers. She explained that the "teenagers are not allowed to talk about why and how they should die" because she does not permit "suicide talk."

Students are allowed to talk about "how awful they feel," but they must use the term "seriously hurting yourself" rather than "suicide" to reinforce that suicide is not an option.

Professor Johnson told how one New Jersey high school reduced its suicide rate after eliminating the emphasis on suicide from its program. She explained that, following two student suicides, the predominantly white, over-achieving community high school brought in a prevention team to run special suicide groups. The school subsequently had seven suicides that year.

The following year, in the fall of 1985, the school shifted from the emphasis on suicide to an emphasis on staying alive. The school conducted stress groups for "anyone who was hurting." The topic of those groups was "what can I do with the stress I am under," not "should I die or not," said Professor Johnson. There were no student suicides in 1985.

In each individual case, Professor Johnson said, it is necessary to understand that all adolescents share the same conflicting emotions. One of those emotions is a sense of fatalism and helplessness. A conflicting emotion is a sense of grandiosity. That false sense of grandiosity can be expressed by teens when they say, "I'm the only one who can drink and drive safely," said Professor Johnson.



In addition, Professor Johnson explained that "all teens are gamblers." The key, she said, is to use that gambling instinct to promote good behavior.

Guidelines for prevention presented

In order to assist members of the audience who work with troubled teenagers, Professor Johnson enumerated and explained important guidelines for dealing with youth who are depressed, suicidal, or suffering from drug or alcohol use. That list, based on her own work experience, consisted of the following guideposts:

- **Take a suicide threat seriously, and make sure there are no lethal weapons in the home.** This precaution will help children to protect themselves and each other.

- **Do not enter into a debate with young people over whether they should live or die.** At the same time, Professor Johnson said, it is not advisable to "tell someone who feels like

"teenagers are not allowed to talk about why and how they should die"

Joy Johnson

they are a piece of garbage that you think they are a really wonderful human being because they don't believe you, and, if they give you a hassle, you won't believe it either."

- **Instead, tell adolescents, "NO," they can't commit suicide, and help them to find other nondangerous options.** Professor Johnson said that she will help the depressed youth to devise an effective plan for dealing with anger. For example, if a child threatens or carries out a threat to take too much aspirin to get a rise out of the parents, Professor Johnson has successfully suggested that the youth, instead, make cookies in the middle of the night and bang the pots and pans as a way of venting frustration.

- **Make sure the depressed teen knows that a friend will not keep his secret about contemplating suicide.** It is important to convey to teens that it is not "narking" to get help for a child who is in danger.

- **Focus on the person and feelings rather than on the final or ultimate act of suicide.** "As soon as suicide is outlawed as a topic of discussion," said Professor Johnson, "the kid begins to talk about why they are really hurting. Otherwise, they are focusing on the wrong thing."

- **Tell young people that suicide is an act of cowardice.** "In my professional judgment," said Professor Johnson, "teenage suicide is an act of desperation, it is an act of hostility, an act of cowardice. That person killed himself because he didn't have the guts to stick it out."

The sociologist explained, "A lot of people don't like to call suicide an act of cowardice, but I do because I believe it. Children don't mind being dead, but they don't want to be chicken. If

the word is out among their peers that [suicide is] a cop-out, then they are more likely to stay alive."

Professor Johnson explained how one school principal in Austin, Texas, passed out written notices to the students which said that seriously hurting oneself is not only an act of desperation, it is also an act of cowardice and hostility, and that any really good friend will stick it out.

- **Offer the troubled youth the support they need until they have the courage to stay alive.** According to Professor Johnson, one of the best treatments for preventing suicide is "networking." Networking consists of asking the young person for a list of people who care whether they live or die.

Professor Johnson said that, upon obtaining a list of 5 people, she calls them immediately so they can all meet together. She tells them, "Barbara is in danger and shouldn't be left alone for the next 48 hours. Can we arrange a program so someone will always be within 8 feet of her?"

Networking has proven to be very successful because, according to Professor Johnson, "it's the most caring thing a person can feel, and, [simultaneously] it's not very comfortable when you can't take a shower without someone sitting on the toilet seat waiting for you to get out, or to have someone waiting outside the gymnasium to walk you to your next class when you are 17."

If the youth cannot name enough caring friends or family, Professor Johnson recommended that members of the community be enlisted. "The little old lady adds meaning to her life" by becoming part of the network, and some community-wide network programs have been very successful, she said.

- **If there has been a suicide, make sure the victim is not eulogized or made a hero by the young people.** Young people should not endow sainthood on the victim or put part of themselves in the casket.

Many adolescents have a "fatalistic grandiose fantasy that they can kill themselves and still be alive," said Professor Johnson. "They think they can kill themselves and still be at their own funeral watching how much everybody is hurting and then get even. That's one of the reasons why you have to help them learn other ways of getting even."

Professor Johnson told the conference audience about one incident involving a Rockford mother whose teenage child had committed suicide one week before the mother attended a workshop featuring Professor Johnson. Prior to that workshop, the mother was very concerned about the potential after-effects of an upcoming memorial dance for her child.

Following the workshop, the Rockford mother conceived the idea of changing the theme of the dance from a memorial for the dead student to a celebration for all those who had the courage to live. She later contacted Professor Johnson to tell her how successful and uplifting the event had been.

- **Never allow oneself to get into a debate about whether a young person is really suicidal or not.** Sometimes, there is no way of knowing whether the youth is suicidal. "It's a useless argument," said Professor Johnson, "and the people who indulge in that argument and lose the child will think there is something wrong with themselves."

Additional elements for dealing with depressed adolescents include helping the family to be a cohesive support unit and learning how to be gentle with children so that the children will learn how to be gentle with each other.

Professor Johnson also advised people who work with depressed teenagers to take care of themselves as well.

FOCUS: Drug Courses that don't teach right and wrong...do they work?

Parents nationwide are growing increasingly concerned about classroom courses regarding drugs, alcohol, and sex which, instead of teaching teenagers to "just say No," use group therapy techniques to promote so-called "responsible decision-making" based on the individual's feelings and personal value judgments. The following article by Dr. W.R. Coulson, Ph.D. is a summary analysis of his conversations with drug educators about this teaching methodology. Dr. Coulson is a professor of psychology and education at United States International University in San Diego, California.

The method [used in many drug education programs today] is inherently flawed for its derivation from the theory and practice of group therapy. In group therapy, the most important thing is to get people to talk openly. The problem of achieving this is comparable to what Freud struggled with in creating psychoanalysis. He tried hypnotizing and even bullying his patients before he stumbled on "the rule of free association," for it was simply very difficult to get them to reveal what was really on their minds. To get them to talk, he had to be extremely permissive. So has every effective psychotherapist since Freud; otherwise the patient's defenses remain in control.

Psychological "openness" is so assiduously cultivated in group therapy and individual psychotherapy, then, because the issues addressed are uniquely personal and, like as not, deeply hidden. Quick and insistently authoritative answers by a doctor miss the mark. Effective psychotherapeutic training is therefore focused upon learning how to draw patients out; in order to do that, a climate of safety has to be built, with the end goal that the patient become able to identify what his or her feelings really are. Naming accurately a deeply buried feeling is virtually equivalent in psychotherapy to knowing what to do about it.

So, successful group therapists, rather than providing answers, devote themselves to insuring the thoroughness of the process of personal exploration. Often, especially in the early weeks of a newly-constituted group, this will entail preventing members of the group themselves from offering solutions to the member who is on the "hot seat." Jumping in would simply forestall further exploration.

We must notice now what is unique about

group therapy: it is all about inner experience, the realm of the subjective.

But drug education ought to be about the objective realm, specifically about the objective dangers of using drugs. It ought not to be about remaking the personalities of the students, for this can't be done briefly, can't be done by amateurs, and shouldn't be done in school in any case. It doesn't really matter, then, what schoolchildren *feel* about drugs (any more than it matters what they feel about the alphabet). There is something to be learned, not something to "explore." What must be learned is that experimenting with drugs hazards the child's entire future.

You will notice [in some drug education] materials that the teacher is instructed to accept virtually *whatever* the students say, and that the method is built upon the premise that everyone has a right to his or her own opinion. (As if the boy had responded to Harrison Ford's "Never-ever" with "You have a right to your opinion, I have a right to mine.") This is the fundamental rule of group therapy, offered for the purpose of bringing to light the patients' subjective world. But what will teachers do with the subjective worlds of their young students if (amateur therapists that the method invites them to be) they succeed in bringing them out?

(Exhortation need not in itself be considered ineffective. Consider the most successful exhortation in advertising history; "Come to where the flavor is." It works. More children smoke Marlboro, the most often exhorted brand of cigarettes, than any other.)

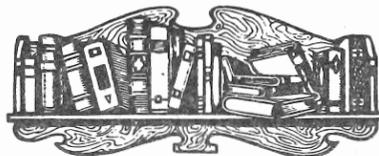
In the realm of decision making, students are taught that one problem with the peer group is that it forces "quick decisions." While it is good to teach students to resist negative pressure from the peer group, the implication is that all will be well for the child who makes up his or her mind slowly. Again the realm worked here is a subjective realm. Decision making about drugs ought to have an objective referent. In that sense, no *decision* about drugs is even necessary. One must simply confront reality. Students are handicapped for being taught that they must make decisions about what reality has already settled for us all. The decision making method therefore places them at risk.

What does the contrast teach the students, the contrast between energetic instruction offered on behalf of good group techniques and the idea that, on issues of substance, we must never be "judgmental"? What it teaches is that the teacher *will* take a stand -- even to such lengths as banishing a repeated rule-breaker to the corner (called, in the manner of *Animal Farm* "earning" a corner) -- but only on matters of importance. Doing the right thing about drugs is not one of them.

Research evidence accumulated over the years established that, once having been persuaded that what's most important is not to do the right thing but to make up their own minds, children are quite liable to make them up wrong. To be a child is to need guidance, and the only guidance many of them are getting is from salesmen. The caring adults, by and large, have swallowed the notion that the best way to show you care is to be non-judgmental. The tragic fact is that children who go through drug education programs "free of right and wrong answers" become drug users.

A longer version of the above article, entitled "Principled Morality vs. Consequentialism: Reflections on Recent Conversations with Drug Educators" by Dr. Coulson is available from Nevermore Associates, 6423 Goodwin Street, San Diego, California, 92111

The tragic fact is that children who go through drug courses "free of right and wrong answers" become drug users.



The difference between the subjective and the objective realm (and the related lesson that group therapy has been shown to backfire when applied to objective problems) is sometimes hard to get across to students of psychotherapy, so conditioned have they become to thinking in terms of the *technical* problem, namely, how to bring their patients' inner world to the surface. So I like to get at it with a line of dialogue lifted from the Harrison Ford movie *Witness*.

A government agent solving a major crime in a rural setting, Ford has been shot and sought refuge in the home of a Mennonite family. One day he finds the family's eight-year-old boy examining the pistol the agent has left in a drawer. It is loaded. Uncharacteristically, Ford raises his voice: "Never-ever play with a loaded gun!" He neither asks the boy how he feels about what he's doing nor offers to teach him a six-step decision-making regimen so that he can make up his own mind. Instead he enters upon an exercise in what learning theorists refer to as "one-trial learning." And it is clear at the end of the scene that the boy has learned. He has become highly unlikely to forget what he must never-ever do.

I mean to suggest, in other words, that time is spent subjectivizing objective concerns. This methodology works the wrong territory. For example, [in one curriculum] discussions are to be "free of right and wrong answers," and "The instructor is never judgmental." Obviously these rules are offered to the end that everyone be heard. But what's the subject? Is it drugs or not? What if Johnny or Mary's opinion about drugs is wrong? It doesn't matter. In this method, all opinions are equal. The discussion is "free of right and wrong answers."

Is there *any* possibility of a wrong answer? Yes. On the subject of group method, but only that. The only absolute the method recognizes is that the rules of group therapy must be honored.

For the rest, on the subject on which young people desperately need authoritative guidance (lest the only guidance they receive be from peer group and the dealers), they are to make up their own minds. All the leverage is applied to insuring group process, and that alone. Yes, the method provides bare-bones information about the dangers of drugs and alcohol; but apparently, no exhortation.

International Baccalaureate Program Faulted For Lack of U.S. History

A growing number of high schools nationwide are adopting the International Baccalaureate curriculum, but, as the numbers grow, so does the concern that the program is short on teaching democracy and long on promoting globalism, or one-world government.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is a two-year program of academic study with an international focus for students ages 16-19. The IB program began in 1962 under the auspices of the International School of Geneva with funding from UNESCO. The original purpose of the IB program was to provide the foreign students in Geneva with a comprehensive, standardized curriculum with an international orientation.

Today, the expanded goal of the IB program is to also provide students who may not be exposed to foreign countries with a liberal arts education based on a knowledge of the international community. As stated in the 1987 program materials, the IB curriculum provides the "whole person" with "different linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds with the intellectual, social, and critical perspectives necessary for the adult world that lies ahead of them."

The core curriculum of the IB program

includes instruction in at least one foreign language, world literature, history, geography, philosophy, social anthropology, psychology, economics, the experimental sciences, mathematics, and art or music.

In addition to required academics, students must also participate in artistic, athletic, or community service, write a 4,000 word research paper, and complete a philosophical course entitled the Theory of Knowledge which encourages students to acquire a critical awareness of what they know through analyzing concepts and arguments.

At the end of the two-year program, students take comprehensive subject examinations in order to earn the Baccalaureate Diploma which, according to program administrators, is recognized by higher institutions of learning around the world.

The IB program is currently used in 321 schools worldwide, of which 131 are in the United States. American enrollment in the IB program has more than doubled in the past five years.

According to one school official in Yakima, Washington, where the program was recently adopted, start-up costs to implement the pro-

gram amount to \$20,000.

Curriculum fails to highlight democratic government

Although critics of the IB program said the program provides some well-rounded academic instruction, they expressed concern that the history and humanities courses fail to provide American students with an adequate knowledge of, or pride in, democratic government and United States history.

Assistant Secretary of Education Chester E. Finn, Jr. is among those who fault the IB program for its lack of emphasis on the superiority of democratic government.

Critics pointed to the absence of U.S. history from the 1987 history course outline to support their claim that the IB program is deficient in U.S. history.

The current curriculum outline lists the following areas of study in history:

(1) Causes, practices and effects of war, (2) Nationalist and independence movements, decolonization, and the emergence and problems of new nations, (3) Economic developments of the twentieth century, (4) Social change in the twentieth century, (5) The artist and society, (6) The rise and rule of single party

states, (7) The establishment and work of international organizations, (8) Religion and politics, (9) East/West relations after 1945, (10) Minorities in the twentieth century.

Critics also noted that the close alliance between UNESCO and the IB program may partially account for the lack of focus on the importance of democratic government.

UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) has come under attack during the last decade for its pro-communist, anti-American activities. The United States announced its withdrawal from UNESCO in 1984 due to UNESCO's lack of attention to Western concerns.

As summarized in IB materials, the IB program has been closely tied to UNESCO since its conception in 1962.

Since that time, UNESCO officials have participated in major IB conferences in order to evaluate and make recommendations for the future of the IB program. At an April 1974 conference sponsored by the French government, the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) unanimously recommended that the work of the IBO be continued in closer association with UNESCO.

Film *continued*

minute film, as stated and restated by actress and host Rae Dawn Chong, are (1) "AIDS is hard to get," (2) "You can get AIDS from sharing needles," and (3) "if you have sex, any kind of sex, use a condom." Miss Chong states, "If you decide not to have sex, that's okay, too."

Concerning the cause of AIDS, Miss Chong tells viewers, "It's not their [the homosexuals'] fault. It's nobody's fault. There's no one to blame except the virus."

Opponents of the film objected to the homosexual messages in the film. They pointed to one scene in a bicycle shop in which the brother of an AIDS victim uses dialogue and tears to elicit the viewers' acceptance of homosexuals.

Criticism and controversy have surrounded the film ever since it was unveiled. Although the New York City Board of Education originally commissioned O.D.N. Productions in New York to produce the film and provided the \$97,000 funding, the New York Board was less than satisfied with the finished film.

The Board was particularly unhappy with the graphic nature of the film and the lack of emphasis on abstinence as an effective means of AIDS prevention. As a result, the Board requested a number of revisions in the film before they will make it widely available for high school students in New York City.

Christie Timms, distribution manager for O.D.N., said that O.D.N. has produced an alternative version of the film called *The Subject is AIDS* "in response to criticism from educators and parents who have expressed an interest in abstinence as the primary force of AIDS prevention."

She said, "the [new] video will have an introduction by the Surgeon General C. Everett Koop explaining the seriousness of the problem as it relates to junior and senior high school students, ... and the scene in which three girls discuss sex, condom use and birth control is replaced by one in which three girls, two black and one white, discuss abstinence as a positive alternative and primary means of AIDS prevention." The revised version will be available in late May.

To date, the original version of *Sex, Drugs, & AIDS* has been distributed to all 50 states, particularly to schools and state health department offices. Miss Timms estimated that "between 300 and 450" schools have shown the film.

According to Miss Timms, the Charles F. Revson Foundation of New York initially subsidized the distribution of 5,000 free copies of the film which normally sells for \$35.

Iowa mothers battle with school district

One Ames, Iowa mother is currently embroiled in a growing debate with school officials over whether or not the local high school students should view the film.

Nancy Charter, mother of a high school student, attended a film preview of *Sex, Drugs, & AIDS* the week of April 27. Mrs. Charter said her shock and anger over the film's content and message compelled her to take immediate action.

Mrs. Charter, along with several other mothers, formed a telephone tree to call and alert other citizens and parents to the scheduled film showing at the school. The mothers also urged other parents to attend a final film preview the evening of May 5.

Fifty parents attended the May 5 preview, but, despite vocal objections to the film, school officials said they still plan to show the film to students.

Mrs. Charter said parents will continue their efforts to stop the film showing. Concerned citizens distributed copies of a recent speech by Secretary of Education William Bennett in which he stressed the need for abstinence education as a preventative for AIDS.

Michigan Citizens Sound the Alarm About Witch, R-rated Films in Local Schools

School officials in Plymouth, Michigan, have not heard the last of Citizens For Better Education, despite the fact that the school board has repeatedly turned down requests from the new citizen coalition to reconsider or eliminate R-rated films and occult and witchcraft exercises from local classrooms. Instead, the chairman of Citizens for Better Education (CBE) said the group has only just begun to fight.

Most recently, the 65-member citizen group has distributed 20,000 fliers by hand to homes in the Plymouth area in order to alert taxpayers to what they consider offensive or inappropriate materials used in the Plymouth-Canton schools. CBE plans to eventually reach the whole community.

CBE specifically objects to middle and high school classroom activities which include palm reading and Ouija board exercises as well as showing R-rated films such as *Excalibur* without parental notice or consent.

The current CBE newsletter listed the following objections to nonacademic exercises taught in the Plymouth-Canton schools:

- The film *The Sword and the Sorcerer* was shown to 6th graders at East Middle School. The CBE newsletter stated "This is not a Walt Disney animated cartoon. This is a full Hollywood style production geared to frighten any viewer. The opening scene shows a witch calling up a devil from the pit of hell while the walls come alive with anguished humans, bleeding and screaming in agony. The witch proceeds to worship the devil by licking and kissing him throughout several scenes, calling him, 'my god' and 'my master.'" CBE reported that, due to their written and filed complaints, the school withdrew the film from classrooms.

- The films *Teen Wolf* and *Ghostbusters* were shown at East Middle School while R-rated movies including *Excalibur*, *The Thing*, and *The Breakfast Club* were shown at local high schools. Among many reasons, CBE objected to the films because "they promote the acceptance of premarital sex, foul language, and use of drugs."

- The book *Rules for Radicals* is used in local high schools. The CBE flier included the following quote from the book: "Today's generation, having rejected their materialistic backgrounds, the goal of a well-paid job, suburbandom, automobile, security and everything that meant success to their parents. They have had it. They watched it lead their parents to tranquilizers, alcohol, long-term endurance marriages, or divorces, high blood pressure, ulcers, frustration, and the disillusionment of 'the good life.'"

The school board unanimously denied the written request for reconsideration and removal of the book.

- Fourth-graders at Isbister Elementary school received an instruction sheet about crystal ball reading, palm reading and card reading. According to CBE, the instructions to students stated, "in either case, once you learn how to read the clues you too can try to tell a fortune. Since most fortune tellers have some type of ritual they perform to help set the mood and create a sense of expectation, the room is usually dimly lit by a candle and the fortune-teller draws out the suspense by deeply concentrating on the clues. The more you believe in your prophesy, the more likely it is to come true. You may want to test your own psychic

Mrs. Daskalakis that her young daughter had nightmares after seeing films including *Teen Wolf* in school.

Mrs. Daskalakis subsequently met with school officials to discuss her concerns. The school officials said they had seen the films, but they refused to take any action.

As a result, Mrs. Daskalakis decided to run for the school board in the spring of 1986. Mrs. Daskalakis said she met with school officials 44 times to discuss her concerns as a citizen and school board candidate. Those meetings did not result in any changes in school policy or activities.

Although she was unsuccessful in that attempt, Mrs. Daskalakis said she was successful in informing and recruiting concerned citizens to organize Citizens for Better Education.

The 65-member group distributed 20,000 fliers by hand to homes in the Plymouth area...



abilities or maybe just learn to be a good fortune-teller." The school board unanimously denied the request to withdraw this material.

One citizen recruits many more

CBE was organized in 1986 by Diane Daskalakis, a local merchant, who became concerned when her neighbor, a teacher, told her about the scheduled appearance of a self-professed witch at the local high school in conjunction with Halloween in October 1985.

Mrs. Daskalakis said she was so concerned about the witch that she circulated a petition in her own neighborhood to protest and block the witch's appearance, and 98 percent of the neighbors signed the petition.

The citizen leader took her petition to the next school board meeting at which an overflow crowd unsuccessfully requested that the school board withdraw their sponsorship of the witch.

Following that meeting, Mrs. Daskalakis became increasingly aware of nonacademic exercises and films being used in the classroom from mothers who visited her jewelry store and told her about their concerns. One mother told

"I started with the help of only two people," said Mrs. Daskalakis. "We hand delivered about 5,000 fliers which took about two months. From that, more people came forward to form a network of over 45 active workers. Each person is assigned a territory, and we deliver over 10,000 fliers in four days. We have approximately 38,000 homes [in the Plymouth area]."

Most recently, CBE is actively campaigning for two school board candidates in the upcoming June election, and the group plans to issue and distribute newsletters every two or three months.

Dr. Holmes, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, said that, prior to the organization of CBE, the district typically received only two complaints per year. Now, members of CBE "are developing a growing interest in school materials."

Dr. Holmes confirmed that R-rated films are shown in the schools, but he said that parental permission is normally required. He noted that the film *The Breakfast Club* had generated much controversy and local media attention.



Legislation Update . . . Homeschools in Maine

Local school districts in Maine will receive the same amount of state funding for home-school students as they do for students attending public schools if proposed legislation passes the State Legislature.

The controversial legislation, L.D. 892, is entitled an "Act to Allow Per Pupil Reimbursement to School Administrative Units for Home Instruction Pupils." According to the official legislative summary, "the bill allows districts which keep track of home school students to count those students in their pupil count used in computing their state school subsidy under the School Finance Act."

Under current law, school districts only receive state and local funding for each student who is enrolled in the public school system.

The legislation received unanimous approval from a House Committee, but opponents said

they will not let the bill pass the State Legislature without a fight.

Mrs. Bettina Dobbs, president of Guardians of Education for Maine (GEM), is one of the leaders of the opposition to L.D. 892. "Parents of homeschooled children have already paid local taxes to the school districts, for which they receive no services," she said.

Mrs. Dobbs suggested that "perhaps remanding those funds to the homeschooling families should be considered at this time" instead of providing school districts money for services they never provide to the homeschool children.

Mrs. Dobbs explained that "private-homeschooled children" do not require expensive services such as bus costs, a school nurse, a school-based health clinic, school counselors, equipment and building maintenance costs, and death and dying or suicide programs. Instead,

she said the cost of homeschool education is the sole responsibility of the parents who have already paid taxes to support the local school which their children do not attend.

Proponents of the bill defended the legislation by claiming that it would benefit homeschool parents. They said that local school district officials would be less likely to attack homeschool families if the district continued to receive money for each homeschool student.

Supporters of homeschooling cited that argument to support their own long-standing claim that money is at the root of the opposition to homeschooling. They said that school officials realize that the rapid rise in the number of homeschoolers will result in a corresponding decline in state and local taxpayer dollars which are allocated to school districts based on district enrollment figures.