



The

Phyllis Schlafly Report



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BOX 618, ALTON, ILLINOIS 62002

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Will The Education Department Hearings Be Published?

Will the Department of Education publish — or censor — the record of the seven days of hearings it conducted in March 1984 across the country on regulations for the Protection of Pupil Rights Act? To publish or not to publish, that is the question.

Secretary Terrel H. Bell and his Department are now sitting on more than a thousand pages of recorded testimony taken down by court reporters at full-day hearings in seven U.S. cities. These pages speak with the thunderous voice of hundreds of parents who are angry at how their children have been emotionally and mentally abused by experimental psychological and behavioral programs during classroom hours when the parents *thought* their children were being taught basic education.

Parents complained that such programs are alienating school children from their parents, from religious beliefs, and from our nation's patriotic heritage. Parents charged that educator "change agents" have spent Federal tax dollars to use local schools as laboratories for social engineering and experimentation rather than for traditional academic instruction.

All that sort of thing is supposed to be in violation of the Pupil Rights Act passed by Congress in 1978 prohibiting psychological programs without the parents' consent. Although the law is five years old, the Department of Education is just getting around to asking for public comment on proposed regulations. It is a mystery why no regulations have yet been issued to enforce this Federal statute.

This Protection of Pupil Rights Act (20 U.S.C. 1232h, sometimes called the Hatch Amendment), forbids schools to subject students to psychological examination or treatment which requires the pupil to reveal information concerning "political affiliations," "sex behavior and attitudes," "mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his family," or "critical appraisals" of behavior and attitudes of family members, without "the prior written consent of the parent."

At day-long hearings in Seattle, Phoenix, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Orlando, Concord, NH, and Washington, DC, parents presented a mountain of evidence of abuses in the classroom which would be in violation of the Pupil Rights Act IF it were enforced. Their testimony was revealing and often shocking.

These 1984 hearings revealed that many schools now look upon education as a sort of psychological treatment or psychotherapy, which is precisely what the Pupil Rights Act forbids. Many schools have replaced cognitive education with affective education. Whereas cognitive education addresses the child's intellect, affective education addresses the child's feelings and emotions.

Back in 1978, former Senator and educator Sam Hayakawa spoke out strongly against what he called the "heresy that rejects the idea of education as the acquisition of knowledge and skills" and instead "regards the fundamental task of education as therapy." He said that this inquiring into attitudes and beliefs, and psychic and emotional problems, is a "serious invasion of privacy." The need for regulations for the Pupil Rights Act is greater than ever, and they should be issued immediately.

Back in 1974, Terrel H. Bell had this to say about the role of parents: "Parents have the right to expect that the schools, in their teaching approaches and selection of instructional materials, will support the values and standards that their children are taught at home. And if the schools cannot support those values, they must at least avoid deliberate destruction of them."

Continuing, he said, "Parents have the ultimate responsibility for the upbringing of their children. The school's authority ends where it infringes on this right. We must pay more attention to parents' values and seek their advice more frequently."

Parents certainly gave their advice at these Education Department hearings. Whether or not Secretary Bell publishes the record will indicate whether or not he is listening to the parents' advice.

Testimony by Phyllis Schlafly
Department of Education Hearing
On the Protection Of Pupil Rights Act
March 27, 1984

Parents send children to elementary and secondary schools to learn the basic skills: how to read and write the English language, some mathematics and science, and the essentials of American history and government. Unfortunately, some persons look upon the schools *not* as a means of teaching children knowledge and skills, but as a means of subjecting them to psychiatric treatment, changing their attitudes, probing into private family matters and attitudes that are none of the school's business, and getting pupils to accept religious and moral values different from their own.

This is why we urgently need regulations to enforce the Protection of Pupil Rights Act (20 U.S.C. 1232h), passed in 1974 and amended in 1978. The shocking question is, why haven't we had regulations and enforcement of a five-year-old statute! Let's talk about some of the things going on in schools which the Protection of Pupil Rights Act would forbid, IF the Department of Education would enforce the statute through appropriate regulations.

The Protection of Pupil Rights Act forbids schools to subject students to psychological examination or treatment which requires the student to reveal information concerning "sex behavior and attitudes," "mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his family," or "critical appraisals" of behavior and attitudes of family members. All across the country, classroom courses masquerading as sex education are in fact violating the letter and spirit of that law. Let's take a look at the most up-to-date example of classroom sex courses written for use in public schools K-12 (kindergarten through twelfth grade).

The New York City Board of Education has just published a new "Sex Education Program" (SEP). It is 293 pages long. That's about 283 pages longer than is necessary to instruct pupils in the facts of life; the rest is classroom fun and games designed to subject pupils to psychological treatment, to require pupils to reveal information about sex behavior and attitudes, to require pupils to discuss psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his family, to invade his and his family's privacy, and to elicit critical appraisals of other individuals with whom the pupils have close relationships.

One of SEP's major teaching tactics is *Role-Playing*, that is, getting pupils of every age to act out roles in various psychological situations. It is a powerful form of psychotherapy. SEP requires pupils to act out these situations: (1) pretend your parents are getting a divorce (p. 74); (2) pretend you are having a conflict with your parents (p.75); (3) pretend someone you know is pregnant; discuss the options she has to choose from "including teenage marriage, adoption, single parenthood, foster care, extended family, abortion" (p. 92); (4) pretend your boyfriend tells you he has syphilis or gonorrhoea. (p. 128)

Another teaching technique is called the *Grab Bag*. The teacher tells the pupils to write "descriptions of different situations in which couples are having sexual relations but are not planning on a pregnancy." The

papers are put in a grab bag and drawn out one by one. The pupils discuss and evaluate the various methods of contraception and select the best contraceptive "to fit each particular situation." (pp. 166-167)

SEP grievously invades the privacy of the pupil and his family. Big Brother may not be watching you in 1984 but, with SEP, Child Is Spying on Parent. Pupils in pre-kindergarten through grade 2 are told to tell the class what happened "in their home when mom was having a baby," (p. 34) and to "discuss what are some of the ways your parents show love for each other." (p. 37) Pupils are told to discuss "what is your present relationship with your parents," (p. 75) and to tell about times you disagree with "decisions made by your parents." (p. 46) The child is instructed to "describe your family," (pp. 72 & 177) and to "interview a grandparent or older adult in your family" and ask all sorts of personal questions. (p. 72)

Of course, being a public school course, SEP does not tell pupils that premarital sex is wrong; the teacher would be forbidden to do that. Instead, the pupil is instructed "to identify and evaluate the choices involved in sexual expression." The choices then listed for the student are "abstinence, sexual fantasy, masturbation, hugging, kissing, petting, exploration, intercourse, nocturnal emission or wet dreams, sexual preference, homosexual preference, homosexual experience, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transvestite, transsexual." (p. 137) SEP forces explicit discussions of sexuality and genitalia on little children at the kindergarten and primary grade levels. (p. 30)

A persistent undercurrent of SEP is its attempt to teach pupils to be tolerant of homosexuals. "Experimental sex play" with persons of the same sex is described as "not unusual" among 5th and 6th grade children. (p. 63) "Homosexual experimentation" is described as normal behavior of 14-to-16-year olds. (p. 19) SEP states that "most child molesters are heterosexual males and not homosexuals." (p. 139)

SEP requires the child to make critical appraisals of gender-identity values within his family at home. The pupil must reveal whether it is "an advantage or disadvantage to be a boy or a girl in your family." The pupil is required "to list various household jobs that are performed by males, females, or both in your family," and then the pupil is required to determine "sharing responsibilities in your own home." (p. 73)

In a patronizing way, SEP says that "school districts and high schools may excuse students from such instruction if requested by the student's parent or guardian." (p. 5) But that's not satisfactory; schools should be required to obey the Protection of Pupil Rights Act which forbids inflicting such psychological treatment on children and invasions of their privacy "without the prior written consent of the parent." Furthermore, SEP states that SEP is "integrated into the entire curriculum and not just in specific courses such as biology and health," (p. 7) so it would be impossible for the parent to know that SEP was being given unless the school first notified the parent.

Classroom sex courses are one type of course which is often in violation of the Protection of Pupil Rights Act. Another major violator is the classroom courses in nuclear war which have proliferated during the past year. Incidentally, sex and nuclear war are the only two subjects which are taught K-12 (kindergarten through

twelfth grade). No other subject is taught for the entire 13 years of pre-college schooling — not English, math, science, or history.

It is clear from an evaluation of the five major curricula in nuclear war currently in use that they are not designed to teach pupils facts or history, but are psychological-treatment courses which produce fear, guilt and despair. The nuclear war courses invade the pupils' privacy about political affiliations and attitudes, and attempt to change the students' attitudes to conform to the authors' prejudices and politics.

One of the major teaching techniques used in the nuclear war courses is forcing the pupil to write a *Student Journal* in which he reveals to the teacher his private attitudes about the course, his innermost feelings, and private conversations with his parents, friends and neighbors about controversial issues. The following direct quotations from journals written by pupils who took a nuclear war course prove clearly that they had been subjected to psychological or psychiatric treatment in violation of the Protection of Pupil Rights Act.

"These days, I just try not to think about my future, because I have a hard time seeing one. . . . I want to do something with my life, but who cares about me? Besides, we're all going to get blown up anyway." ("Crossroads")

"Some of the discussions we had got 'pretty heavy,' and it was hard to handle! It's hard to spend 45 minutes a day talking about dying, and it's depressing!" ("Decision Making in a Nuclear Age")

"I have learned that there is seldom a right or wrong but rather a right or left." "I'm conscious of having changed in the strength of my convictions on many of the ethical dilemmas we've confronted. . . . Where do I draw the line between right and wrong?" "We all, in our struggling humanity, have to clutch to our eyeballs to keep out the cold light of despair." "The most meaningful parts of the book [Elie Wiesel's *Night*] to me were when the boy stopped believing in God. . . . Maybe my faith is waning a little, just from reading about it. Unfortunately, this book will always be tucked in my memory." ("Facing History and Ourselves," a Federally-funded program.)

These Student Journals prove that the courses constitute psychological treatment which produces despair, promotes pacifism, and shakes the pupils' sense of right and wrong. They are a sophisticated form of child abuse.

Another technique used in the nuclear war curricula is the *Whip*. This is the device of asking the pupil to complete a phrase by speaking the first words that come to mind. It is a means of probing the child's psyche to find out what is in his innermost thoughts. When the teacher says, "When I think of nuclear war . . ." the pupil is expected to answer "Death!" How gruesome!

Simulation Games are widely used in the nuclear war curricula to teach pacifist and anti-defense politics. The "Token Game" is one of several games featured in the NEA-sponsored nuclear war course called "Choices." The pupils are given 20 tokens which represent all the money in the Federal budget. The pupils are told that 9 out of 20 tokens are now spent on national defense and induced to make the "choice" that those tokens would be better spent on NEA-approved social programs. (Even the NEA arithmetic is false; only one-fourth of the Federal budget is actually spent on defense).

Another technique used in all the nuclear war courses is requiring the pupils to write letters to "Dear Soviet Citizen" and to "Dear Editor." The pupils are told to send their letters to "Facing History and Ourselves" in Brookline, Massachusetts. This clearly establishes the linkage between the Federally-funded curriculum under that name and the other nuclear war curricula.

The sample letters provided to the students are part of the psychological treatment which produces fear and despair in the minds and hearts of the pupils. Here are some quotations from the sample letters presented in the curriculum called "A Day of Dialogue."

"It's hard for me to seriously think of the future. . . . It is overwhelming to me, as it must be to you, that every human being on this planet must live each day to its fullest, because the next day may never come." (p. 177)
"Fear and helplessness overwhelms me." (p. 175)

Putting aside the bad grammar of this last example, it is so sad that schoolchildren are deliberately taught to be afraid and are trained to feel helpless and overwhelmed. Children should be given hope, idealism, and faith in the future.

Regulations and enforcement of the Protection of Pupil Rights Act are urgently needed in order to prevent the psychological abuse of schoolchildren through classroom courses in sex and in nuclear war. The regulations must apply to all educational programs, including those of the National Institute of Education and the National Center for Educational Studies. What are we waiting for?

Highlights from the Testimony of Other Witnesses at the Department of Education Hearings March 13-27, 1984

One woman told that she had two abortions while she was in high school and was held up before the class by her teacher as a role model of "responsible" sexual activity. She said classroom programs encouraged her promiscuous behavior and, now that she is married and has children of her own, she does not want them to be led down the same road.

Another parent testified that her son committed suicide after classroom courses and school assignments reinforced his negative attitudes and depression.

One Pennsylvania parent, testifying at the Washington, D.C., hearing, stated that she removed her four children from public schools after discovering that sexually explicit films were used in a "human development curriculum" required for all students. Specifically, she complained about a 20-minute film shown to eighth graders which depicted teenagers engaging in "nude masturbation in detail; it showed how men do it, women do it, why they do it, and where it feels best."

One mother told how her fifth grade boy was taught a Federally-funded "drug education" curriculum; however, of the 152 pages of the textbook, only four pages were on drugs, while the rest were on changing attitudes. The pupils were told "there are no right or wrong answers" to such questions as: Is it OK to try anything once? Should parents have more than two children? Is a drug dealer just a business person like anyone else? Is it impossible to become an alcoholic just on beer? Is it all right to lie, cheat and steal once in a while or only at certain times?

Many parents told about the *Survival Game* in which the children are required to decide who lives and who dies from a list of persons. The survival question can be posed in different situations, such as, we can let only three people inside the fallout shelter while four others must be left outside to die; or, the lifeboat (or space ship) will hold only five out of ten people and the extra ones must be shoved out to die; or, seven people have a terrible disease and there is enough medicine to cure only three. The pupils debate and discuss which lives are worth saving and which are not.

Parents told how psychological treatment is dished out in courses called family living, sexuality education, drug and alcohol education, nuclear war, and human development. Often the objectionable lessons are integrated in many different subjects.

Many parents told about "death education," in which pupils are required to contemplate death and dying. Sometimes children are instructed to write their own epitaphs. One parent told of the traumatic experience in which her child was told to write a graphic description of the death of his pet dog. Some parents told of the depressing content of the nuclear war courses which probe into the political attitudes and ethical values of the students.

Some parents told about classroom courses in sex which require embarrassingly explicit nonjudgmental discussion of every variety of sex act, inside and outside of marriage, and which probe into family attitudes and behavior that are none of the school's business.

Parents told how arrogant educators act as though they think it is their prerogative to change and mold the values of children. Parents told how schools teach that it is "in" to be nonjudgmental about moral standards, to think that all opinions are of equal value, and that "nobody these days knows what's normal and not normal."

Witnesses told how children are taught in a thousand ways that parents are old-fashioned and often (or even usually) wrong. They are taught that situation ethics is the norm in today's pluralistic society, and that a child who maintains religious values is somehow out of step with today's secular society.

A teacher from Detroit said she was trained to be a "change agent," rather than an instructor; she was taught how to alter her pupils' values. She said, "the whole philosophy of education has become 'it's what you feel and not what you know,' and has gone 180 degrees from learning facts."

A spokesman for the Maryland Coalition of Concerned Parents testified that the schools have shifted from "cognitive academic learning to psychological development and social adjustment." He complained that "pop psychology" is used to manipulate the children's feelings, attitudes and opinions.

This spokesman for the Maryland Coalition of Concerned Parents listed for the record some of the practices which are blatant "psychological manipulation and invasion of student privacy." These techniques include "non-academic personality tests; questionnaires on personal life, views, and family; autobiography assignments pertaining to personalized moral and legal dilemmas; log books used as supplements in language arts and social studies, diaries, journals, compulsory K-through-12 life science curriculum, sociograms, group contact sessions and talk-ins, blindfold walks, isolation

techniques, role-playing, psychodrama, sociodrama, values clarification strategies, and life/death survival games." This witness concluded: "These techniques draw information from the students and permit the manipulation of their attitudes and personality development. . . Children are at risk in the classroom."

Another witness told how the Michigan Department of Public Health used a grant from the U.S. Office of Education to print and distribute a manual for junior and senior high school sex education teachers which obviously promoted pre-marital sexual activities. This Federally-funded manual, entitled "Preparing Professionals for Family Life and Human Sexuality Education," tells the teacher (p. 12): "First ask the students to relax, feel comfortable and close their eyes. Then ask them to fantasize and design a form of birth control that they would enjoy using. . . . Next, ask students to share their designs out loud, noting differences and good ideas."

This manual urges the teachers (p. 15) to be comfortable with the language of human sexuality. "Divide the class into groups of five or six, select one word or phrase and then have each group list as many synonyms as it can in 3-5 minutes. Use such words as penis, vagina, intercourse, breast. Repeat, using a different word. . . . Engage in a conversation for three minutes trying to use as many of the words on the list as possible. Repeat with a different list."

Some psychological programs used in the schools are funded in whole or in part by Federal tax dollars, and others are simply given a Federal stamp of approval. Many witnesses pointed a finger at the National Institute of Education, the National Diffusion Network, and the National Center for Educational Statistics as the fountainhead of such programs. For some unexplained reasons, the proposed Department of Education regulations appear to exempt these bureaus, as well as Federally financed computer software programs for schools, from the application of the Pupil Rights Act. This piece of bureaucratic chicanery came in for heavy criticism from dozens of witnesses.

It is clear that the Protection of Pupil Rights Act was intended to apply to such classroom activities as values clarification, role-playing, sensitivity training, encounter groups, moral reasoning, behavior modification, sex education, and a wide variety of psychosocial techniques. The Department of Education hearings prove that parents all over the country are incensed about the schools that are failing to teach children the three R's, and instead are devoting an increasingly large amount of precious school time and resources to changing the attitudes and values of children in controversial areas, including politics, defense policy, religion, the role of the family, feminism, attitudes toward death, and sexual behavior.

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