

## Pumsy Has No Effect on Self-Esteem

### NYC School Board Gives Fernandez a \$475K Sendoff

NEW YORK, NY — Joseph Fernandez, the New York City Schools Chancellor, is being paid a severance package totaling \$475,000 by the same taxpayers and parents who fired him effective June 30. During his stormy three years as chancellor, Fernandez was paid an annual salary of \$195,000 and lived in a town house the school board bought for his use for \$1 million plus \$250,000 in renovations.

Fernandez first came to national attention when he introduced condom distribution to the New York City school system over the protests of parents. That controversy was still brewing when he ordered all the elementary schools to use an "anti-bias" curriculum allegedly written by gay rights activists. Concerned parents and school board members, led by Mary Cummins in Queens, successfully defied his orders. This controversy was ultimately responsible for Fernandez' ouster this year.

Fernandez's actions were the principal issue in the New York City school board election on March 4. The City Board of Elections originally reported that it was a light turnout of only 313,000 ballots cast. Two weeks later, according to the *New York Times* the City Board of Elections admitted that 425,000 voters had cast ballots, showing that early reports were off by about 35%.

Executive Director Daniel DeFrancesco said part of the discrepancy was due to "sloppy" record-keeping by Board of



Chancellor Joseph Fernandez

Elections inspectors. DeFrancesco said some inspectors had neglected "to write any vote totals at all on reporting sheets at hundreds, perhaps thousands, of polling sites on Election Day." He said officials at the board's Manhattan headquarters subsequently "failed to account for the missing figures as they used the reporting sheets to calculate turnout figures."

DeFrancesco said that according to the actual count of votes, "virtually every district in the city had substantial increases in turnout over the last school board elections, held in 1988, and in some districts the number of voters doubled and tripled." ■

### NAEYC Pushes "Witches and Healers"

ANAHEIM, CA — Workshops attended by 5,000 California teachers at the annual Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) on March 19-20 continue to prove that the NAEYC's anti-bias curricula are really a venue for promoting homosexuality and witchcraft to young children.

Featured workshop speaker, Louise Derman-Sparks, author of the controversial *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children* (published by NAEYC in 1989), hawked her book which teaches children not to be biased against "witches and healers" and "powerful women."

"The Halloween image of the 'witch,' old, ugly, wicked, and dressed in black, reflects stereotypes . . . [that] powerful women are evil," Derman-Sparks writes in her *Anti-Bias Curriculum*. The curriculum suggests that witchcraft is not "bad" and, to prove this point, recommends children's activities such as preparing witch's brew. According to the curriculum, witches heal people who are sick or hurt.

Other recommended anti-bias activities



get young children to depict "gay or lesbian

families (families with two mothers or fathers)" and warn teachers to "beware of using . . . children's books picturing only families with two parents, and . . . books that assume readers are Christian."

Another workshop was titled "On Becoming An Anti-Bias Educator: Stages Of The Journey." The presenters (Louise Derman-Sparks, Phyllis Brady, and Cecelia Alvarado Kuster) discussed Stage I, denial and resistance; Stage II, disequilibrium; and Stage III, reconstruction or activism. Derman-Sparks called Stage II a period of "Emotional Masturbation where you are massaging all those feelings and emotions."

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### Curriculum Used in 40% of Elementary Schools is a Loser

MILWAUKEE, WI — *Pumsy* has no significant measurable effect on children's self esteem, according to a Ph.D. dissertation accepted at Marquette University in Milwaukee. Julie Ann Kummer, who received her doctor's degree in May from Marquette's Education Department, conducted an empirical study and came up with findings that challenge education establishment views on this controversial curriculum.

*Pumsy in Pursuit of Excellence* is now used in over 16,000 (40%) of the country's elementary schools. *Pumsy* and similar programs, which have goals of building children's self-esteem in ages 6-11, have been implemented in schools even though there is no empirical support that they fulfill their stated goals. The few studies that have been made on these curricula show that no significant changes in self-esteem are found in children who complete the program.

Dr. Kummer's research program was to determine if the *Pumsy* program is effective in its goal of measurably improving the self-esteem of the schoolchildren. Only one other empirical study has investigated the effects of *Pumsy* (Nagel-Harmon, 1989), and this study found no significant measurable self-esteem gains. Many studies of *DUSO* (*Developing Understanding of Self and Others*) show also that participation does not improve achievement scores. Accordingly, Kummer's hypothesis was that *Pumsy* does not improve self esteem.

The 8-week *Pumsy* program centers around stories and activities involving a small female dragon named Pumsy. Pumsy has three mind-sets — "mud," "clear" and "sparkle" — which children are taught to emulate. Pumsy at times finds it difficult to feel good about herself. If she is in her "mud" mind, she waits for something good to happen so that her "clear" mind will take over.

With the help of one of her friends, Pumsy develops positive thinking and self-esteem skills in a "fun" way that help her to feel good about herself in spite of things that happen to her that she dislikes.

The effect of *Pumsy* is that children are directed to their imaginary friends, their peers or their counselors for help and guidance in difficult life situations, rather than to their parents.

Dr. Kummer's experimental design was to use three 4th grade classes of 20 students each from three Lutheran schools. She secured prior written permission from parents for their children to participate in the study. One class used *Pumsy*, the second class used a children's support group, and the third class was a control group with no self-esteem curriculum.

The support group, which was not as structured as the *Pumsy* program, included such activities as arts and crafts and informal discussions of "kids' issues." It was designed to be more flexible than *Pumsy*

and tended to lend itself to interactive sharing more than *Pumsy*.

The children's self esteem was measured before and after the programs on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (CSCS). This system, which is generally accepted as the best testing technique currently available, showed that there was no significant measurable increase in self esteem in the *Pumsy* group.

Apart from the issue of self-esteem, children in the support group completed their homework assignments significantly more times than the children in *Pumsy*. Dr. Kummer says that this was probably due to the fact that children liked the homework assignments in the support group better.



Illustration from *Pumsy*

Dr. Kummer concluded that "schools need to be cautious in assuming that the *Pumsy* program will enhance children's self-esteem" because there is no empirical support for that assumption.

*Pumsy* should not be confused with the popular children's TV character, "Barney." The characters in "Barney" do not engage in psychological manipulation. They recently advised children viewers: "It's good to talk with your parents about things you are afraid of" and "Monsters aren't real — they're only in storybooks." ■

### *Pumsy's Instructions for Schools vs. Parents*

EUGENE, OR — Timberline Press, the publisher of *Pumsy In Pursuit of Excellence*, is distributing the following instructions to advise schools how to deal with parents who criticize the curriculum:

Most parents who strongly oppose *Pumsy* and other counseling programs are "fundamental" Christians. They may be connected to a national network seeking to promote heavy censorship in public schools.

In some cases . . . parents are not willing or able to tolerate any beliefs or opinions that do not support their own. These parents may insist on taking their objections . . . to

See *Pumsy's Instructions*, page 4

EDUCATION  
BRIEFS

"The National Extortion Association" is the title of an extraordinary article in the June 7 issue of *Forbes* magazine about the powerful, wealthy, dictatorial, partisan union called the National Education Association (NEA). *Forbes* shows how the NEA spends its tremendous budget (extracted from teachers by compulsory dues that average \$400 per teacher per year) on "left-wing looneyism" and on building its own political power at any cost in order to carry on its war against parents and taxpayers.

The Texas Board of Education has voted to adopt four U.S. government textbooks for use in Texas classrooms despite critics' claims that the books contain over 250 errors. The books will be used next year, under the condition that each book not have more than 50 errors. According to Texas Education Commissioner Lionel Meno, if the Texas Education Agency finds more than 50 errors in the textbooks, which are worth \$4.3 million, the books will be taken off the adoption list. The books under investigation are: *United States Government* by Glencoe Publishing Co.; *Government in America* by Houghton Mifflin Co.; *Magruder's American Government* by West Services Inc.; and *West's American Government* by West Services Inc.

"Conclusive evidence" that year-round schools improve academic performance does not exist, according to Jared Hazleton, a Texas A&M professor who headed a study for Texas policymakers. 26 school districts in Texas practiced year-round schooling in 1991, and the number rose to 41 in 1992.

Math teachers in Forsyth County, NC fear that a new state rule requiring algebra in high school will prevent some students from graduating. Teachers say they are recording some of the highest failure rates ever in pre-algebra classes, and they are concerned that some students will never master algebra, and therefore, never graduate. They claim that the lack of basic skills is one reason failure rates are so high. Education and business leaders say algebra has become a necessity of the modern workplace, so state education officials are requiring that all students, beginning with this year's freshmen, pass algebra in high school.

In many schools, teachers are secretly using the "old-fashioned" and "tedious" math texts published by John Saxon, creating what some have light-heartedly called the "education underground." Saxon and his "old-school" methods have been attacked by educational reformers, but teachers give him rave reviews, claiming improved test scores and increased interest in math by the students.

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# California Improves Test Scores by Finagling the Tests

ANAHEIM, CA — What's the best way to improve student scores on annual assessment tests? Change the tests, of course. And that's exactly what's been done with the California Assessment Program (CAP). The formerly multiple-choice language arts test, administered to 4th and 8th graders throughout the state's public school system, now calls for essays and "collaborative" efforts in which students express their "feelings" about selecting reading materials. This radical change in assessment has necessitated a revolution in instructional methods.

The three-part CAP test begins with a reading assessment in which "students work individually, reading a text and writing their responses to open-ended questions." During the ungraded middle section, "groups of students . . . work collaboratively to explore their interpretations of the text." In the third section, "students work individually on a writing task thematically linked to the reading text" but are encouraged to incorporate the ideas and opinions generated by their peers during the group session.

Sandy Worrel, a 4th grade teacher, was disturbed by the revised assessment's emphasis on "student's thoughts and feelings." Instead of right and wrong answers, students are now judged on "how they verbally express their thoughts and feelings

about the story and then how they relate what they read to a personal experience in their own life."

Gone, says Mrs. Worrel, are such questions as: "What is the author's purpose? How would you describe the main character? What is the setting of the story? What is the main idea?" "What used to be a very structured, standardized test," she observes, "now has been changed and only tests the sensory and analytical domains of writing."

Mrs. Worrel worries that students receive "no guidance when applying what was learned in the story — they are allowed to come up with their own conclusions or copy the ideas discussed by their peers during their 'group work' period." The teacher, she adds, "cannot judge their responses, only how they present their responses."

Mrs. Worrel learned about the change in the assessment early this spring when she and other 4th- and 8th-grade teachers attended two "in-service" sessions of three hours each in which they were coached on how to "have students write in the margins their feelings and thoughts as they read a story, fill out 'open minds' to show what a character might be thinking, group students for discussion, and finally have them write an application." The teachers received a total of only six hours training to prepare them for a radically new way of teaching lan-

guage arts.

"We were told to teach all the stories from our readers in this way," Mrs. Worrel recalls. "At the same time, we were told we no longer needed to use the workbooks that go along with our readers and are filled with skill-based learning. We could now 'dump' those and concentrate on having students express their feelings and thoughts."

She reports that 3rd- and 7th-grade teachers will be "in-serviced" next year, 2nd- and 6th-grade teachers the following year, and so on "until all teachers at every level are trained to teach reading in this way."

Mrs. Worrel notes that the state department of education has been obliged to hire people to hand score the new assessment, which is more expensive than machine-scored multiple-choice tests. She also wonders how the state can ensure a uniform standard of assessment when the subjective responses of thousands of students are scored by a variety of judges.

Mrs. Worrel was disappointed, but not surprised, that few of her colleagues shared her aversion to this new approach to teaching. "All this stuff has slowly been indoctrinated over the years," she explains, and "most teachers have learned that they must go along to get along." ■

## Classroom Film on Death Education Scares 7th Grade

BIRMINGHAM, AL — *Faces of Death*, a controversial documentary on death, was shown to 7th graders as part of a life sciences class at Forest Hills Middle School in Fairfield, Alabama.

Some children became so upset by viewing the film that they had nightmares and now won't eat the foods featured in the film. The film shows scenes of the running body of a beheaded chicken, people clubbing a monkey to death and then eating its brains, and autopsies of human corpses. The film also includes several executions: death in a gas chamber, a beheading, and an electrocution.

The cover of the video boasts that the film is "banned in 46 countries." A printed warning on the cover says the film "has not been rated because of its brutal and explicit depiction of actual death. The content and subject matter may not be suitable for those under 18, those with weak hearts and those of delicate nature."

Parental consent was not obtained by the teacher who showed the video. The school principal said that teachers are permitted to use their own judgment in presenting videos in the classroom when the subject is controversial. Apparently, *Faces of Death* was not considered to be in this category. The teacher defended the film by arguing that it was supposed to "aid in alleviating the students' fear of death." ■

## Outcome-Based Basketball

All high school basketball teams must use Outcome-Based Basketball beginning next season. To ensure that all teams feel successful, we will not keep score. It is more important that the team learn the process and finish the game at the skill level determined by the coach rather than by winners.

To make sure everyone meets all the outcomes, poor players must be given more practice time and coaching. No scores will be kept and no winners will be announced. During games, anyone who fails to make goals, double dribbles, fouls, or displays an uncooperative attitude toward the process, will be remediated during time-outs. The better players must sit on the bench, help coach the others until they demonstrate the right moves, or engage in enrichment activities such as playing tag. These games will last much longer, so be prepared to stay.

All teams will complete 12 games and will receive the same trophy. No records will be kept, no statistics will be needed, nor will we need any play-offs, all-star teams, or recognition banquets. Trophies will be meaningless, but everyone will get one.

Psycho-behavioral basketball experts feel that this will increase the self-esteem of every player, who will feel great about his/her accomplishments. We discourage playing any games against teams that don't have the same regulations. It would be unfair competition to play against teams that emphasize excellence and winning. The peer pressure of not being part of our group should be sufficient motivation to conform the "traditional" team to the Outcome-Based Basketball Model.

*This is Outcome-Based Basketball, where excellence is relative, everyone is equal, everyone feels great about his/her performance, and all players work to their highest potential so long as it does not exceed the skill level determined by the coach.*

*"Everyone can play basketball"*

*Is this really what we want for our athletes . . . or worse yet, for our academic programs?*

(Author unknown)



# FOCUS: A Liberating Curriculum

By Roberta F. Borkat

A blessed change has come over me. Events of recent months have revealed to me that I have been laboring as a university professor for more than 20 years under a misguided theory of teaching. I humbly regret that during all those years I have caused distress and inconvenience to thousands of students while providing some amusement to my more practical colleagues. Enlightenment came to me in a sublime moment of clarity while I was being verbally attacked by a student whose paper I had just proved to have been plagiarized from *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Suddenly, I understood the true purpose of my profession, and I devised a plan to embody that revelation. Every moment since then has been filled with delight about the advantages to students, professors and universities from my Plan to Increase Student Happiness.

The plan is simplicity itself: at the end of the second week of the semester, all students enrolled in each course will receive a final grade of A. Then their minds will be relieved of anxiety, and they will be free to do whatever they want for the rest of the term.

The benefits are immediately evident. Students will be assured of high grade-point averages and an absence of obstacles in their march toward graduation. Professors will be relieved of useless burdens and will have time to pursue their real interests. Universities will have achieved the long-desired goal of molding individual professors into interchangeable parts of a smoothly operating machine. Even the environment will be improved because education will no longer consume vast quanti-

ties of paper for books, compositions and examinations.

Although this scheme will instantly solve countless problems that have plagued education, a few people may raise trivial objections and even urge universities not to adopt it. Some of my colleagues may protest that we have an obligation to uphold the integrity of our profession. Poor fools; I understand their delusion, for I formerly

knowledge was important and that we should encourage hard work and perseverance. Now I realize that the concept of rewards for merit is elitist and, therefore, wrong in a society that aims for equality in all things. We are a democracy. What could be more democratic than to give exactly the same grade to every single student?

One or two forlorn colleagues may even protest that we have a responsibility to sig-

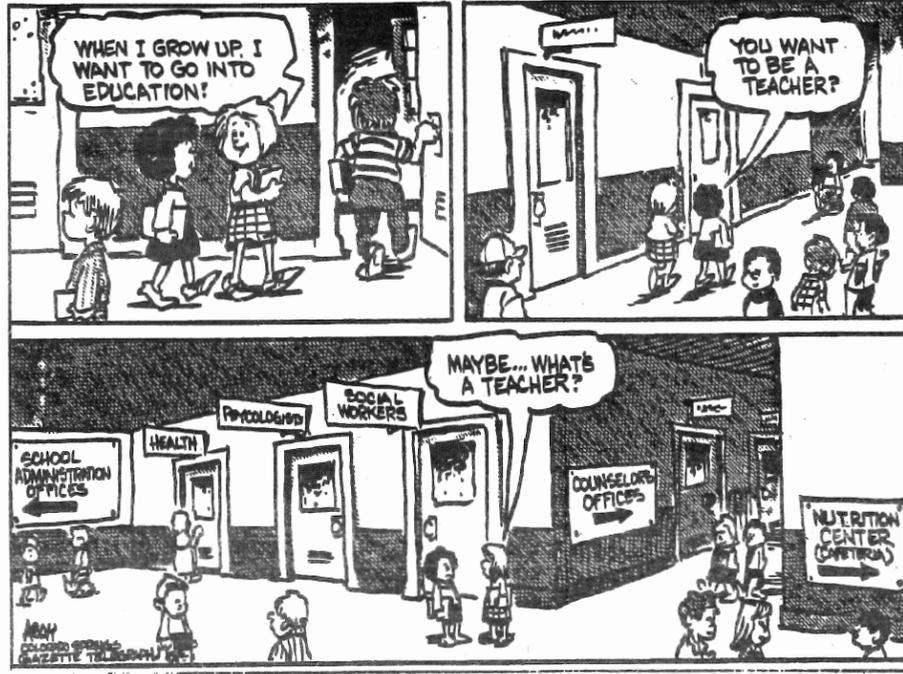
the illusion that I was giving my students a precious gift by introducing them to works by great poets, playwrights and satirists. Now I recognize the error of my ways. The writings of such authors may have seemed meaningful to our ancestors, who had nothing better to do, but we are living in a time of wonderful improvements. The writers of bygone eras have been made irrelevant, replaced by MTV and *People* magazine. After all, their bodies are dead. Why shouldn't their ideas be dead, too?

Joyous smiles: If any colleagues persist in protesting that we should try to convey knowledge to students and preserve our cultural heritage, I offer this suggestion: honestly consider what students really want. As one young man graciously explained to me, he had no desire to take my course but had enrolled in it merely to fulfill a requirement that he resented. His job schedule made it impossible for him to attend at least 30 percent of my class sessions, and he wouldn't have time to do much of the reading. Nevertheless, he wanted a good grade. Another student consulted me after the first exam, upset because she had not studied and had earned only 14 points out of a possible 100. I told her that, if she studied hard and attended class more regularly, she could do well enough on the remaining tests to pass the course. This encouragement did not satisfy her. What she wanted was an assurance that she would receive at least a B. Under my plan both students would be guaranteed an A. Why not? They have good looks and self-esteem. What more could anyone ever need in life?

I do not ask for thanks from the many people who will benefit. I'm grateful to my colleagues who for decades have tried to help me realize that seriousness about teaching is not the path to professorial prestige, rapid promotion and frequent sabbaticals. Alas, I was stubborn. Not until I heard the illuminating explanation of the student who had plagiarized from the anthology's introduction to Jonathan Swift did I fully grasp the wisdom that others had been generously offering to me for years — learning is just too hard. Now, with a light heart, I await the plan's adoption. In my mind's eye, I can see the happy faces of university administrators and professors, released at last from the irksome chore of dealing with students. I can imagine the joyous smiles of thousands of students, all with straight-A averages and plenty of free time.

My only regret is that I wasted so much time. For nearly 30 years, I threw away numerous hours annually on trivia: writing, grading and explaining examinations; grading hundreds of papers a semester; holding private conferences with students; reading countless books; buying extra materials to give students a feeling for the music, art and clothing of past centuries; endlessly worrying about how to improve my teaching. At last I see the folly of grubbing away in meaningless efforts. I wish that I had faced facts earlier and had not lost years because of old-fashioned notions. But such are the penalties for those who do not understand the true purpose of education.

Roberta F. Borkat is a professor of English and comparative literature at San Diego State University.



shared it. To them, I say: "Hey, lighten up! Why make life difficult?"

Those who believe that we have a duty to increase the knowledge of our students may also object. I, too, used to think that

significant works of the past because the writings of such authors as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton and Swift are intrinsically valuable. I can empathize with these misguided souls, for I once labored under

## Colleges, Not Students, Do the Cheating Now

CAMBRIDGE, MA — *Harvard Magazine* of May-June has lifted the lid on the touchy question of grade inflation and admitted how it has diminished the value of high grades and honors.

In 1992, A and A- made up 43% of all grades at Harvard University. A and A- accounted for about 22% of grades in 1966-67. "In some departments A stands for Average," according to a student interviewed for the article.

In the past two commencements at Harvard, 30% of graduates received magna honors. Summa cum laude degrees increased less dramatically, from 3% to about 5% of graduates over the last six years. Magna cum laude and cum laude degrees are ignored by the dean of admissions at the Harvard Law School because they "have become meaningless."

Grade inflation has proceeded at a much higher rate in the humanities, where the average grade exceeds B+. In Harvard's English department the B- is considered beneath mediocre. While all fields experience grade inflation, students in the sciences must work much harder to get a B. Consequently, at commencements, the top ten people ranked by grade point average

are usually humanities majors. Relatively lower grades in the sciences discourage students from pursuing these majors.

Colleges are becoming "holding tanks" to prevent massive unemployment, according to a Harvard College professor interviewed for the article. Medieval literature specialist William Cole asserted that mediocrity is awarded and excellence discouraged. "Universities have lost sight of their goal, which should be education" and "learning has become marginal to the business of higher education," Cole observed. "The system makes everyone happy: professors have a minimal teaching load, students get their easy A's, and the universities collect millions of dollars in tuition and fees."

A recent article by Hoover Institution scholar Martin Anderson, author of *Impostors in the Temple*, labelled the practice of grade inflation the "most ingenious scam" that American universities and colleges have devised to deceive parents and cheat students. Students don't have to study hard or cheat to get high grades these days, he says; the universities do the cheating for them and award high grades and honors that students do not earn.

## Do You Have A College Degree?

At least 35% of recent graduates now take jobs that don't require college degrees, up from 15% five years ago. The dismal job market has prompted many graduates to take factory jobs away from high school graduates. Career prospects for the college class of '93 are the worst in decades. Successful job searches are now taking between 9 months and a year as compared to previous 3-month searches. Colleges had an average of only 23 corporate recruiters visit their campuses this year, compared to 42 in 1986.

From 1988 to 1992, the number of graduating college seniors grew 11 times faster than the number of full-time, non-farm jobs, according to the National Center for Employment Statistics and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Bureau warns that there will be 200,000 fewer jobs than graduates every year for at least the next decade.

Companies can afford to be choosy now that college diplomas are a glut on the market. They look for better grades and directly related job experience while in college. Apple Computer Inc. looks for students who took time off to gain work experience. As companies expand overseas many are looking for language skills.

## Parents Get *Pumsy* Removed

DRY FORK, VA — Parents' efforts in Pittsylvania County resulted in the removal of the *Pumsy* self esteem curriculum last October. The parent activists are now working state-wide to require parental consent for all psychotherapeutic techniques.

After Michael and Judy Rominger learned that one of their children was in the psycho-manipulative *Pumsy* curriculum without their consent, they led a county-wide campaign to have it removed from the schools. "Teachers, principals and school board members were willing to remove aspects or all of the curriculum, but they wouldn't make a policy commitment on paper," Mrs. Rominger said.

The Romingers and other parents then activated a campaign of memoranda to the school board, letters to the editor, and finally they took out a full-page newspaper advertisement against *Pumsy*. Mrs.

Rominger credits the newspaper ad with playing a significant role in the parents' victory. The ad featured a psychiatrist's evaluation of the guided imagery and hypnotic practices involved in *Pumsy*.

Mr. and Mrs. Rominger went to the Virginia General Assembly and convinced four legislators to propose a bill (HB 1792) to require that parents be sent written notification and given the option of withdrawing pupils from any activities that employ psychotherapeutic techniques.

The Assembly's Committee on Education, chaired by J. Paul Council Jr., ordered the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Joseph Stagnolo, to hold statewide hearings or to conduct a study by December 1, 1993. Superintendent Stagnolo has apparently chosen to take the "conduct a study" route, which parents fear will kill their current momentum. ■

### **Pumsy's Instructions** Continued from page 1

the school board in an effort to censor programs that activate their fears.

Be assured . . . that history is on your side. . . .

What helps districts succeed in retaining programs? . . .

- Locate positive support among parents for the program. . . . Inform parents that programs they support are in danger of being censored. Be sure to provide them with avenues through which they can voice their support. . . .
- . . . Gather a local support team. This is comprised of people who are informed about the issues of censorship . . . who will be effective in presenting their views. . . . Develop a plan of action. The support team might be comprised of:
  - Two guidance specialists (district counselors, psychologists and/or Director of Guidance) who can provide . . . leadership. . . in favor of retaining the *Pumsy* or other counseling programs.
  - Two parents . . .
  - Two classroom teachers . . . who can . . . verify positive changes in the classroom

environment as a result of the program.

*One administrator . . .* who can address the issue of federal laws and the compliance of the district in this regard.

*One community leader . . .* who can validate the need for self-esteem programs in public schools.

- . . . Some state associations . . . have created a position designating one person to do nothing but deal with censorship. . . . This person can be a gold mine of knowledge, experience and support.
- Inform yourself and parents about court cases . . . and the Hatch Act [sic: Amendment] — the federal law prohibiting public school curriculum from promoting any religious point of view [sic: Nothing in the Hatch Amendment refers to religion; it concerns psychological curricula, *ed. note*].
- Only if absolutely necessary, offer to delete the activity called "Let's Imagine" (formerly "Painting Mind Pictures") or the verbal affirmations at the end of the activity.
- Don't buckle under . . . parental objections. . . . ■

### **NAEYC** Continued from page 1

You are supposed to come to the realization that, if you are white, you won't know if you want to be white any more and, if you are a minority, then you will want to reclaim your identity with your group. The white race was viewed as the bad guy and responsible for all oppression in our society. Stage III was concerned with experimental ideas and activities.

NAEYC stands foursquare behind Derman-Sparks' *Anti-Bias Curriculum*, calling it an important "tool for educating adults who want to help children resist the biases that permeate society."

Last year at the national NAEYC convention, Derman-Sparks admitted her bias against Christians because, she reasoned, "Christians just think they're right." (See *Education Reporter*, Feb. 1992) Derman-Sparks is a teacher at the Pacific Oaks Children's School in Pasadena, CA, which receives major funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, MI. Kellogg gave Pacific Oaks College \$390,000 for its "Anti-Bias Leadership Training Project." ■



## Yes, Virginia, It's Censorship

SHREVEPORT, LA — The judge in the Caddo District lawsuit, *Betty Coleman et al v. Caddo Parish School Board*, has recalled the censored abstinence-based middle school and high school texts, *Sex Respect* and *Facing Reality*, from classrooms because pupils were holding the censored pages to the light to discern the blackened (censored) text.

Judge Frank Thaxton III recently ordered that certain offending passages of the texts *Sex Respect* and *Facing Reality* be removed from classrooms after he decided they contained words, sentences and paragraphs violating Louisiana law in the areas of religion, medical inaccuracies, abortion discussion, and quizzing and surveying of students.

Caddo Parish School Board complied with the judge's order, with the financial assistance of *Project Respect*, and hired temporary employees to delete the offending passages with black markers. Students are now using photocopies made from one of the censored books where the markings were considered "dark enough."

The judge's Order to censor has been appealed by Caddo Parish School Board.

Meanwhile, the plaintiffs filed another lawsuit against the Caddo Parish School Board for conspiring to do a poor job of complying with the judge's order to censor.

Caddo parents who back their School Board and the *Sex Respect* and *Facing Reality* curricula have formed the Caddo Alliance of Parents (CAPS). "He [Judge Thaxton] let his judgment be influenced by the media, which have misrepresented the curricula and the parents who are in favor of it," said CAPS member Dorothy Moore. "Since when has abstinence become a four-letter word?" said CAPS chairman Jack Mills. "We reject Caddo District Judge Frank Thaxton's order to have certain portions of the text removed."

"It's our intent to allow parents to judge for themselves just how petty and inane this censorship is," said Mills. CAPS will distribute copies of revised versions of *Facing Reality*, which have been donated by *Project Respect*, the publisher of the abstinence curricula. The edited workbooks will come enclosed in brown paper bags, with the word "censorship" written over "abstinence." ■

### MESSAGES FROM OUR SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CLINICS



### Selections from 13 pages of the censored text *Facing Reality*:

List as many possible harmful consequences of premarital sexual activity as you can. Don't forget to include the effects on personality.

Some individuals derive pleasure from sexual activity without the commitment of marriage. They would argue that it "hurts no one." Is this argument valid? Can you give examples of how someone can be hurt in such an arrangement? Give examples of how society might be harmed by promiscuous sexual activity. How might abstinence and monogamy benefit society?

Although some teenagers are sexually active and acquiring sexually transmitted diseases at an unprecedented rate, most teenage girls still have not had sexual intercourse. What factors do you see in your environment that encourage or affirm this healthy choice?

Many forms of sexual expression are learned. As you know, many persons have learned self-centered sexual choices. Is it possible for someone to "unlearn" selfish-

ness? How could this be done? Give examples.

Make a list of the reasons why people date. Next to each reason, identify an activity other than dating that could address that reason.

Group dating is said to be safer and more fun. Do you think this is so? Why? What advantages are there to group dating?

The historical failure rate as a contraceptive for the condom is 10-15% and a human sperm is much larger than a virus. Some cite much higher failure rates for transmitted disease. What do you think using the term "safe sex" implies in a discussion of condoms. Do condoms make sexual activity moral? Legal? Healthy?

Several years ago, there was a big push to put condom advertisements on network T.V. Why do you think this was a heated debate? How do you think a good advertiser could portray the condom? Would they emphasize its weaknesses? Explain. ■