

History Standards' Authors Mail Out Aggressive Lobbying Campaign Packet

The authors of the controversial and discredited *National Standards on United States History* are fighting back. The National History Standards Project at UCLA, where the *Standards* originated, has mailed out thousands of copies of a 13-page packet designed to motivate teachers to write their Congressmen requesting enforcement of the *Standards* as written. The grassroots lobbying packet contains the names and addresses of key Senators and Congressmen, plus a long list of sample paragraphs or talking points, defending the standards.

This lobbying packet boasts that "these standards have the support of all of the leading history and social studies professional organizations," including the National Education Association, the National

Association of State Boards of Education, the American Historical Association, and the World History Association. Assuming this is true, it proves that the academic professionals in the history field are determined to pursue revisionism and teach the next generation of students a story about America that is very different from what their parents were taught. Critics have branded the *Standards* as leftwing, revisionist, and anti-Western.

Critics charge that the bias of the 271-page volume shows an attempt to force Political Correctness (P.C.) on schoolchildren. Among the features of P.C. are a hostility to DWEMs (Dead White European Males) and a predilection for replacing history with "Oppression Studies," featuring third-rate feminist and minority writ-

ers who attack Western Civilization as sexist, racist, and oppressive.

The U.S. Senate voted 99 to 1 to denounce these U.S. History Standards, but that resolution did not impress the education establishment. Thousands of copies of *Standards* have been flooding into schools, state departments of education, the offices of social studies teachers, and publishing houses.

The U.S. History Standards project started when Lynne Cheney, then the Bush Administration's head of the National Endowment for the Humanities, authorized the granting of \$2 million of taxpayers' money to UCLA to write the *Standards*. Mrs. Cheney has appeared on television expressing indignation at the way the *Standards* turned out, but she has no

power to stop them from being used.

Some Bush Administration officials are eager advocates of the idea of the Federal Government writing "standards" for various school subjects. While Mrs. Cheney has now lost her taste for the idea, other ex-Bush Administration officials take the position that all they need is a cosmetic face-lift.

Many parents say that a little editing cannot possibly cure the fundamental defects of the various volumes of "standards." They say that the whole idea of the Federal Government writing or financing public school curricula is an elitist, totalitarian notion that should be unacceptable in America.

Attacks on Western civilization so per-
See History, Page 2

Liberal Student Lobby Loses its Funding after Two-Year Fight with the Right

ST. LOUIS, MO - Funding for MOPIRG (Missouri Public Interest Research Group) was wiped out in the Student Government Elections at St. Louis University for the second year in a row. MOPIRG is a liberal student lobby that purports to support environmental, consumer interest, and animal rights legislation.

Kimmy Smith, SLU Law Student, launched a two-year campaign that successfully defeated MOPIRG's proposed tuition fee of \$8 per year.

For 23 years, MOPIRG received money in the form of a negative check-off on the tuition bill. This means that students had to

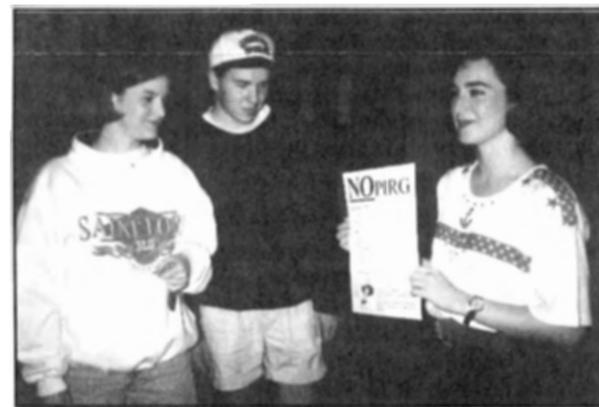
initial their bill if they did *not* want to pay the fee. Every three years, the students were given the opportunity to vote on whether or not MOPIRG should remain on their bill.

Kimmy Smith's first campaign in 1994 was successful and MOPIRG was defeated. In Feb. 1995, MOPIRG came back with a petition drive for a referendum to put them back on the tuition bill. MOPIRG members argued that they deserved a new election to "Save MOPIRG" because Miss Smith had allegedly "lied" about them.

Miss Smith then launched a poster campaign, disclosing many details about MOPIRG. She explained that the method of funding was unfair because it tricked students into paying for an organization they may or may not support.

"The MOPIRG tuition fee is like receiving a bill from a department store for an item you never ordered, and having to initial the bill so as not to be forced to pay for it," said Smith.

Again, MOPIRG members accused Smith of "lying." The SLU student newspaper released four days before the election contained ten stories against Miss Smith and only one very short editorial in favor of her efforts. She was referred to as an "uncaring right-wing fanatic with nothing better to do than destroy what a group of concerned students have



Kimmy Smith holds a poster outside a polling place.

taken a year to build." She was misquoted six times, and accused of "slippery, dishonest, libelous campaign tactics."

Despite these attacks, MOPIRG lost its
See Smith, Page 2

NJ Bill to Make PIRG Fees Illegal

TRENTON, NJ - A bill making automatic financing of student lobbying groups illegal passed at the end of March in New Jersey.

After several complaints from businesses and construction trade groups about the NJPIRG (New Jersey Public Interest Research Group), Senator John P. Scott sponsored a bill that forces the NJPIRG to change its funding method from a negative to a positive check-off. The law now says that student lobbying groups will receive fees only from students who check "yes" on a form.

Presently, NJPIRG charges \$7.50 per student per semester, and the total amount collected from students is \$300,000. It is questionable whether or not the organization will raise very much money at all now that the students have to voluntarily donate money. □

Christian Magazine Appeals to Supreme Court

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA - A case widely believed to be the most important recent case dealing with religious freedom is now before the U.S. Supreme Court. It challenges what many consider to be academia's hostility towards religion.

The case, *Rosenberger v. the Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia*, stems from a University of Virginia decision that denied funding to *Wide Awake*, a student publication, on the grounds that it advocated an "avowedly Christian" perspective.

"As a conservative Christian, I feel that I'm being asked to take a seat at the back of the bus," said Ron Rosenberger, plaintiff in the case and publisher of *Wide Awake*.

While *Wide Awake* was denied money, both the Jewish Law Students Associa-



Ron Rosenberger

tion and the Muslim Students Association received University funding. According to court papers, however, these groups were subsidized as "cultural activities," rather than "religious activities."

Tens of thousands of dollars were also

poured into student groups promoting feminism, multiculturalism, and homosexuality. The Lesbian and Gay Student Union and Students for Animal Rights both received University money.

"The University's decision denies Christians equal access to benefits made available to everyone else," claims Rosenberger. "Christian speech is given a second-class status."

Lawyers for the religious publication noted in their appeal that, in the last term, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said the court "should, in a proper case... bring our Establishment Clause jurisprudence back to what I think is the proper track - government impartiality, not animosity, towards religion." □

EDUCATION BRIEFS

Michigan teachers are angry that the president of the Michigan Education Association received a 43% pay raise over the past two fiscal years, while union member raises only just beat inflation. MEA President Julius Maddox's salary rose from \$84,858 in 1991-92 to \$121,676 in 1993-94, according to a union finance report filed with the U.S. Department of Labor. Maddox also had use of an East Lansing home and was reimbursed for nearly \$22,000 in expenses last year.

Hundreds of Virginia families currently invoke the only law in the nation that grants an exemption from all state educational standards based on religious grounds. According to the law, the state must grant a religious exemption to "any pupil, who, together with his parents, by reason of bona fide religious training or belief, is conscientiously opposed to attendance at school." Parents who fill out a form stating their religious beliefs routinely are granted the exemption, which ends all contact between the family and the school system. In September 1993, there were 1,445 children with religious exemptions. By last September, there were 1,870 - a 23% increase.

Fairfax County, VA school officials say a controversial student survey that queries children as young as nine-years-old about their sex lives will probably be cancelled because of its cost. The school staff has recommended that the School Board abandon the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which could have cost \$50,000 to administer.

Medication alone is not enough for children who have severe trouble concentrating, the Education Department stated in its first report on attention-deficit disorders (ADD). "The role of drugs such as Ritalin - now prescribed for 60% to 90% of U.S. children with ADD - needs more study, and overprescription is a worry," agency official Tom Hehir said. Many researchers warn that ADD is diagnosed too often or that medicines such as Ritalin have become "silver bullets."

A new congressional study has found that many young students have been coached by their families to "act up" and "act dumb" in order to qualify for a social security program that makes payments to families with mentally and physically disabled children. Families who qualify can receive up to \$458 a month under this program. Wayne Parker, a manager for the Louisiana Disability Determinations Service, said, "Several teachers have said they have overheard children discussing what you have to do to get the 'crazy checks.'"

Education Reporter (ISSN 0887-0608) is published monthly by Eagle Forum Education & Legal Defense Fund with editorial offices at 7800 Bonhomme Ave., St. Louis, MO 63105, (314) 721-1213. 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.

Housing Project Mothers Teach Children to Read



Phyllis Schlafly with the four women who sang the praises of phonics and *First Reader*.

History

continued from page 1

meate the *National Standards* that American Federation of Teachers chairman Al Shanker said this is the first time a government has tried to teach children to "feel negative about their own country." The multicultural distortions of the *National Standards* are so extreme that even the *New York Times* complained that the book teaches students to admire Aztec architecture but does not mention the uncivilized Aztec practice of human sacrifice.

The adoption of national standards in major school subjects by all public school districts is mandated by the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, signed by President Clinton last year. The adoption of standards is called "voluntary," but the receipt of federal money in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is tied to the acceptance of the "voluntary" standards.

Most state departments of education are well on their way toward writing the national standards into state law, into state mandates on local school districts, and into school curriculum often using the packaged thinking in national standards already written. (*National Standards* is published by UCLA History Standards Project (310)825-4702.)

Smith

Continued from page 1

referendum by 170 more votes than in 1994. The final tally was 870 to 691.

Personal attacks on Kimmy Smith were prohibited by the Student Code of Rights and Regulations, but SLU's administration has taken no disciplinary action against MOPIRG.

"It is typical of the liberal education establishment," Miss Smith said, "to treat conservatives as enemies of all that is good and caring. Conservative activists on campus are considered by the administration to be automatically wrong about any issue, even when the students overwhelmingly agree with the conservative view."

ST. LOUIS, MO — Dr. Shirley Curry, in her speech at the Educational Policy Conference (EPC) in January, demonstrated that teaching phonics at home using *First Reader* is a sure-fire way to teach children to read.

A former U.S. Department of Education and Housing and Urban Development official, Dr. Curry received a grant from the federal government to teach phonics with *First Reader* in a St. Louis public housing project. She was able to secure funds that made it possible for 20 families in the Cochran Gardens housing projects to teach their children to read using *First Reader*. Dr. Curry invited four of the twenty grant recipients to speak at the EPC.

Marsha Lannin, a mother and resident of the Cochran Housing project, said, "I tried at home [to teach my child to read], but you know, it didn't work. Over the summer, I met Mrs. Curry. She brought in *First Reader*. And so I studied with my daughter every day, and from the beginning of school to the first semester, she brought that 'D' — she had a 'D' — and she brought it up to a 'B' in one semester of the school year."

Jeannie Miner said, "I know a friend that couldn't get a job because he didn't know how to read... and I was intending to tell him about *First Reader*' cause now I can... I would like to try to get him to try to get *First Reader* also because a person is never too old to learn."

Jaquice Yancy, the third mother to speak, said, "I have a four-year-old daughter. She has come a long way in reading the book. Now she's in the vowel sounds and the words and the consonants, and now she's reading the stories... I only completed the 6th grade in high school, and the book has taught me a lot about the vowel sounds and all that, that I didn't know... Now I want to teach my grandmother how to read."

Rene Lee, the final woman to describe her experiences with *First Reader*, said, "... My four-year-old niece I have custody of, she loves the book. And she has a three-year-old brother that comes and visits her, and she has a one-year-old brother that comes and visits, so every time she learns something in that book, what she'll do is, she tell her brother, 'Come on Red, let me show you.'... And I didn't know that their mother didn't know how to read. You know, I knew she was always a problem. She went to school every day, never missed a day. She even went on Saturdays when they had special programs, but I never knew she didn't know how to read."

These four "star" mothers, as Dr. Curry calls them, are now teaching other mothers in the St. Louis housing projects how to teach their children to read. All four mothers are presently working toward their General Equivalency Diploma (GED).

The women spoke about *First Reader* at the sixth annual Educational Policy Conference which was held January 19-21. Sponsored by the Constitutional Coalition, the conference covered a broad array of education issues: school reform, Goals 2000, political correctness, and ideas and programs that work. If you would like to receive audio tapes of the conference, you can write or call ACTS, Inc., 14153 Clayton Rd., Ballwin, MO 63011, (800) 642-2287.

Book of the Month



Psychology As Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship

by Paul C. Vitz

William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1977, 173 pps, \$12.99.

In classrooms across the country, psychology has become an increasingly influential phenomenon, causing many schools to elevate "self-esteem" over academic achievement.

In 1977 Paul Vitz, professor of psychology at New York University, wrote *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship*. In this critique of modern psychology, he claims that, while much has happened since 1977, "... we are still very much what Phillip Rieff called 'a therapeutic' society. Self-actualization, self-fulfillment, etc. are standard explanations of everything from college education to life itself. Countless Christians worry more about losing their self-esteem than about losing their souls... Psychology has become a religion, a secular cult of self."

Now, Dr. Vitz has virtually rewritten *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship*, and in it he takes into account much of what has happened in psychology in the past 16 years. He has added two new chapters - one on "values clarification" and one on the New Age movement.

In American education, Dr. Vitz states, "The basic idea of self-esteem is that students should be told how wonderful and important they are... What is wrong with the concept of self-esteem? Lots - and it is fundamental in nature... Self-esteem is a complex notion... A 1989 study of mathematical skills compared students in eight different countries. American students ranked lowest in mathematical competence, and Korean students ranked highest. But the researchers also asked the students to state how good they were at mathematics. The American students ranked the highest in self-judged mathematical ability, while the Koreans ranked the lowest. This is certainly an example of 'feel good' psychology keeping students from an accurate perception of reality. The self-esteem theory predicts that only those who feel good about themselves will do well - which is supposedly why all students need self-esteem - but feeling good about yourself may simply make you overconfident, narcissistic, and unable to work hard."

Dr. Vitz points out that, "Genuine accomplishment in the real world creates and justifies our attitudes. A child who learns to read, who can do mathematics, who can play the piano... will have a true sense of accomplishment and an appropriate sense of self-esteem."

FOCUS: What Happened to History?

After the decline in academic achievement became general knowledge, one of the popular remedies presented was a demand for "national standards." It was said that schools need to be told what students should know by the time they finish grade school and high school. It was asserted that national standards would give us a benchmark by which we could judge what schools were teaching and what students were learning.

It all sounded so reasonable. It is elementary that all schoolchildren should be taught the historical facts about how America became a nation and grew to our present size and greatness. It should be so simple to give schools an outline of the basic facts of American History, with guidelines explaining what should be taught at various elementary and secondary school levels.

The next step, of course, was to get the Federal Government to finance this worthy idea. And so it came to pass that a federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities, gave \$2 million of the taxpayers' money to a UCLA (University of California at Los Angeles) history project to produce a definitive set of standards setting forth how American History should be taught to all students in grades 5 through 12. This taxpayers' grant was supplemented by another grant, almost as large, from the U.S. Department of Education.

The result was a 271-page book called *National Standards for United States History*. It provides conclusive proof that the Federal Government should never write, or pay for the writing, of school curricula. The book is so defective that the U.S. Senate denounced it in a resolution by a vote of 99 to 1, and the one "no" vote was from a Senator who wanted a stronger resolution.

The dictionary defines history as the record of past events. *National Standards*, however, is not a narrative of past events, but is leftwing revisionism. The book is a prime example of Political Correctness (P.C.), the first tenet of which is to view everything through the prism of race and gender.

Accordingly, almost every event in American history is described as though it had race or gender motives and effects. Almost every page is calculated to teach girls and minorities that they have always been oppressed classes in America. It is a grievous disservice to American schoolchildren, as well as historically false, to view the entire panorama of American history as one long conflict about race and gender, in which all ethnic groups except white males are portrayed as victims.

The P.C. hostility to Western/Christian civilization is established at the very beginning when children are taught that calendar time does not have to be identified as BC (as in Before Christ) or AD (as in Anno Domini), but rather as BCE (Before the Common Era) and CE (Common Era). Completely ignoring the historical fact of the dominance of the Christian religion in America and its moral values and traditions, the student is taught an anonymous quota-

tion from an 18th century New Yorker asserting that "The only principle of life propagated among the young people is to get money."

National Standards begins its recitation with what America was like 30,000 years ago. Nobody knows much of anything about our continent in that long-ago period, but this is included in order to drive home the point that pre-1492 events make us a multicultural nation. *Standards* includes instruction on many multicultural items that have had little or no importance in American History, such as the influence of Islam in West Africa. *Standards* instructs 7th and 8th grade students to analyze "the achieve-



ments and grandeur of Mansa Musa's court [a 14th century West African king], and the social customs and wealth of the kingdom of Mali." These assignments are called examples of student achievement.

Instead of learning history as it happened, *Standards* proudly proclaims that students will be "doing history." That means developing fictional conversations among historical figures, role-playing fictional situations, revisionist fictional diaries, and engaging in revisionism on such matters as the life of Christopher Columbus.

Leftwing bias shows itself in the skewed selection of historical figures. Some of the most influential men in our history are ignored or given scant mention, while dozens of persons are singled out for study who have had little or no effect on American history, chosen obviously because of their race or gender.

Omitted from *National Standards*, for example, are Paul Revere, Thomas Edison, the Wright brothers, General Robert E. Lee, Albert Einstein, and Jonas Salk. On the other hand, Senator Joseph McCarthy receives 19 mentions (unfavorable, of course), Harriet Tubman gets six mentions, and students are told to study the influence of MTV, Madonna, Murphy Brown, and Roseanne. *Standards* also refers students to several Communists without identifying their un-American affiliation.

National Standards includes all sorts of exercises for the students to study and to construct biographical sketches about obscure figures chosen for their race, gender

or ethnicity. George Washington is handled by telling the student to construct a fictional dialogue between Washington and an Indian leader at the end of the Revolution. Nothing is suggested to be taught about his extraordinary leadership and personal character, military prowess, presidency of the Constitutional Convention, or service as our nation's first executive.

Students are instructed to "read selections from the writings of major leaders" such as John Dewey, Margaret Sanger, and many obscure individuals of no influence or importance. No such instruction is given about George Washington.

Advocacy of the radical feminist ideology based on victimology runs throughout *National Standards*. The 1848 feminist Declaration at Seneca Falls is mentioned six times, making it more important than the U.S. Constitution and the Gettysburg Address, and at least on a par with our Declaration of Independence (which, incidentally, is equated with Zapata's "Plan de Ayala").

Students are instructed to study the National Organization for Women, to read *Ms.* magazine plus feminist books by Betty Friedan and many obscure writers chosen only for their race or gender. *National Standards* renders the opinion that feminism is "compelling in its analysis of women's problems and the solutions offered." No suggestion is made as to why feminism does not appeal to the majority of American women.

Examples of leftwing bias abound. *National Standards* tells students to analyze why Truman vetoed the Taft-Hartley Act, but makes no reference to why Congress passed that law over his veto. *Standards* calls on students to evaluate the accomplishments of John F. Kennedy's New Frontier and Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, but they are not told to assess those programs' costs and failures.

Value judgments are imposed on the student throughout *National Standards*. For example, students are instructed to conduct a "trial" of John D. Rockefeller on the charge that he "knowingly and willfully participated in unethical and amoral busi-

ness practices."

Distorted versions of history appear on almost every page. Coverage of World War II relegates the Pacific theater to minor importance. The Standards dwell repeatedly on the internment of the Japanese Americans and provide exercises to get students to relive those unhappy experiences, but there is no reference to the cruelty of the Japanese, such as at the Bataan Death March.

National Standards tells students to describe how the SALT I and SALT II Treaties were advantageous to the United States. The book, however, does not mention the treaties' disadvantages, or that SALT I was repeatedly broken by the Soviets, or that the U.S. Senate refused to ratify SALT II.

National Standards makes it imperative that 5th and 6th graders define and understand the key terms associated with Watergate, such as "plumbers," "enemies list," and "CREEP." No such importance is laid on understanding the influence of great American inventors such as Thomas Edison, Eli Whitney, Robert Fulton, and how their inventions contributed mightily to American progress and achievement. When it comes to the history of Congressional leaders, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster are ignored, but former House Speaker Tip O'Neill rates a quote because he called Ronald Reagan "a cheerleader for selfishness."

National Standards instructs the students to survey their classmates to discover who their heroes/heroines are. That may be an interesting assignment, but it's not the study of history, it's the probing of personal attitudes. It is especially out of place in a book that has omitted so many real American heroes.

Parents want schools to return to the teaching of American History as it really happened, not as some trendy revisionists wish it had happened. Parents know that, to survive as a free nation, we must know the lessons of the past so we can apply them to the challenges of the present.

National Standards are a bad idea even if they are promoted by good people. To centralize decision-making at the federal level means that we allow a select elite, with their own biases and agenda, to decide what lessons must be known by American citizens. *National Standards* are symptomatic of the elitist thinking that only those in the seat of power know what is best for all the people. *National Standards* for our nation's schools are unacceptable even if written by the so-called "good people" or "experts."

One problem is the word "standards," as used by the education bureaucrats, no longer means standards of objective knowledge, facts and basic skills. As the advocates of the standards movement use the word, it means "performance standards," that is, how the student feels, responds, believes and behaves. Thus, the assessments (tests) given to the students are for the purpose of ascertaining his attitudes, feelings, and adaptability to being remediated by the school, rather than objective knowledge he has learned.

See *Standards*, page 4

Different Sexes, Different Brains

Scientists have found the most convincing evidence yet that the brains of men and women work in dramatically different ways, at least in how they handle a crucial language task.

When a man mentally breaks a word into its individual sounds, he concentrates the job on the left side of his brain. But a woman uses both sides of the brain almost equally to do the same thing, Yale researchers report in Feb. 16 of the journal *Nature*. Despite this difference, men and women did the task equally well in the study, said researcher Dr. Sally Shaywitz.

The findings are "an extremely important milestone" in understanding language ability as well as learning disabilities and reading problems, said neuropsychologist

G. Reid Lyon of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, which funded the study.

Rhyming tasks were emphasized, Lyon said, because they are concerned with discerning the sounds of language elements. Difficulty in processing word sounds "may be the culprit in this thing called dyslexia," Lyon said. "How kids read words and break them into pieces is the key" to many learning problems.

The finding suggests women have a brain reserve for language ability in case of damage or malfunctioning in the left side of the brain. That might help women recover better from language problems caused by strokes and explain why girls with a reading disability end up reading better than boys

with the problem.

Dr. Shaywitz and her husband, Dr. Bennett Shaywitz, who are co-directors of the Yale Center for the Study of Learning and Attention at the Yale University School of Medicine, along with colleagues studied 19 men and 19 women with a recently developed technique called functional magnetic resonance imaging, which can show which parts of the brain are being activated while a person does a particular task.

One task performed by the volunteers was to judge whether two nonsense words like "lete" and "keat" rhyme, a job that required them to mentally sound out the words. The brain activity in each of the sexes shows that the brains of men and women aren't organized the same way. □

Standards

continued from page 3

The challenge to parents who care about the education of their children is profound. If they fail to stop the brainwashing and revisionism that is going on today in the name of "standards," they will have lost control of their schools — and of their children.

There is so much to be proud of about America. Big question is: Will our young people know about our glorious history? That will depend on whether schools require them to read the history that really happened, or to study liberal brainwashing produced by leftwing academics with our tax dollars. □

Spending Money Doesn't Produce Smart Students in D.C.

WASHINGTON, DC — Despite its lavish spending on education, the Washington, D.C. public school system continues to shortchange its students.

Thomas N. Edmonds and Raymond J. Keating assert in *D.C. By The Numbers: A State of Failure* that practically every major conventional recipe for educational excellence prescribed by the "education experts" has been implemented in D.C.'s public school system, but with little or no effect.

For instance, D.C.'s per-pupil public school expenditures in 1992 (the most recent comparative data) was the highest in

the nation. The cost was approximately \$9,549 per student, compared to the national average of \$5,421. On a per capita basis, D.C.'s federal education aid surpassed the national average by 250%. Average annual public school teacher salaries in D.C. ranked sixth highest in the nation.

Despite all these high amounts of per-pupil spending, federal aid, and teacher salaries, the education results for D.C. are some of the worst in the nation.

In 1993-94, D.C.'s on-time graduation rate ranked 49th in the nation. Of the 27 states where at least 25% of high school graduates took the SAT, D.C. ranked 24th

in verbal scores and last in math scores in 1992-93.

In terms of 8th grade math proficiency, 4th grade math proficiency, and 4th grade reading proficiency, D.C. ranked last in the nation in each category when compared with the states.

Edmonds and Keating write that, even as education experts are confronted with such

subject failure, they "continue to ignore the best means to establishing a favorable education environment for our children — simple competition. Until parents are able to choose where their children go to school, public or private, the decline of D.C.'s public school system will continue unabated — no matter how much money is thrown at the problem." □

NJ Makes Third Try For Abstinence

TRENTON, NJ — For the third time in six years, the New Jersey Assembly passed a bill that would require schools to teach sexual abstinence as the "only completely reliable means" of preventing unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS. The bill was approved 53 to 16 and sent to the Senate.

Former Gov. Jim Florio (D) vetoed a similar bill last year, calling it a political intrusion on local school decisions. An override attempt succeeded in the Assembly but fell four votes short in the Senate.

Conservative Republican sponsors of the bill believe they have a better chance of succeeding this year since Christine Todd Whitman — a member of their own party — is Governor. However, Mrs. Whitman is from the more moderate wing of the party, and she has expressed views similar to those of Florio on the proposed mandate.

"When the state started the Family Life education program, it was carefully crafted initially to make sure the state stayed out of developing the courses," said Carl Golden, Mrs. Whitman's spokesman. "It has worked fairly well, and the Governor is

concerned about the state getting into the curriculum-writing business."

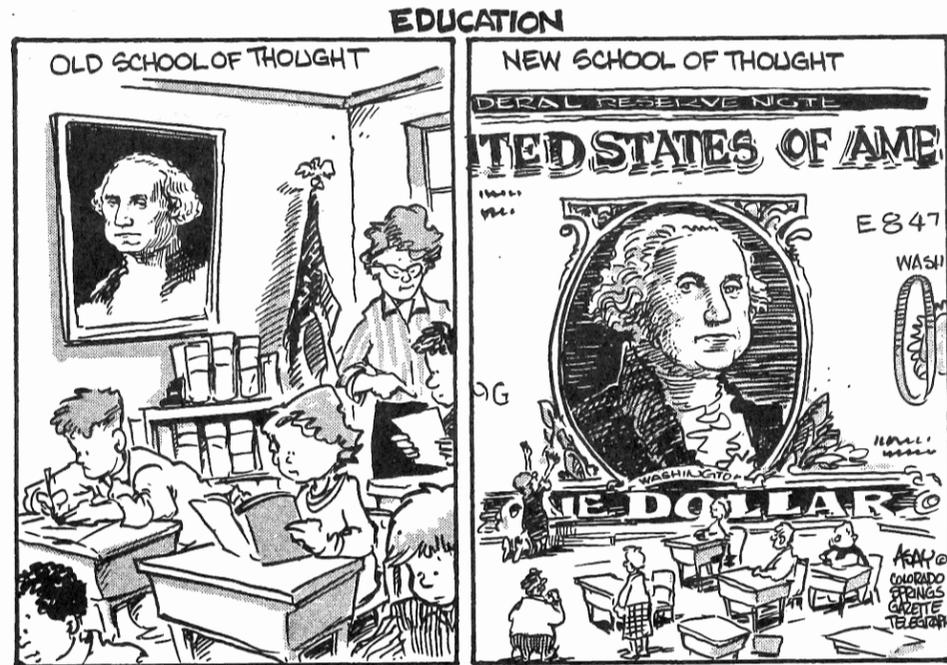
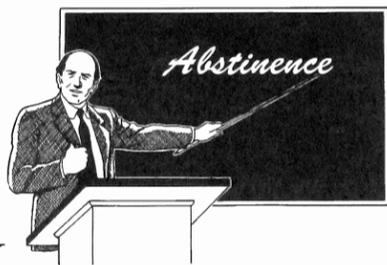
Mr. Golden did not go so far as to predict another veto. "We understand there will be some attempt to amend the bill before it receives final passage, and the Governor will wait to see what arrives at her desk," he said.

Assemblywoman Marion Crecco, (R-Bloomfield), the bill's chief sponsor (see *Education Reporter*, Nov. 1994), maintains that "abstinence programs which teach these strategies have had tremendous success, particularly among inner city youth."

Opponents argue that a state mandate would skew local Family Life programs that were to be designed by local school districts and parents. They fear that instruction in the use of contraceptives and prophylactics could be played down, they claim, putting sexually active students at a greater risk of contracting disease.

Assemblyman John A. Rocco, a former associate professor at Rider College, said he was at a loss to see how anyone could oppose the bill. "It's a common sense bill and contains nothing harmful or not in the best interest of students. It will bring some sense of security to the young men and women who are abstaining and who want to know there is a place for them in sex education programs," he said.

"Some teachers are showing them bananas with condoms on them or condoms that glow in the dark, but not talking about abstinence," Mr. Rocco added. □



Atheist Left Attacks Religious Students

The Young America's Foundation reports that, on college campuses, "freedom of religion" has come to mean "freedom from religion." Consider the following:

- At Harvard Divinity School, students are reprimanded for capitalizing "G" in the word God.
- Patrick Mooney, a Catholic student at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, was stripped of his job as a resident assistant for refusing to wear a button supporting homosexuality.
- The Social Work Department at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota states that "It is simply not acceptable for social workers to view homosexual people as perverse or sinners. . . Students who have predetermined negative attitudes toward gay and lesbian people . . . should probably look elsewhere for a major."
- Professor Vernon McClean of William Patterson College opened his class "Racism and Sexism in a Changing America" by proclaiming his belief that the Pope is a "racist c - - s - - - - -."

For more information about the Young America's Foundation, please call 1-800-292-9231.