

Students Threatened with 'Mr. Scissors'

SYRACUSE, NY — Students at Delaware Elementary School were warned by third-grade teacher Lynne Strumlok that, if they misbehaved or did not keep quiet, "Mr. Scissors" would cut out their tongues.

When the 8-year-olds got boisterous, Strumlok would go to her desk, take out an adult-sized pair of scissors, and start opening and closing the blades.

Strumlok had made several threats, but recently the Joey DeCarr, 7, was from the front of the class as an example for continuously talking. Strumlok reportedly tied a "blood catcher" around Joey's neck, put on latex gloves, and pulled out the scissors. She stopped when Joey began sobbing.

"Man, oh, man, I blew my top," said Joey's father, Harold DeCarr. "Now I'm the one who gets up with him in the middle of the night when he's screaming because of nightmares," he said. "I'm the one who puts the nightlight on because he's afraid of the dark now."

Another Delaware Elementary School teacher, Joanne Herschkorn who teaches reading, carried the threats even farther. She told students the tongues were first, then came the livers.

"It's appalling," said Joanne Shapiro, a psychologist with Helix Assessment and Therapy Services in Syracuse. "A teacher is supposed to engender feelings of safety and security. These teachers have done the opposite."

One parent said her daughter came home from school and started asking strange questions like "Can someone talk without a tongue?" and "How much of your stomach do you have to cut to take out someone's liver?" Her daughter began having nightmares and was fearful of going to school.

Approximately 50 parents met at the school to object to how their children had been treated. "It's child abuse," said Harold DeCarr, "and I want those women out of that school."

School district administrators said the teachers did not intentionally hurt the children and promised a full investigation. In the meantime, both teachers have been removed from their classrooms. The teachers admitted using "Mr. Scissors" as a disciplinary method, but claimed they thought the children would know they were kidding. They apologized to students, but many parents say that isn't enough.

While the district conducts its investigation, both teachers will receive full pay and work in other positions assisting teachers. Assistant superintendent Robert DiFlorio said it's unlikely either teacher will be fired. ■

Illegal Sex Education Test Stirs Parents to Protest in Michigan

LAPEER, MI — Superintendent Jack McCauley admits that an error was made on September 30th when a health test containing sex education questions was administered indiscriminately to Lapeer West High School juniors. But McCauley may have to wait for the next school board election to find out whether or not angry parents have accepted his apology.

The Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) health test, consisting of 60 multiple-choice questions, was administered in all of the state's 565 school districts. But the test taken by Lapeer West students contained 15 additional questions, addressing such explicit sex-related subjects as the "proper" use of condoms. Only 71 schools statewide received the longer test, which was part of a pilot program entitled "Responsible Sexuality." State Board of Education officials have thus far refused to identify the other 70 schools.

McCauley concedes that Lapeer West violated state law by failing to notify parents in advance that the test would contain sex-related questions, and by neglecting to exclude students who had already opted out of the school's sex education class. "We screwed up on that," he said. The test was mistakenly administered to three students who had opted out of the school's sex education class, and to 30 transfer students who had not yet taken the course. School officials promised to pull the answer sheets of those 33 students and send letters of apology to their parents.

Michigan law states: "A pupil shall not be enrolled in a class in which the subjects of family planning or reproductive health are discussed unless the pupil's parent or guardian is notified in advance of the course and the content of the course, is given a prior opportunity to review the materials to be used in the course, and is notified in advance of his or her right to have the pupil excused from the class."

Senate Kills Costly Education Bill

By a single vote in October, the U.S. Senate tossed into the "circular file" the \$800,000,000 "education" boondoggle sponsored by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA). This bill was packaged as the "Neighborhood Schools Improvement Act," but it wouldn't have "improved" anything and it would have made neighborhoods subservient to a federalized bureaucracy.

Every provision for parents' choice in schools had already been completely removed from the bill. Choice was the centerpiece of President Bush's proposals to improve and reform the public schools, and the liberal Congress would have absolutely none of it, despite growing public demand for choice. The Democrats had to vote against choice because the National Education Association (NEA) won't permit it. The NEA officially endorsed Bill Clinton for President, as well as a majority of Democrats running for Congress this year.



16-year-old boy required to take the test even though parents opted him out of sex ed.

Carrie Litzman has already received her letter of apology from Lapeer West, but she still isn't satisfied. Her 16-year-old son was one of the three students excused from the school's sex ed class, and as far as she is concerned there was no excuse for making him take the test. "They have done their best to strip my son of his chastity," she said. Once her son realized the nature of the test, however, he did what he could to lessen his exposure. "He went through and marked answers without reading any of the questions," said Litzman.

Students who had taken the school's sex education class were also shocked by the explicit nature of the test questions. "They were angry, they were embarrassed, they were confused. They had no forewarning of what was coming," claims Mrs. Litzman. Adults at the school were caught off guard as well, she says. "The kids who took this test didn't know what it was. The teachers didn't know what it was. The principal didn't know what it was." Mrs. Litzman

reports that one teacher even went to the principal's office after the test was concluded and asked, "Have you seen what we just gave the kids?"

In an interview with the *Flint Journal*, Superintendent McCauley defended the Responsible Sexuality portion of the test, arguing that, "if a person objects to sex education, they're going to object to the test." The material covered by the questions was explicit, he conceded, "but that is, in fact, what kids cover in sex ed class."

Mrs. Litzman has learned that every question on the test has a written state objective and is demanding to know what the objective is for each particular question. She believes that the state's overall goals are to convince teens that they have a right to sexual gratification and to present homosexuality as a legitimate alternative life style.

Although MEAP tests are not administered to seniors, and her son is not scheduled to take any more this year, Mrs. Litzman claims that she would have exercised her right to have him excused if she had known beforehand what the test would consist of. Few parents realize that their children can be excused from taking the entire MEAP test, she says, because school officials neglect to inform them of this right. In fact, students are often told that colleges and employers will not accept them without a state-endorsed diploma, and that they have to have MEAP scores to get one. This, Mrs. Litzman says, is patently untrue.

Mrs. Litzman attempted to air her complaints at the October 15 school board meeting, but was advised to present them at an upcoming curriculum meeting instead. Superintendent McCauley subsequently sent a letter to parents informing them that the committee had met and considered their objections. (See box on page 4 for some of the sexuality questions.) ■

In the first year, the Kennedy education bill would have funnelled 100 percent of the money into the hands of the public school bureaucrats. Thus, nearly one billion new federal dollars would have gone to feed three new layers of bureaucracy before any money would get to the classroom.

The Kennedy education bill would have poured taxpayer funds into "comprehensive education and social services," the catch-all code cliché for the controversial school-based clinics that dispense contraceptives, condom distribution, abortion counseling and referral, psychological counseling, and homosexual outreach — all without the knowledge or consent of the parents.

The Kennedy education bill would have established the equivalent of a National School Board called a "National Education Goals Panel," with a fulltime director and staff. This new bureaucracy would have had the power to establish both the curriculum

("national content standards") and the manner (national schools delivery system) in which the new curriculum would be taught.

The bill's advocates said, "Don't worry it's voluntary," but the bill would have required state plans to "provide for the adoption of school delivery standards" as a condition of receiving a federal grant. Such "standards" would have become another layer of the same education bureaucracy that is responsible for our present failures, trampling on the traditional role of state and local school districts.

The Kennedy education bill would have set up a commission to study ways to teach values. The "values" commission set up in this bill would report to "appropriate committees" of Congress. Kennedy is chairman of one of those committees.

The defeated bill is expected to be reintroduced into Congress in January. ■

EDUCATION BRIEFS

Frank Sinatra's singing is the punishment for Chicago-area students who misbehave. Teacher Bruce Janu sentences misbehaving pupils to the Frank Sinatra Detention Club, where they are forced to listen to Sinatra tapes — with no talking, homework, or writing allowed. He says the students "just hate it and they're miserable. Despite this negative reaction, Janu hopes this will enlighten the students because "Sinatra is an important part of our jazz heritage." He adds that if the threat of Sinatra wears off, he will use his other weapons — Tony Bennett or Mel Torme.

The top official of the U. S. Public Health Service says that only abstinence-based sex education will lower teen pregnancies and sexual diseases. Dr. William Archer III, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Population Affairs said, "No condom program or school-based clinic has ever shown the ability to prevent pregnancy. We want programs that work." Dr. Archer added, "Abstinence courses teach youth to abstain from premarital sex as a matter of health and personal integrity," whereas most sex education courses "inform students how to use contraceptives" but "do not make judgments about whether sexual activity is right or wrong."

The Michael Josephson Institute of Ethics, a non-profit group devoted to character education, states that an "unacceptably high" number of 15-to-30-year-olds are willing to steal, lie and cheat at work and in school. The San Francisco group said that a survey of high school and college students found that 61% of highschoolers and 32% of college students cheated on an exam at least once, that 33% of high school kids and 16% of college students admit they've stolen from a store, that 33% in each group are willing to lie on a resume, and that 21% in college would falsify a report to hang onto a job.

St. Louis school officials and police are investigating a 6th-grade boy's report that a substitute teacher held him out of a 4th-floor window and shook him for punishment after he spilled the teacher's coffee. The student, Jimmy Reavis Jr., age 11, attends a magnet school in the St. Louis public school system. Witnesses confirmed the boy's account, but the school will not say whether the teacher will be allowed to return to the classroom or not.

Education Reporter (ISSN 0887-0608) is published monthly by Eagle Forum Education and Legal Defense Fund with editorial offices at Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002, (618)462-5415. 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 \$25. Back issues available @ \$2. Second Class postage paid at Alton, Illinois.

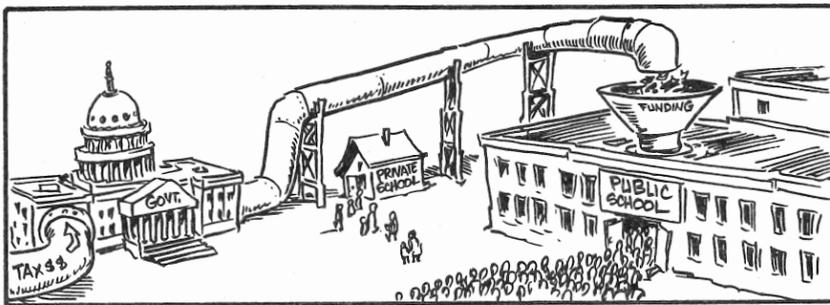
Education Choice Kept off Ballot in California

SAN DIEGO, CA — School choice was not on the California ballot on November 3 due to what parents in San Diego County call "sabotage." The failure of a school voucher initiative to qualify for the November ballot was due to the discovery of thousands of duplicate signatures on the petitions. "It appears there was intentional fraud," said Conny McCormack, registrar of voters for San Diego County. "We're turning this over to the district attorney."

The California Teachers Association (CTA) had announced earlier this year that it would conduct a "very dramatic" campaign to block a school choice initiative

taken, it was revealed that the initiative had achieved 639,000 valid signatures, well over the 619,000 needed to qualify. ExCEL went to court asking for a place on the November ballot, but by then the courts ruled there wasn't time to print extra ballot materials. The measure is now scheduled for the June 1994 ballot.

Some claim the extra two years is an advantage because in 1994 there won't be a general election campaign to compete with, and now the pro-choice proponents have more time to raise money and strengthen their opposition to the anti-choice propaganda coming out of the school establishment.



from the ballot. This initiative, which was sponsored by ExCEL, a Los Angeles-based coalition of business leaders and low-income parents, would have provided a \$2,500 annual state scholarship to schoolchildren who want to attend public, private, or parochial schools.

"There are some proposals that are so evil that they should never even be presented to the voters," wrote CTA President D. A. "Del" Weber. "We do not believe, for example, that we should hold an election on 'empowering' the Ku Klux Klan. And we would not think it's 'undemocratic' to oppose voting on legalizing child prostitution. Destroying public education in our view, belongs in that category."

One of the tactics used in the "blocking campaign" was intimidation. Teachers and anti-voucher activists surrounded signature-gatherers to keep away would-be signers. Despite such bullying tactics ExCEL turned in 910,000 signatures although only 615,000 were needed.

The campaign, which was expected to succeed without any problems, ran into trouble when the county official started to verify the signatures. During a random sampling, a large number of duplicate signatures were found, causing a punitive penalty to be assessed. A follow-up check of signatures found that people presumably aware of punitive penalties had altered the signature petitions with fraudulent duplicates. In San Diego, 32 people had signed the petitions 10 or more times. "Many, many, many more than that signed the seven, eight, or nine times," says Conny McCormack.

The CTA denies authorizing any use of duplicate signatures, but its officials are elated over the outcome. They sent out a letter thanking allies for helping in the "blocking effort."

Mr. Arno, the initiative expert, is astounded at the silence of the media on the strategies used against school choice. "Just imagine the reaction," he said, "if environmentalists circulating petitions were the victims of fraud and were harassed by chemical company goons."

When a full count of the signatures was

Privately Funded Vouchers

Many businesses, private foundations, and individuals aren't waiting around while lawmakers debate the merits of government vouchers for education. Instead, they are enabling hundreds of children from low-income families to enroll in private schools by funding local voucher programs.

"The business community is tapping into a huge market of low-income people who want to take their kids out of the public schools, but don't have the resources," said Allyson Tucker, the manager of the center for educational policy at the Heritage Foundation. "There is a sense of frustration with the unwillingness of government to move" on proposals such as vouchers, said Denis P. Doyle, an education analyst and a senior fellow with the Hudson Institute.

Students in Atlanta, Little Rock, Milwaukee, San Antonio, and other cities are benefiting from this effort designed to provide low-income parents with more choice in education. The plans usually offer to pay half the cost of private-school tuition for children whose families meet federal school-lunch criteria, with a maximum grant ranging from \$750 to \$3,000 per year. Some programs aid as few as 19 and others as many as 1,500 students.

Several programs report that they have hundreds of students on waiting lists. In Atlanta, over 7,000 applications have been received for its voucher program, the Children's Education Foundation. "We had anticipated about 2,000 applications," said Matthew Glavin, the president of the public-policy foundation. "There has been a huge response."

In Arkansas, a Jonesboro manufacturing-company owner, Blant Hurt, has raised \$50,000 to launch a voucher program. "I'm not doing this to give away money," Mr. Hurt said. "I believe in breaking the government's monopoly on education."

Most of the privately funded choice programs have been inspired by the Choice Charitable Trust in Indianapolis, a plan introduced a year ago by J. Patrick Rooney, the chairman of Golden Rule Insurance Company. (See *Education Reporter*, September, 1991)

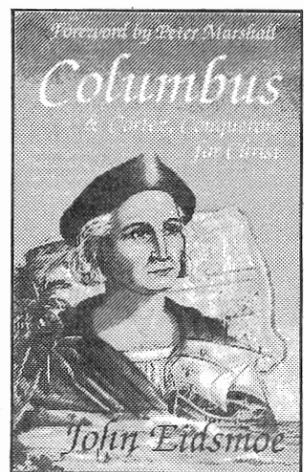
Book of the Month



Columbus & Cortez, Conquerors for Christ by John Eidsmoe. New Leaf Press, Green Forest, Arkansas, 1992, 304 pp. \$9.95.

Those of us who learned that "Columbus sailed the ocean blue in fourteen hundred ninety two" have difficulty understanding the vilification of Columbus that is taking place during this 500th anniversary of the Admiral's voyage. John Eidsmoe not only sets the record straight by going back to original sources, but also demonstrates that Columbus-bashing is just one aspect of a much larger cultural war, an attempt by the "politically correct" extremists to secularize America by denigrating our Christian foundations.

In this well-documented yet very readable book, Eidsmoe cites extensively from Columbus's *Journals* and *Book of Prophecies* to prove that Columbus was a committed Christian who wanted to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of Asia and Africa. The main obstacle was the power of Islam that controlled the Middle East and the Mediterranean. The best way to surmount the Islamic menace and bring the Gospel to Asia and Africa, Columbus believed, was to sail west across the Atlantic.



Without denying that Columbus made mistakes, Attorney Eidsmoe presents a convincing defense of his actions. He demonstrates that many of the supposed wrongs that took place during the colonization of the New World were falsehoods, gross exaggerations, or occurred after Columbus returned to Spain.

The chapter describing the adventures of Cortez and his 500 men as they conquered the Aztec empire is exciting. Eidsmoe reveals that, contrary to the modern glorification of Aztec culture, the Aztecs practiced a bloodthirsty religion of human sacrifice that alienated the surrounding tribes and caused them to look upon Cortez as a leader who could liberate them from Aztec tyranny.

In the closing chapter, Eidsmoe addresses current issues surrounding the Columbus controversy: environmentalism, racism, land-stealing, slavery, and the clash of values to name but a few. This book is a useful antidote to Columbus bashing!

FOCUS: MAIN PARENTAL OBJECTIONS TO

The Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education

The following are further excerpts from the Preliminary Report of the Senate Select Committee to Study the Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education entitled "It's Not Kid-Friendly," released in October 1992. The curriculum has been controversial in Michigan since it was introduced into Michigan public schools in 1984, and was vigorously criticized by the Senate Committee after listening to parents and teachers who testified at 12 hearings around the state. Last month's Education Reporter excerpted the 30 Findings from the 53-page Report of the Senate Committee. Herewith are excerpts from the portion entitled "Main Parental Objections."

Families were being threatened by the neighborhood school. They believed their child's school should be an ally and not a foe in their efforts to equip their children for life in the last decade of this century and beyond. They sent their children to school for a variety of reasons. They wanted them to learn the academics, reading, writing and arithmetic and the other classes needed to be a productive citizen. These parents told us loud and clear, they didn't however, send their children to school to have their family values challenged and changed.

Parents questioned whether it was the school's job to teach their kids about the things that are taught in most homes. Since when, they asked, did the schools gain the right to teach their children basic safety, survival and coping skills that parents have been teaching their children since the beginning of time?

They went to their local schools and to their local school boards and asked these questions and became frustrated when they did not receive answers. Many establishment parents were forced into being middle-class terrorists to get information about what their children were being taught. What follows is a list of the main objections we heard.

1. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL IS NOT FAMILY-FRIENDLY.

Michigan Model developers and partisans have a vision of the child that differs from that of the average parent. A child prospers best, they maintain, when it is left to develop its own individual identity, unfettered by parental values. The child evolves and grows as it experiences life and all of its vagaries.

The Michigan Model curriculum is peppered with examples where students are steered away from their families as their first line of defense in life situations. Instead, they are directed to their peers, counselors and other health care workers as providers of advice and direction.

2. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL IS VALUE FREE. IT ALLOWS STUDENTS TO DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT'S RIGHT AND WRONG. IT DOES THIS THROUGH VALUES CLARIFICATION EXERCISES IN ALL GRADES.

The Michigan Model is a textbook example of non-directive affective education. It is an educational methodology where the focus is on giving students information about "life issues" such as sexuality. Then it teaches them decision-making skills. The centerpiece of this method of teaching is the small discussion group. It is patterned after similar groups popularized

by humanist psychologist Carl Rogers who developed client-centered therapy.

The small group is the primary means used by the student to seek answers to life questions. The teacher plays the role of facilitator of the discussion. Each student finds his or her own answers to suit their own needs and values. According to this educational model, there are no right and wrong answers. Group consensus becomes a substitute for ethical truth.

The non-directive model of affective education results in children getting squishy messages about sex, about substance abuse and other important life matters. When they are most in need of strong direction, they get choices.

We have extreme misgivings about this approach. It can result in challenging and changing a child's deeply held religious and family values. It is a values clarification exercise pure and simple and should not be used in public elementary or secondary schools.

3. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL IS BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT ADOLESCENTS CANNOT CONTROL THEIR SEXUAL URGES. THEY JUST DON'T HAVE THE ABILITY TO SAY "NO" TO SEX, ESPECIALLY IN TODAY'S ENVIRONMENT.

What little confidence our educational establishment has in our children, especially adolescents. Many in the educational establishment who testified at our hearings seemed ready to label anybody who advocated sexual self-control for youth as a religious fanatic. There was the strong message that you were not connected to the reality of today's youth who are busy copulating, along with doing their school work.

Let's make no mistake about it! Pre-marital sexual abstinence has been the standard for our civilization for the past 2,000 years. We challenge anybody to point to evidence to the contrary. We can learn important lessons from history, especially on this issue. Cultures grew strong because of their emphasis on sexual virtue, monogamy and the family.

The cultural norm in the United States still favors premarital abstinence and shows disfavor toward casual sex among minors. Nevertheless, progressive sex educators believe they need to avoid upholding normative standards.

On what does the state of Michigan base its assumptions about sexual behavior? Alfred Kinsey, the fabled sex researcher of the 50's, is the one who has led Michigan Model developers and sympathizers to believe that humans, especially young people, are not able to control their sexual desires.

4. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL ASSUMES THAT ADOLESCENTS ARE ABLE TO REASON THROUGH CHOICES INVOLVING RISK-TAKING BEHAVIOR, ESPECIALLY INVOLVING SEX AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

Would you trust your teenager or pre-adolescent being given license to make independent decisions about important questions such as whether they should take drugs, drink alcohol or have sex? The Michigan Model does.

At no point is the student told it's just plain wrong for them to smoke and to drink.

They are left to their own devices. They are left with the loaded gun on the nightstand, without being told not to touch it.

5. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL TEACHES CHILDREN THAT IF THEY ARE GOING TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL INTERCOURSE, THEY SHOULD USE "SAFE SEX" PRACTICES.

The message is there even though it might be sugar-coated and wrapped under the words family and values. The wrapping is actually foil and it contains a condom. If a student is going to have sex, then do it safely and responsibly. And the Michigan Model says safety from AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) comes from condoms.

Giving a kid a condom and telling him to have fun is akin to giving him a loaded gun with all the rounds, except three, in the cylinder.

Adolescents are not looking for birth control. They are looking for ways to postpone sexual involvement.

6. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL USES A VARIETY OF BREATHING TECHNIQUES FOR RELAXATION AND STRESS REDUCTION AMONG STUDENTS THAT RAISE SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR EFFECT. ONE OF THEM IS CALLED THE QUIETING REFLEX. ITS DEVELOPER, DR. CHARLES STROEBEL, WARNED ABOUT QR'S POTENTIAL FOR HARM.

Parents are concerned that such exercises will result in an altered state of consciousness. To those weaned on stories from the sixties about Dr. Timothy Leary and his experimentation with LSD, such concerns almost seem laughable.

However, scientific research shows that brain wave patterns can easily be altered through breathing changes. This can result in an altered state where the brain is more amenable to suggestions. In the hands of a conscientious and skillful teacher, such exercises should be no problem. However, what about the teacher who is not diligent? What could happen?

7. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL PUTS STUDENTS IN DANGER OF BEING HYPNOTIZED.

At each hearing, there were parents who feared that their kids were being or in danger of being hypnotized. Many parents were certain their children were being taught to self-hypnotize themselves. Pictures were painted of elementary school children being programmed by teachers whose agendas were set by the Michigan Model Steering Committee in Lansing.

We did not see evidence of such a conspiracy. What we saw was a lot of unanswered questions about the effects on children of all the relaxation exercises in the Model. We did not feel confident that children would be invulnerable to an altered state of consciousness given the right circumstances. Michigan Model officials responded by waving their hands and saying parents could be assured that their children were not being hypnotized or being taught to hypnotize themselves. In other words, trust them! Parents have indicated they were not reassured.

7. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL USES CLASSROOM TEACHERS AS AMATEUR PSYCHOTHERAPISTS WITH THEIR CHILDREN.

Parents told us in unison they felt there was a hidden danger every time they let their child go into a Michigan Model classroom. The danger came from teachers who played amateur psychologists with their children. Teachers who are not licensed for such activities were given a mandate by the Michigan Model to unlock the inner most spaces of their child's mind.

They pointed to reams of examples from the nine Teacher's Manuals of the Model curriculum. From kindergarten through eighth grade, students were asked to sort out all sorts of social problems and dilemmas. They were asked their feelings on just about every kind of situation they would face at their age level.

Michigan Model proponents would respond that every dilemma and problem students were asked to respond to would be couched in terms that would exclude intrusions into personal and family privacy. Parents pointed to examples where that clearly is not the case. The door to their child's inner-self was being opened. And the person grabbing onto the door handle and pulling was the teacher, untrained and unlicensed for such activities.

Is it or isn't it psychotherapy? Depends on who you talk to. The Department of Mental Health issued a statement trying to assuage the fears of parents. The department said simply to parents, the Model's problem-solving approach is not psychotherapy. There was nothing more. Parents were supposed to trust the unidentified memo writer.

Are the Model's problem-solving exercises psychotherapy? It would be easy to pick out many exercises from the Model that would fill the above description. Call it what you will, but it looks like psychotherapy, sounds like it, feels like it and is intended to have the same results.

8. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL LESSONS ENCOURAGE AND RESULT IN REGULAR INVASIONS OF FAMILY AND STUDENT PRIVACY.

When they sent their children to school, parents did not expect that the inner sanctums of their child's life and their family life would be a subject of classroom discussion. What your child perceives as stress in your home is fair game. Your spouse who drinks too much on occasion could be fodder for discussion in sixth grade. Your child's innermost feelings about life and about self will be opened up for examination.

We found no reason to be encouraged on this issue. The whole question hinges on if and how the Model is being taught in your child's classroom. We were able to gather very little evidence, anecdotal or otherwise, that the Model is being taught the way the Teacher's Manual and Michigan Model in-service training specifies.

However, looking at the lessons in the Manuals leaves one with a very clear impression that many parental fears are grounded in fact. A standard each lesson should be measured by is a statement by a U.S. District Court in the case of *Merriken v. Cressman* where a Pennsylvania parent complained that a schools drug prevention program was invading her son's and her family's privacy.

See Michigan Model, page 4

Michigan Model — Continued from page 3

The court said emphatically: "There probably is no more private a relationship, excepting marriage, which the Constitution safeguards than that between parents and child."

9. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL LESSONS ON AIDS ARE LARGELY IRRELEVANT AND COULD CONTRIBUTE TO, RATHER THAN PREVENT YOUNG PEOPLE FROM GETTING THE FATAL DISEASE.

This is another example of how the Michigan Model subtly and we are sure, unintentionally, encourages teenagers to engage in risk-taking behaviors that they are not equipped to handle. For instance, the grade 8 teacher's manual for the Model, has teachers telling students that AIDS can be prevented by the use of condoms if one is sexually active. Research shows that consistent condom use results in pregnancies more than 10 percent of the time and that their use results in transmission of the HIV virus more than 17 percent of the time. This is hardly reassuring to parents concerned about children growing up in a sexually-oriented society.

10. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL INFORMATION, THE WHAT, HOW, AND WHEN THAT LESSONS ARE BEING TAUGHT HAS BEEN SHROUDED FROM PARENTAL VIEW BY BUREAUCRATIC VEIL SECRECY.

School building administrators looked us straight in the eye and usually told us the exact opposite. But parents told how they had to travel long distances to an Intermediate School District or a regional library to view the Michigan Model lessons their kids were to be taught. Some administrators allowed some parents some access to Model lessons, but it was usually limited and parents said they were made to feel like intruders who were being watched.

11. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL RELIES AND FOSTERS TECHNIQUES AND TEACHINGS OF THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT, A RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT WITH STRONG TIES TO THE OCCULT AND HINDUISM.

Students, many parents were saying, were being taught the religious practices culled from the New Age movement. The New Age movement is a loosely networked group that subscribes to several beliefs which come from Eastern mystical religious practices and from the occult. They talked about visualization, centering, meditation, altered states of consciousness and guided imagery.

12. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL INSTRUCTS CHILDREN ON DEATH AND DYING WITH LESSONS THAT CAN CAUSE UNNECESSARY FEAR. THEY ARE ALSO CONTRARY TO THE BELIEFS OF THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION.

Why should public schools have regular lessons plugged into the curriculum for K-8 about death and dying, parents asked at our hearings. There was testimony about how elementary students were starting to worry about their parents dying. Many questioned the appropriateness of such instruction, while others questioned the materials used. Some materials violated family and religious values, some parents maintained.

13. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL PROMOTES THE USE OF A FORM OF TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION IN ITS LESSONS.

For many parents, certain calming exer-

cises for students in the Michigan Model resemble adapted Eastern meditative methods such as TM (transcendental meditation). Many came to the hearings as former practitioners of this religious rite, others were familiar with it and some weren't familiar, but they didn't like the sound of it. This classroom exercise carried the stigma of religious practices they were not comfortable with. They did not want their children using techniques to relax that are used to worship somebody else's god.

14. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL INCLUDES SUPPLEMENTARY TEACHING MATERIALS IN WHAT IS CALLED PHASE BOXES. THESE MATERIALS ARE USUALLY NOT AVAILABLE FOR EXAMINATION BY PARENTS.

There's this whole other side to the Michigan Model that is closed to public view, we were told. It's called Phase Boxes. These are the supplementary teaching materials, sometimes visual aids, books, worksheets, films and videotapes and other materials used to help teach Model lessons. Some parents were fearful that the Phase Boxes for each grade contained material anathema to what they felt was appropriate for their children to be taught.

15. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL ENCOURAGES CHILDREN TO VIEW HOMOSEXUALITY AS AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE.

We could find no evidence in the Michigan Model teacher manuals for K-9 that students were being taught that homosexuality is an acceptable alternative lifestyle. However, we heard testimony that during some in-service training teachers were being trained that they should prepare their students for the diversity in contemporary sexuality. The goal appeared to be to train students with homosexual inclinations to feel comfortable with their emerging identity. The Michigan Department of Education adds to the confusion about such teaching with its most current editions of Guidelines for Sex Education Including Reproductive Health and Family Planning. When considering a sex education curriculum, it urges districts to answer the question of how it will address "the wide range of options in human sexual behavior to students."

16. OBJECTION — MICHIGAN MODEL IS BEING MARKETED AND SOLD TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS AROUND THE COUNTRY.

Rumors were rampant in our hearings, from our phone calls and letters that the Michigan Model was being promoted to school districts around the country. Questions were asked about the propriety of this practice. Why should our tax money be used to pay for the development of a curriculum that's given or sold to another state. The question was asked if it was appropriate for the state to be in the curriculum business, competing with curriculum developers who are in the private sector. Indeed, the Michigan Model is being used in other states. There are school districts in Massachusetts, West Virginia and elsewhere that use the Model. The Michigan Model Steering Committee has been less than forthcoming about financial arrangements and about whether the Michigan Model materials center at Central Michigan University sold Phase Box materials to these districts and for how much. ■

Sex Ed Test Questions

1992 MEAP Test, Health and Essential Skills Responsible Sexuality Pilot

62. Which of the following is not an example of peer pressure being used in a sexual situation?

- A. Everybody's doing it
- B. You would if you loved me
- C. You would if you were a real man
- D. Everybody should make their own decision

63. According to research, which of the following is least likely to happen to an unmarried girl who gets pregnant while in high school?

- A. She will finish high school
- B. She will depend on her parents for support
- C. She will go on public welfare
- D. She will get married

64. Which of the following is the least effective method of birth control?

- A. Vasectomy
- B. Diaphragm
- C. Withdrawal
- D. Birth control pill

65. What is the name of the rubber device that covers the penis and prevents sperm from entering the vagina during sexual intercourse?

- A. Diaphragm
- B. Condom
- C. Vasectomy
- D. Sponge

66. How long can sperm live within the uterus and fallopian tubes after intercourse?

- A. Up to 5 hours
- B. About 1 day
- C. About 3 days
- D. Up to 5 days

67. Which contraceptive requires a doctor's prescription?

- A. A condom
- B. A sponge
- C. Birth control pills
- D. Spermicidal jelly

68. All of the following are important when using a condom EXCEPT

- A. Leaving some space at the tip for the ejaculation
- B. Using a condom every time sexual intercourse occurs
- C. Using the largest size that is available
- D. Holding the condom on the penis while withdrawing from the vagina

69. Where can teenagers get free or low-cost contraceptives in Michigan?

- A. Public health department
- B. Drug stores
- C. School health clinics
- D. Private physicians' offices

70. Mrs. Nichols forgot to take one of her birth control pills and is now concerned about getting pregnant. Which is BEST for her to do?

- A. Stop worrying because one missed pill will not make her ovulate
- B. Use additional birth control methods if she has sexual intercourse that month
- C. Take an extra pill from another pack before having sexual intercourse
- D. Take the missed pill when she is most likely to ovulate

71. Used correctly, which of the following methods of birth control is most effective?

- A. A diaphragm
- B. A sponge
- C. A condom
- D. Birth control pills

72. Which of the following is TRUE about sexually abused teenagers who want help?

- A. They should contact Protective Services
- B. They must have their parent's permission to get help
- C. They need court approval to get help if parent permission is not provided
- D. They should be referred by a doctor before they can get help from the agency

73. Research shows sexual abuse of children is LEAST likely to involve someone who is

- A. Known to the child
- B. A stranger
- C. A neighbor
- D. A family member

Social Services in Schools?

LAS VEGAS, NV — A program called "Cities in Schools" (CIS) has stirred up a controversy in the Clark County School District. CIS would institute a massive, privately controlled program of social services into public schools without adequate public knowledge. CIS promoters demand independence from the school board and the right to establish their own policies and procedures, thus eliminating open meetings and public votes on program specifics. CIS materials warn their supporters, when selecting committee members, to "avoid inviting those who may present problems of incompatibility."

Although only sketchy information is available so far, CIS materials include numerous references to "counseling," "teen pregnancy," and "outside referrals." Planned Parenthood is listed as one of the resources. The CIS program is supposed to begin in the high schools, but CIS's own materials list a future step as: "integrate the CIS mechanism into an elementary school."

CIS regional director Robert Arias showed a video to the Clark County Board that included examples from Atlanta's CIS group, calling it "alternative schools within

the school district" where schools become the "family" and a "support group" for the pupils. These small "family" groups meet "several times a day." Social workers are brought in so that "students could form relationships with adults" who "put their arms around them" so that their lives would be "turned around by the experience of being loved."

The CIS program publicly claims to be directed only to "at-risk" students, but CIS materials indicate that CIS's "partnership" between CIS, the California Department of Education, and others has an ambitious and far-reaching agenda. In the CIS newsletter, *Cities in Schools Update*, Summer 1989, Arias wrote: "It is the philosophy of the school district and state officials that every student enrolled in the district schools is 'at risk.' Therefore, it is incumbent to impact the entire student body and effect changes throughout the school environment."

Parents express concern that the definition of "at-risk" will soon include virtually every child — including those who don't eat the right foods, lack bed-making skills, aren't satisfied with their daily living routine, or object to parental authority. ■