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Panelists Encourage Boulder Teens to Have Sex and Use Drugs ‘Appropriately’

Four panelists spoke to students at Boulder High School on April 10, on “STDs: Sex, Teens and Drugs.” “I’m going to encourage you to have sex, and I’m going to encourage you to use drugs appropriately,” announced Dr. Joel Becker, psychiatrist and UCLA professor. “And why I’m going to take that position is because you’re going to do it anyway,” he said; even though a survey recently taken at Boulder High had found that only 33% of the students had ever had sex.

Ten Republican state senators have joined together to chastise the Boulder Valley school board for the district’s “weak” response to the Conference on World Affairs panel. The senators denounced the panel discussion as “reckless and utterly irresponsible,” and called for the district’s superintendent and the principal of Boulder High to be fired. The school board has yet to respond officially to the senators’ letters.

To listen to the recording of the panel discussion is to hear four grown adults openly jockeying for the position of “coolest panelist” in the eyes of their teenage audience. One boasts of her wide experience with alcohol and marijuana; another casually drops details that brag how often he has sex with women he hardly knows. A third mentions that if he had the drug ecstasy, he might take it — that from the psychiatrist, who should know the ruinous psychological and physical effects of that drug. All this, and much more, took place at a public high school assembly for which many teachers made attendance mandatory.

Boulder High School (BHS) has hosted panels through the University of Colorado’s Conference on World Affairs since 1998. This was the first panel to cause controversy. When some parents complained, Boulder Valley School Board president Helayne Jones initially called the panel a “huge mistake.” After listening to the recording, however, Jones and other board members decided the panel’s message was appropriate overall.

“Its intent was to discuss with students of [sic] the risks of engaging in certain behaviors before they are emotionally and psychologically mature enough to cope with their consequences,” wrote Supt. George Garcia. Garcia acknowledged that parts of the presentation were “unnecessarily crude.” He also said that while BHS will continue to host the event and the teachers involved in bringing these speakers will not be disciplined, teachers will no longer mandate attendance.

Does Garcia’s description do justice to the panel’s intent? The panelists lauded experimentation with sex and drugs, while

mentioning the risks and consequences only briefly. Panelist Antonio Sacre shared the story of his experience with an STD as if it were a good joke; the audience laughed and applauded. The few negative examples and negative consequences cited pertained almost exclusively to having sex or using drugs *too young*, before students are “ready.” As long as you perceive yourself to be ready, casual sex and illegal drugs are fine, the panelists clearly communicated.

The only exception came at a brief moment when Sacre mentioned the abortion his 17-year-old girlfriend had, describing the regret and the “hole in your heart” he feels so many years later. This was the only moment in the recording that gave a strong disincentive to experimenting with drugs or sex. Even so, in the context of the rest of his message, Sacre was really only urging students to use condoms when they have sex, not to postpone sex or forgo sex until marriage.

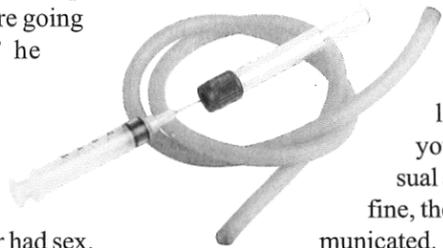
The panelists condoned uncommitted sex, even between people with no illusions of love or long-term plans (“It feels the same both ways”). When one student asked the panel, “Would you have sex with someone you liked but he doesn’t love you,” all four panelists said that they would.

Although more than one student tried to make some connection between love and sex in questions to the panel, teens might well despair of ever finding lasting love, based on the responses they received.

“We older people make jokes and say that teenage boys will stick their you-know-what in a melon. I mean, that’s about as much feeling as they need to have for the object,” said Becker. “And after it’s over, it can be as meaningless as you can imagine. So you have to be prepared for those differences between the two of you.” Later, Becker warned against abstinence because students committed to abstinence until marriage tend to marry significantly sooner than others. “We don’t necessarily think that’s a good idea,” he said. “If you get married before the age of 25, you’ve got an 80% chance of that marriage not working out. I don’t think anybody would go to the track and take that bet. . . . And so what I’m worried about in the abstinence model is that people are getting married younger, too young, [and] they’re getting the same amount of STDs anyway.”

Besides abstinence, the panel warned students severely against tobacco. “If you get one message [out of this panel], it’s that,” said Sanho

(See Panelists, page 4)



Billionaires Call for ‘Ed in ’08’

Billionaires Bill Gates and Eli Broad, with other top philanthropists, plan a \$60 million effort to put public education at the top of the 2008 presidential campaign agenda. Gates and Broad have spent more than \$2 billion on various education initiatives in the past. The new \$60 million project, called Strong American Schools, will nearly top the list for spending on single-issue initiatives in presidential races.

The campaign will proceed under the slogan “Ed in ’08.” “The lack of political and public will is a significant barrier to making dramatic improvements in school and student performance,” said Gates in an e-mail to the *New York Times*. Strong American Schools hopes to motivate voters and candidates through TV and radio ads in battleground states, along with other strategies.

Gates and Broad say this effort will be nonpartisan. Gates has supported campaigns in both the Democratic and Republican parties at different times. Broad is a prominent Democratic donor and has given money to Senator Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign. The billionaires have recruited bipartisan leadership and financial support for this project.

The project will promote three main

education initiatives: stronger and more nationally consistent curriculum standards, a longer school day and year, and merit pay for teachers.

The largest teachers unions oppose merit pay and other incentives to reward teacher quality. Strong American Schools may therefore create some confusion among Democratic supporters and candidates, with the teachers unions and the billionaires pulling in two different directions on this topic.

Many Republicans, on the other hand, favor merit pay, but oppose national standards. The third item, longer school days and school years, is already in effect in some school districts scattered across the nation, and some are convinced it is the solution to lagging school and student performance. Opponents point to nations where students excel in school while spending far less time in class than American students already do. For example, in Sweden, children at all levels must spend 741 hours in school per year. The average American child spends 900 hours per year in school.

The project will avoid some of the most controversial issues in education: vouchers, charter schools, and state-funded preschool. (*New York Times*, 4-25-07)



96 Colleges and Universities Host Islamo-Fascism Awareness Day

Fears of discrimination against Muslim students have led many universities to suppress discussion of radical Islam or the challenge it poses to free nations worldwide. The film *Obsession* attempts to raise Westerners’ awareness of the threat, through an inside look at some of the tactics and objectives of militant Islam.

The documentary distinguishes between the majority of Muslims and the vocal minority, saying that most Muslims are peaceable and do not support terror. Even so, some university administrators and others have tried to keep the film off of campuses because they think it is potentially offensive.

In fall of 2006, Michael Abdurakhmanov tried to arrange a public screening of *Obsession* at Pace University in New York, where he is a student. Muslim students raised some protests against showing the film, but Pace administrators op-



posed the idea even more strongly. One warned Abdurakhmanov that showing the film could not only incite “hate crimes” against Muslim students but might even be considered a hate crime in and of itself.

On April 19th, however, Pace was one of 96 colleges and universities to screen *Obsession* on campus, as part of the first-ever Islamo-Fascism Awareness Day. Across the nation, groups of students and faculty watched the documentary together and discussed it. “The simultaneous showing of a film exposing the Islamist threat at nearly 100 universities is a tremendous victory for the forces of freedom and for intellectual diversity, which are now under attack,” said activist and author David Horowitz. The David Horowitz Freedom Center’s Terrorism Awareness Project sponsored the screenings and helped student groups to bring *Obsession* to their campuses.

(See Awareness Day, page 4)

EDUCATION BRIEFS

A new study found that the nation's first 12 voucher and tax-credit programs saved state and local budgets \$444 million between 1990 and 2006. The Friedman Foundation report also found that instructional spending per student rose in all public school districts and states affected by the school choice reforms — contrary to the expectations of school choice opponents. Each of the 12 programs studied was at least fiscally neutral, while most resulted in significant budgetary savings. (www.friedmanfoundation.org)

A \$1 million gift to establish a conservative speakers' forum at Florida's Stetson University is already enlivening the campus's political atmosphere. Mrs. Martha Apgar endowed the John N. Apgar Jr. Lecture Series in response to Stetson's College Republicans' frustration that so few conservative voices are heard on campus. William F. Buckley spoke at Stetson last fall as part of the first lecture series, and Robert George will speak there later this year as part of the second. (Washington Times, 5-14-07)

A substitute teacher at a Chicago school played the explicit, R-rated homosexual love story, *Brokeback Mountain*, for a class of 8th-graders. "What happens in Ms. Buford's class stays in Ms. Buford's class," said the sub before closing the door and showing the movie. One student and her family have filed suit against the teacher, the Chicago Board of Education, and the principal, who the suit alleges knew the movie would be shown. (Chicago Sun-Times, 5-13-07)

Middle schoolers in Manchester, NH took a field trip to Planned Parenthood. They visited the abortion clinic through a YMCA-operated program for at-risk students, as part of a field trip to several social services agencies. Parkside Middle School principal Dawn Michaud apparently knew about the trip. The local school board is investigating the matter. (Union Leader, 6-12-07)

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New Jersey School Prepares for Christian Prayer Warrior Attack

This spring, Burlington Township High School in New Jersey staged a hostage drill to prepare students and faculty in the event of a terrorist attack. The scenario for the drill was an attack by two gunmen, "members of a right-wing fundamentalist group called the 'New Crusaders' who don't believe in separation of church and state." The Christian gunmen in the drill pretended to take hostages and open fire on students because one of their daughters was expelled for praying before class.



"You perform as you practice," said Supt. Chris Manno. "We need to practice under conditions as real as possible in order to evaluate our procedures and plans so that they're as effective as possible." The drill caused a strong emotional reaction among Christian students and community members, who objected to the scenario's portrayal of Christians. Many also quickly pointed out that even the father's grievance was unrealistic, since it is perfectly legal for students to pray at school.

Commentator Michelle Malkin remembered in *National Review Online* (4-

4-07) the terrorism drill in Michigan in 2004 in which students practiced for an attack by Christian homeschoolers.

"The exercise will simulate an attack by a fictitious radical group called Wackos Against Schools and Education who believe everyone should be homeschooled," the plan for that drill explained.

Malkin's article, entitled "Whitewashing Jihad in the Schools," accused American educators of refusing to confront the reality of militant Islam ever since 9/11. The National Education Association warned parents and teachers against suggesting "that any group is responsible" for the 9/11 attacks.

Now some educators and administrators "feel free to conjure up homeschooling 'wackos' and Christian 'New Crusaders' to avoid offending the Muslim lobby," writes Malkin.

The Burlington Township School District issued a statement on the drill, regretting "any perceived insensitivity to our religious community," and reaffirming awareness of students' and staff members' right to pray while at school.

SCIENTIFIC STUDIES SHOW...



Referendum on Utah's Vouchers

After a series of misadventures, the Utah universal voucher program signed into law in the spring will now appear as a referendum on the Nov. 6, 2007 ballot.

The Utah legislature recently passed the nation's first universal voucher program (see *Education Reporter*, Mar. 2007). Under the program, Utah students who don't already attend private school could receive between \$500 and \$3,000 to attend the school of their choice, beginning in the fall of 2007.

When the first voucher bill passed (H.B. 148), Utahns for Public Schools, a group opposed to vouchers, started a petition drive in the hope that voters would then repeal the law by referendum. The petition drive did not address a second voucher bill, H.B. 174, which amended H.B. 148. Since the second bill passed

with a two-thirds majority, it could not be repealed by referendum.

The petition drive obtained enough signatures to force a referendum on H.B. 148 onto the November ballot. However, Utah Attorney General Mark Shurtleff said he believed the second bill, H.B. 174, would be strong enough to stand alone and implement the universal voucher program even without H.B. 148. In that case, there would be no way for voters to repeal the program.

However, the Utah Supreme Court ruled that vouchers must appear on the November ballot as a straight yes-or-no question. After hearing testimony on both sides, the court took only three hours to rule that H.B. 174 could not stand alone without H.B. 148, if voters reject H.B. 148 in the November referendum.

Book of the Month



One Nation under Therapy: How the Helping Culture Is Eroding Self-Reliance, Christina Hoff Sommers and Sally Satel, St. Martin's Press, 2005, 310 pp., \$23.95



This book chronicles the rise and current prominence of what the authors call "therapism": the assumption that people are inherently weak, fragile, and in need of professional help to deal with common setbacks and negative life events. Therapism sees awareness and expression of feelings as crucial to well-being, and tends to make self-esteem, self-discovery and self-actualization the ultimate aims of human life.

Satel and Sommers believe that all this self-focus can make people — well, selfish, or even self-obsessed. "Bullies and sociopaths often score very high on self-esteem tests and claim that they are very happy. Happiness, without a foundation in ethics, can characterize a smug, unfeeling person, and such people are often exploitive and dangerous."

The authors examine scientific studies and historical accounts in the areas of education and parenting, crime and punishment, and human response to stress and trauma. They show that people are more resilient, more dignified and more able to take care of themselves than the mindset of therapism assumes.

Therapism also acts as if focusing on one's own internal emotional state, in order to understand it better, is the secret to attaining emotional wholeness and happiness. But numerous studies have shown that "preoccupation with one's mood can intensify and extend the period of depressed mood." It is also now well-known among psychiatrists that expressing anger can be enraging rather than cathartic. Giving vent to anger usually makes people more angry, not less.

The therapeutic mindset that focuses morbidly on emotions and their expression has already filtered into schools and elsewhere. In those settings, it leads to much bad advice and many misguided efforts. These efforts can be invasive, too: teachers often make assignments that ask students to bare their souls and become very vulnerable with their classmates or teachers. "Why should young people who are in school to learn skills and become knowledgeable be asked to 'put themselves on the line'?"

Satel and Sommers recommend that parents "demand knowledge-based instead of feelings-centered classrooms," and teach their children the virtues of action, courage and strength, not only those of sensitivity and empathy. They make a convincing case that therapism is enfeebling to naturally resilient people, and that the American people should reject it.

FOCUS: American Education: Beyond Frankfurt and Dewey

By William A. Borst

Next year marks the 90th anniversary of the devastating flu epidemic of 1918-19, which killed several million people in Europe, India and the United States. It was called the Spanish flu because it was first discovered in Spain. Many called it the "Plague of the Spanish Lady," a veiled reference to an 18th-century Irish ballad. A Spanish Lady was considered a woman of dubious virtue. To "dance with the Spanish Lady" was to catch the flu and maybe die. Oddly, this flu struck a disproportionate number of young adults.

Little Animals

Like the Spanish flu, deadly ideas can also spread their virulent effects across oceans. The 19th century was a boiling cauldron of nefarious ideas that went under a host of different names, including Darwinism, Positivism, and Pragmatism. Their common denominator was the dehumanization of man and the denial of humanization truth.

Most of the discussion of alien intellectual forces that have impacted American culture has focused on the cultural Marxism of the Frankfurt School. According to historian Dr. Dennis Cuddy, the Leipzig School, its older German sister, is equally important. As an incubator for some of the most harmful educational ideas in the history of American education, the Leipzig School would do to the American school system what the Frankfurt sibling would do to American morality. To dance with the German Lady from Leipzig was to be infected with a deadly flu of intellectual bacilli that would prove to be as lethal to young people as was her Spanish kinsman.

In 1879 the Leipzig School's leading scientist, Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920), established his experimental laboratory at Leipzig University. Wundt's iconoclastic approach to science transferred psychology from the domain of philosophy to that of the natural sciences. As the Father of Social and Experimental Psychology, he applied Charles Darwin's godless science to the schools.

Wundt believed that man was an animal who could be put under a microscope and reprogrammed for the good of society. Relationships were no longer based on mutual respect for a fellow-child of God but on pragmatic exploitation. Children were mere "little animals," who needed to be conditioned into good workers for the state. Along with Darwin and later Kinsey, Wundt reduced man to the status of a lab rodent.

Wundt's first prodigy was Granville Stanley Hall (1844-1924). Hall was a former preacher, but Darwinian psychology became his new religion. His interests in child development invariably led him to educational issues and child psychology. He taught at Baltimore's Johns Hopkins University where his most apt pupil was John Dewey.

The American Future

In 1884 the Vermont-born Dewey (1859-1952), destined to become the Father of Progressive Education, received his doctorate from Johns Hopkins. He went on to teach and do research first at the University of Chicago and later at the Columbia Teachers College. At Columbia his influence was unparalleled in the history of American education. By the early 1950s Columbia was producing a third of the nation's largest school systems' principals and superintendents.

A confirmed socialist, Dewey experienced the Soviet future during the 1920s. He was mesmerized by the Soviet ideal of a world without capitalists, traditional families, or religion. In 1933 his Russian sojourn inspired him to contribute to the Humanist Manifesto which promised to do to society what the Communist Manifesto had done to economics. Dewey's Manifesto called for a New World religion that would be "a synthesizing and dynamic force for today that must be shaped for the needs of this age."

Dewey's thinking was an eclectic blend of Plato, Rousseau, and Darwin. He rejected the concept of God and denied the existence of all immutable truth, especially fixed moral laws. Man was a mere biological organism, devoid of a human soul. Individual freedom reduced a person's meaningful contributions to society.

Dewey had set the stage for the decline of traditional education as early as 1897 with his book *My Pedagogic Creed*. In the book he opined that "we violate the child's nature and render difficult the best ethical results by introducing the child too abruptly to a number of special studies, of reading, writing, geography, etc." Personal experience, the key to all learning, replaced rote memory in Dewey's hierarchy of educational values. His reformist ideas created several generations of feelers — not thinkers given to analytical thought and moral understanding. All activities were to be evaluated only according to their contributions to society. Dewey's education philosophy advanced the progressive education movement and fostered a swarm of experimental education programs.

Alice in Wonderland

Progressive education's early history in the United States promised to educate the "whole child." In doing so, progressive educators developed a student-based system that stifled bright students and favored slower-minded children. Its legacy includes such unfeasible principles of pedagogy as open classrooms, cooperative learning, whole language, and alternate schooling, such as non-graded classrooms and schools without walls. Failure was unacceptable because of its long-term damage to the student's self-esteem. Social promotions became the rule of the day. Moral absolutes disappeared in favor of moral relativism, values clarification, and situation ethics.

Dewey did much to adapt progressive

education to what he had learned from Hall and experienced in Soviet Russia. According to the reliable educator Dr. Samuel L. Blumenfeld, Dewey was the first to shift the emphasis from language-based learning "to a hands-on basket-weaving curriculum of progressive education." In his book, *The Marketing of Evil*, internet editor David Kupelian warns that the public school system "has been cultivated to indoctrinate, to mold, and to socialize children."

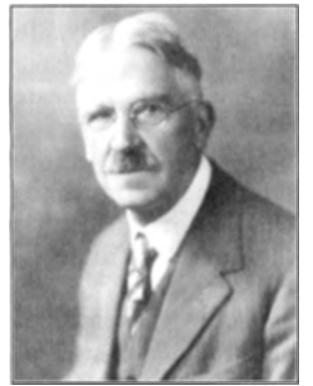
The public schools have become the new Marxist laboratories for social engineering. The average public school is mired in a sociological swamp of pornographic sex education, declining test scores, violence, and speech codes. They have created what Kupelian calls an "Alice in Wonderland environment," where small boys are dosed with Ritalin to contain their natural restlessness while others are suspended for playing Cowboys and Indians.

One of the great casualties of progressive education has been literacy. The progressives abandoned traditional phonics, the sounding out of phonetically structured words, for "whole language," which necessitates the memorization of each individual word. Using this method, according to Rudolf Flesch's 1955 seminal study *Why Johnny Can't Read*, is akin to teaching the Chinese language, which does not have an alphabet and must rely on the memorization of individual ideographs or word pictures. Whole language is a tool designed to make students intellectually dysfunctional. An illiterate society cannot recognize nor defend itself against an intrusive government.

With a Capital T

One of the leading spokesmen for an updated version of Dewey's socialistic pedagogy has been Marc Tucker, a former education *apparatchik* during the George H. W. Bush administration in the early 1990s. In his celebrated *Dear Hillary* letter of November 11, 1992, Tucker outlined his plan for the federal take-over of all public schools. As he wrote the First Lady-elect, "What is essential is that we create a seamless web of opportunities to develop one's skills that literally extend from cradle to grave and is the same system for everyone."

Noted authority Samuel Blumenfeld accurately described Tucker's letter as a plan for "the take-over of American public schools by behavioral scientists and psychologists." Tucker wants to eliminate the traditional education model, root and branch. To accomplish this will require a disastrous change in the prevailing American culture. He wants to put all 4-year-olds and 3-year-olds into universal public preschool, operated by independent contractors and run by teachers. Tucker wants the Federal Government to create regional economic development authorities that would develop goals and strategies for their regions. Tucker is also a strong advocate of systems education, known by



John Dewey

many names, most notably outcome-based education. In place of educating independent thinking students, Tucker wants the government to direct students to the needs of the state.

Political science professor Allen Quist has been monitoring Tucker's career for many years. In the January 2007 issue of the *Education Reporter* he warned that there is a sinister agenda, hidden behind the exaggerated promises detailed in Tucker's 2006 education initiative *Tough Choices or Tough Times*. Tucker boasts that if the U.S. adopts his plans, "no one will fail and we can send almost everyone to college." This utopian fantasy might seal the fate of the American public school system.

Tucker's philosophy lay the basis for the Goals 2000 and the School-To-Work Acts passed by Congress in 1994. This legislation effectively usurped decision-making away from the local school board, damaging its local control. Tucker's contagious ideas provided the drive for the 2002 No Child Left Behind Act, which has prompted most teachers to just teach to the tests, leaving little time for education.

It is quite possible Tucker is pinning his hopes on Senator Clinton's chances for the presidency in 2008. Choosing Tucker to run her Department of Education where he can implement his dangerous plans for America's school children would be entirely consistent with Mrs. Clinton's views on education.

A Lifelong Epidemic

Mark Tucker wants to take the plague of Dewey's ideas globally. He has reapplied Dewey's ideas to the ephemeral world of global capitalism. His ambitious program includes "lifelong education," where all facets of human life — school, work, health, leisure and religion will be monitored from cradle to grave through a comprehensive system. To effect the global village, he plans to use UNESCO, the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization.

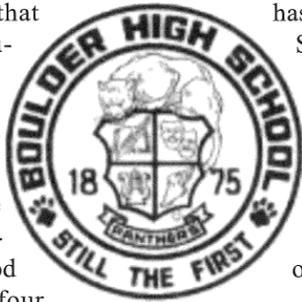
According to Tucker, in order to compete in the world economy, the United States "must adopt internationally benchmarked standards for education and its students and workers." UNESCO would establish these educational standards to be used around the world. It would determine what is taught in all schools, not just those in the United States. Tucker holds that all education should be vocational. That means he plans to adapt his outcome-based education to the global economy. All around the world, students will have to pass a national standards test, established by the UN, that would determine their future. The tests, taken in the 10th grade, will be based on the UN's secular humanist worldview.

Reprinted from *Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation May 2007 Vol. XLIX-No.5 Mindszenty Report*

Panelists (Continued from page 1)

Tree very seriously, after warning of the dangers of tobacco addiction. Tree, who also advocated the legalization of all drugs so that the government can regulate them, directs the Drug Policy Project at the liberal Institute for Policy Studies.

At the very end of the question-and-answer period, one brave student stood up to disagree with the four adults. "It's actually really hard for me to get up and say this, but I feel like I have to. So, I'm extremely offended, just by some of the things you say, and I think it's important to understand even though this is Boulder High School, there are people who are here that have different views, and I think that this discussion has been fairly one-sided. . . . I think it's inappropriate to discredit religious views on some of these issues. And I know that, Mr. Becker, you discredited abstinence, and this is something that a lot of people



feel very strongly about, and I just want everyone to know that there are two sides to the argument, even though this has been fairly one-sided. . . .

So I would just state that I think that the panelists need to think about what messages they came to send." Her peers, to their credit, applauded this sole voice to speak up with an opposing opinion.

They also applauded Joel Becker, as he responded to the girl's comment and closed the program on a note of moral relativism. "One of the things I'm afraid happens in the religious movement is they don't give the same choice to other people. They try to tell other people that what they're doing is right, and what these people are doing is wrong. That's my issue. I think you're very right for you. And I think that all the people who believe like you are right for them. But I don't want you to tell the other people that what they're doing is wrong."

Texas School District is Sued over Elective Bible Course

The American Civil Liberties Union and People for the American Way sued the Ector County Independent School District over offering high school electives in New and Old Testament-era history and literature. The advocacy groups sued on behalf of eight parents who claim that the Bible electives violate their religious liberty. The lawsuit comes just as the Texas Legislature has passed a bill pertaining to Bible electives.

In 2005, the Ector County School Board approved the Bible electives it now offers, and chose the curriculum developed by the National Council on Bible Curriculum in Public Schools (NCBCPS), which has been adopted in 395 school districts in 37 states (see *Education Reporter*, Jan. '06, Jan. '07). Although the curriculum is designed to be taught in a way that neither encourages nor discourages religious belief, the director of the ACLU of Texas called the course "basically a Sunday school class within the walls of a public school."

Kelly Shackelford, chief counsel of Liberty Legal Institute, disagrees. "There is no question that these Bible electives

are constitutional. The United States Supreme Court has stated more than once that teaching about the Bible is not only constitutional, but essential to a quality education. This lawsuit is a loser," he told the *Houston Chronicle* (5-16-07).

The Texas bill on Bible literacy originally would have required all public school districts to offer

Bible electives if 15 or more students wished to take them. It also would have left curriculum decisions up to local school districts.

However, following several amendments, the bill now requires the Texas Attorney General to sign off on a curriculum, and requires all courses to use a book other than the Bible as the primary textbook — which may rule out the popular NCBCPS curriculum.

South Carolina moved quickly over the past legislative session toward establishing state standards for courses on the Bible's history and literature, with legislation based on similar recent efforts in Georgia. Several other states have also recently considered new laws authorizing elective courses on the Bible.

**Quotes from Boulder Conference****Warning: sexually graphic, offensive material**

Joel Becker: "I want to encourage you to all have healthy sexual behavior. Now what is healthy sexual behavior? Well, I don't care if it's with men and men, women and women, men and women, however, whatever combination you would like to put together. But I think that we know enough about what constitutes healthy sexual behavior to think about it along two lines. One is, the issue of health and disease. So all the information that you can get about the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, you should have. And then we should be realistic about what you are actually going to stick to, and what you are not."

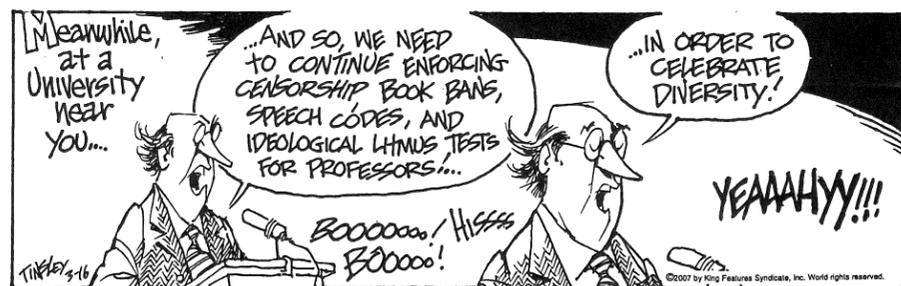
Joel Becker, on the subject of mind-altering drugs: "And there's no question that people's worlds are changed after their consciousness is changed. Well, you have to really sort of think, am I ready to have my world changed? I'm 14 years old. Maybe I'm not ready to see what one sees on LSD. Maybe I'm not ready to have the feelings that mescaline provides in my body, or ecstasy, because a lot of those feelings have to do with feelings of being out of control, and they can be very scary to a person who doesn't have a strong enough sense of themselves, and that's why people end up having bad trips at young ages. They're just not ready."

Sanho Tree, answering a question on why society has a taboo against using drugs or having sex at a young age: "I think H. L. Mencken was the one who characterized puritanism as this terrible feeling that out there somewhere someone was having fun."

Sanho Tree: Also, there's an unintended consequence, again, of abstinence-based models, particularly when they're combined with religious fundamentalism and indoctrination. If it works for you, well, great, it works for you. But what if it fails? . . . Taking someone who may have made a mistake, and you make them feel much worse about themselves — that they have betrayed their covenant with God, that they're dirty, they're impure, something is wrong with them. It's a mistake. We all make mistakes. We all experiment. It's very natural for young people to experiment with same-sex relationships. Perhaps you don't talk about it much. A lot of people experiment and never go on to become homosexual. They go on and lead very productive lives, etc., etc. Well, if you've had that indoctrination, you think, "Well, maybe there's something wrong with me. Maybe I've sinned, I'm dirty," — all these other things that take a bad situation and make it much worse, in my opinion.

Antonio Sacre: Just from a personal point of view, alcohol — maybe it's proven or not — but I know alcohol affects my sexual ability. So it's embarrassing to be out on a date with a lovely woman and have a couple of beers, and if, you know, we're moving towards that — and to be unable to perform is a little embarrassing. So for me, if I'm with a woman, that's something that I don't necessarily do.

Andee Gerhardt: . . . You know, it doesn't always have to be about love, and it doesn't always have to be about long-term relationship. It feels the same way both ways. (<http://www.bvswatch.org/content/view/91/1/>)

MALLARD FILLMORE / by Jeff Tinsley**Briefs** (Continued from page 2)

A history teacher at Manhattan's public Beacon School took a dozen students on an illegal spring break field trip to Cuba in April. He also took students on the same trip in 2004 and 2005. The teacher, Nathan Turner, apparently decided to go ahead with the 2007 trip after his principal and the city Department of Education refused to approve it. A local left-wing community group organized the trip, and U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler and New York Lt. Gov. David Paterson both issued letters endorsing it. Although the principal denies having approved the trip in 2007, the school's website was used to promote it; and the principal admits approving trips to Cuba in 2004 and 2005. The U.S. restricted travel to Cuba in 1962, and tightened restrictions in 2003, meaning that all three trips were illegal. Penalties on high school students traveling to Cuba may range from a warning to

\$65,000 in fines. (*New York Post*, 4-13-07)

The California "spanking bill" died in committee. Assemblywoman Sally Lieber's original bill would have criminalized the spanking of any child under age four. That legislation would have required first-time spankers to attend a parenting class; repeat offenders would have faced up to a year in jail or a \$1,000 fine. The later version of her bill criminalized spanking children with an object such as a paddle or a shoe. It included examples of occasional spanking with such implements alongside true examples of child abuse. "This is a relief for the tens of thousands of parents and grandparents who called and e-mailed Sacramento to protest this home-invasion bill," said Campaign for Children and Families president Randy Thomasson. (www.savecalifornia.com)

Awareness Day (Continued from page 1)

Many of the groups had to fight to be able to show the film. Some administrators with the same concerns as those at Pace created obstacles or tried to talk student groups out of the idea. Georgia Tech student Ruth Malhotra, after overcoming several administrative obstacles and protests by left-wing student groups, received death threats over the film and had to spend most

of the day under police protection.

Nevertheless, most student groups reported great results from the awareness day. Post-film discussions were generally civil and productive. Students reported that the film accomplished its goal of raising awareness and prompting discussion on a topic too important to remain taboo. (*Front Page Magazine*, 4-20-07; *Washington Times* 4-18-07)