



The Phyllis Schlafly Report

VOL. 18, NO. 11, SECTION 1

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JUNE, 1985

Parents Speak Up Against Classroom Abuse

Since the publication of the book, *Child Abuse in the Classroom* (the transcript of the U.S. Department of Education Hearings in March 1984), we have received hundreds of letters and phone calls from parents who are angry and outraged at what has been done to their children in the classroom. Let me share some of these messages.

"My 16-year-old son's chemistry teacher explicitly described in class how to kill yourself 'painlessly' by drowning yourself. The next night, my son tied weights to his ankles and drowned himself in a swimming pool. It certainly was not painless, as he'd been told; he tried in vain to get loose and choked to death."

"My son committed suicide as a result of his involvement with the fantasy role-playing game called Dungeons and Dragons. It was played in the 'gifted and talented class' at school. A 'curse' was placed on him the day he killed himself."

"We recently lost a son to suicide from what he learned at school." "My daughter was required to fill out a questionnaire on which she was asked if she had ever contemplated suicide."

"Fourth, fifth and sixth grade pupils in a Maryland school spent an entire afternoon session at school memorizing the chorus and all six verses of the theme song from the popular movie M[°]A[°]S[°]H. The title of the song is 'Suicide is Painless,' and its lyrics say cheating is the only way to win and the game of life is lost anyway."

"My first-grade child is required to spend classroom time in group discussions on death and handicaps." "My fifth-grade child was taken to the local funeral parlor to view the embalming room."

"My child was required to fill out a 'Decision Sheet for Communications Exercise' on which she had to rank her likes/dislikes, 1, 2, or 3. Here are some of the choices: (1) shoplifting, high school dropout, promiscuous; (2) marry out of necessity, marry outside of his/her race, smoke marijuana once a week; (3) a racially mixed couple, Christine Jorgenson, the Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan; (4) to become (or to get someone) pregnant while unwed, to be dependent on hard drugs, to date someone from another race."

"My child was required to choose which four of the following ten persons she would 'eliminate' as not worthy to live, and why: 31-year-old bookkeeper, 6-months-pregnant wife, black militant medical student, 42-year old historian, Hollywood singer/dancer, biochemist, 54-year-old rabbi, Olympic athlete, college coed, policeman with gun."

"My child was required in class to see the movie called 'The Lottery.' This is a bloody and upsetting film about a mother being stoned to death in front of her own child."

"My son told me that a 10-week-old fetus was kept in a jar in his classroom. I made an appointment to speak to the principal and we had a friendly conversation. He said he would check into the matter. Later he called me and said that the fetus would be removed. Two weeks later, my husband was told that his wife was 'harassing' the school, and he'd better 'control' her or else."

"My child was given 'alcohol education' without my knowledge. He was told that he should drink 'responsibly' by taking one or two drinks. Alcohol is contrary to our religion, and I object to my child being taught that some drinking is a good thing."

"Here are some samples of a 'Forced Choice Quiz' which my child was forced to answer: (1) I would rather tell my parents that at last Saturday night's party: my date got drunk and drove dangerously all the way home, my date tried to get me to have sex with him, my date tried to get me to smoke dope with him; (2) I would rather have my mother find: a bottle of Jack Daniels in my closet, a packet of birth control pills in my dresser drawer, a joint in my purse; (3) I would rather have to tell my parents that: I am pregnant and have decided to marry my boyfriend, I am pregnant and don't know what to do next, I was pregnant last summer and had an abortion; (4) I would rather have to face the fact that: I am an alcoholic, I am pregnant, I am homosexual, I have herpes."

Who are the Typhoid Marys who carry such poison into the classroom?

What Does Drug Education Mean?

If you took a public opinion survey on the question, "Do you favor Drug Education in the schools?,"

probably a high percentage of people would answer yes. Most would infer that "Drug Education" means teaching children that they should NOT take illegal drugs.

It was with amazement, therefore, that I read the Drug Education Curriculum used in the public schools in one Illinois district. Of the 514 pages, only about 100 have anything to do with drugs at all, and those never tell the children NOT to take illegal drugs.

In kindergarten, the children are read depressing stories such as "The Hating Book" and "Angry." The children role-play how they behave when they feel angry ("scream, stomp feet, slam doors, throw things"). The children are told to complete "sentence stems" such as "I feel angry when--," "I feel afraid when--," "I feel worried when--."

In the first grade, children use puppets to act out reactions to situations in which they have "unpleasant feelings," such as a friend is unkind, a friend broke a toy, you are criticized by an adult. The first grader is confronted with a series of dilemmas and asked, "Do you think you should use your own judgment or follow your parent's rule?"

In the 2nd grade, the children are inflicted with more manipulations of their feelings instead of being given facts. They are required to tell what they do when they feel angry, sad, bored, or grumpy, and to talk about their "feeling changes."

In the 3rd grade, the children make a "Me Book." Each day for ten consecutive school days, the child writes a statement to answer a different question, such as "I feel angry when . . .," "My mom thinks I'm . . .," "I feel my brother is . . ." Five hours of the 3rd grade are spent on stupid games about Fuzzies.

The 3rd graders role-play risk-taking situations such as "you and your friends found some old cans of spray paint and one of your friends wants to spray-paint the school doors." The 3rd graders are told to "be a frog, a bird, or a tree." They play a game called Fish Bowl in which they sit in a circle and discuss a problem such as cheating, stealing, or breaking rules without ever being told those things are wrong.

The 4th grade plays a game called Magic Circle. The children sit around in a circle in the classroom and discuss such topics as, "What is the ugliest thing you know?", "How do you select your friends?", "If you could be an animal, what would you be?", "How many children make up an ideal family?", "What one day in your life did you enjoy the least?"

One 4th grade lesson is called "It's up to you." The children are presented with a specific situation, such as shoplifting or finding a wallet with money in it, and then, in groups of three or four, decide what to do. The criterion for the solution is not morality or legality, but what is "acceptable to all."

The 5th grade is given lists of drugs which combine in the same list vitamins, alcohol, tranquilizers, beer, aspirin, cough drops, marijuana, sniffing gasoline, smoking, coffee, diet pills, cold tablets, and heroin. The 5th graders are led to believe that there are many good reasons for taking drugs, such as, it's fun everyone does it, makes you feel better, helps you to forget your problems, helps you to relax.

The class discusses the idea that most everyone in our society uses drugs for various reasons, including famous people such as Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe. The child is encouraged to bring drug-peddling rock records to play in class.

The 6th grade discusses such questions as "How and why do parents and students feel differently?" and "Do you think marijuana should be legal or illegal?" They are taught to identify "double standards" such as "parents telling you not to do things that they do." They are taught to brainstorm things that make them angry or frustrated. Each student must complete a "mad report," a "mad chart," and a "mad check sheet."

The 7th grade is taught that experimentation means "trying pot," recreation means "smoking pot at a party," and abuse is "smoking pot to cope with school." They are taught "the good reasons for drinking alcohol in moderation": to escape problems, relieve nervousness, taste, celebration, feel mature, to relax, be sociable.

The 8th grade spends time discussing the reasons why people drink alcohol and use drugs. Drugs are constantly defined to include medicines, caffeine (including coca cola and chocolate) in the same listing as hard drugs.

By the end of the 8th grade, the child has spent 193 hours of classroom time, but no one has told him that taking illegal drugs is wrong. Indeed, the powerful message of the curriculum is that practically everybody is taking some kind of drugs, and that they have good reasons for doing it, even if there may be a few bad side effects.

What Does Sex Education Mean?

Does "sex education" in the public schools mean having an employee of the local abortion clinic conduct a class for 15-year-olds and peddle its commercial services? That's the shocking news the public learned on a MacNeil-Lehrer TV report.

This issue first came out in the open in January 1985, at a public meeting in Asheville, NC, where parents aired their complaints about violations of parents' and pupils' rights in the local high schools.

Hershel Ted Anderson of Candler, NC, the father of three boys in the public schools, requested and received permission from the principal of Enka High School to attend the 10th grade Biology class when "sex education" was taught. He, his wife, and three friends audited the class on October 23, 1984, and here are excerpts from his written report.

"The Western Carolina Abortion Clinic was giving the instructions. The women started their salesmanship. They were after the children's business. The class was mixed boys and girls. All kinds of contraceptives were opened up and put on display, along with the prices of each. All were passed around the classroom . . .

"Right away, the home was forgotten. All authority of parents was dismembered. The child became a business customer for the abortion clinic. All business to these clinics would be held highly confidential, not even a court order could reveal their business relationship between the child and the abortion clinic.

"The young kids were told that abortions were a means of birth control. . . . The class picked up and went over all female birth control devices, which was very offensive to the class. The abortion clinic gave their price of services, the days and hours they were open for business, and transportation would even be furnished if needed.

"The woman speaking regarded the home as non-existent. Father and mother were dead, as far as respect to us. I feel the teaching is directed to oppress the youth of our age into suicide, no hope, no reason to retain their virtue. Once the virtue is gone, the emptiness is present. These kids were treated as harlots, prostitutes, and whores in the way this abortion clinic treated the audience. They assumed all kids were fornicators. . . . The male condom was presented to the class, passed around to all present.

"I still cannot believe what I saw at Enka High School. What a shame to any state or nation. . . . The Assistant Principal stated after the class that she felt this was a good class for the kids. . . ."

Dr. Ralph Sexton, Sr., attended the sex education class on October 24, 1984. In his written statement, he told how stunned he was "to sit in that class and hear sex discussed and contraceptives displayed with what appeared, to me, to be with only one thing in mind-- 'Young people, go ahead and have sex, but here is how to keep from getting pregnant and if you do, come by and we will abort it for a price.'

"There was not one mention of God, home, husband and wife, and keeping themselves until marriage and home. The young people were told about their 'sex-partners' and how to use their contraceptives, etc."

The parents who audited these "biology" classes took copious notes and presented a transcript at the public meeting. The abortion clinic employee gave the class a detailed explanation of how to use every kind of contraceptive, and described its percentage of effectiveness. Then she quoted her clinic's prices for abortions.

After reading through this transcript, it is easy to see why "sex education" classes *cause* teenage pregnancies and abortions. Most teenagers who sit through these tedious and complex descriptions would conclude: (a) it's normal to engage in sex with any "sex-partner" you want, (b) contraceptives are a hassle, have unpleasant side effects, and don't provide 100% protection anyway, so (c) don't bother with contraceptives; it's so easy to have an abortion (and you're guaranteed that your parents will never know).

The \$600,000,000-a-year abortion business is using the public schools, financed by the taxpayers, to conduct its sales meetings and recruit its customers. "Sex education" classes are in-home sales parties for abortions.

And if parents object, a well-organized smear brigade moves in to denounce them as "censors," "right-wingers," "fundamentalists who don't want their children to take 'biology,'" and "red-necked enemies of public schools." What a racket!

What Does Nuclear War Education Mean?

While traveling through Ohio recently, a mother handed me a letter she found in her 4th grade child's bedroom. In an envelope addressed to President Reagan,

here is the letter, complete with misspellings and bad grammar.

"Dear Mr. Regan. I don't know if I'm stupid or not. Are we going to have world war III? My mom says that she hopes not. My teacher at school says that she is certain that we are. Well persanally I don't want it neither but I know we are."

How sad it is that this child was scared at school into believing that we are "certain" to have World War III. How sad that the school led the child to believe that her Mom is wrong.

The ABC docu-drama about teenage suicide called "Surviving" dramatized the tragic effect that such pseudo-education can have. The last words which the two teenagers said to each other before they committed suicide were, "It doesn't matter what we do. The whole world's going to blow up soon anyway."

It was clear from the docu-drama that those pathetic teenagers did not get that notion from their parents (whatever their other faults). However, the teenagers could easily have gotten that notion from any of the several nuclear war curricula or other depressing materials so widely used in public schools today.

Those last words of ABC's fictional suicidal teenagers sound almost exactly like the words written in a "journal" by real students who took a nuclear course called "Crossroads," produced by a Boston outfit called "Jobs With Peace." The author was so proud of the psychological effect the course had on the students that he published these excerpts from two students' journals:

"These days, I just try not to think about my future, because I have a hard time seeing one. There aren't any jobs and there isn't any money for me to go to college. I want to do something with my life, but who cares about me? Besides, we're all going to get blown up anyway." "I am very scared, very, very scared. Because with a nuclear war you don't have a chance to survive."

Why were the high school officials in Jamestown, Pennsylvania, surprised when a psychological experiment they pulled on juniors in an American Cultures class backfired? Anyone who is aware of how school-children are being manipulated and deceived about war and peace could have predicted the result. It was a typical example of the nuclear war lessons and games widely used in schools to frighten children about nuclear war.

In this case, school officials announced over the loudspeaker that the Soviets had bombed an American ship in the Baltic Sea and that school would be dismissed early to hear an address to Congress by President Reagan. The kids were described as "panic stricken." They immediately thought we had escalated into nuclear war. The principal admitted that they had "very strong reactions" and were "very frightened."

The school's explanation of this experiment was that it was an exercise in "analytical thinking" and "logic," but it failed. It seems that the people who need a course in those things are the school administrators who experimented on their pupils like guinea pigs.

This type of experimental psychiatry is the reason why the U.S. Department of Education last November issued strong regulations to implement the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment. Schools are supposed to get prior parental consent before subjecting pupils in elementary and secondary schools to psychological testing or treatment.

What Does Journal Writing Mean?

Journal writing has become a favorite technique in many grades of many schools. On the surface, this sounds like a good exercise to educate students how to write. But that's not the purpose of classroom journal writing. An explanation of journal writing published in the Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin was written by a teacher who likes and uses this technique. The article makes clear that, although used in English class, journal writing has nothing whatever to do with developing the ability to read and write the English language.

The teacher says that the journal "is never corrected in the usual manner — that is, for misspelling or incorrect grammar or punctuation." Continuing, she explains, "No matter how poorly a student spells or how poorly a sentence is structured, a student can still make high marks on journal writing." With that attitude, it's no wonder that schools are graduating students who can't spell or write coherently.

The teacher goes on to explain further that journal writing enables the students who generally get low marks to score higher on journal writing, since writing and English skills don't count. She defends this giving of high marks to students who didn't earn them by saying that these poor students "like the higher grade and feel successful."

No wonder high school graduates find it hard to adjust to the real world in which you are *not* successful unless you demonstrate ability and skill! So, if writing skills are not the purpose of journals, what is?

The nitty gritty of journal writing is the content. Here is this teacher's description of the subject-matter of journal writing: "personal problems — family fights, divorces, death, drugs and alcohol, peer conflicts and love affairs." Her students write about "personal situations with emotional impact — what makes them happy, sad or angry."

Thus, instead of developing skills in writing and the use of the English language, the purpose of journal writing is the "student taking the teacher into his/her confidence." The purpose is the child sharing his "problems and concerns" with the teacher (instead of with his family members).

Sorry, teacher, but most parents didn't authorize the school to pry into private family problems and affairs. Those are none of the school's business and that's why the regulations for the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment prohibit schools from prying into the private affairs of the child and his family without the prior written consent of the parents.

What Does Invasion of Pupils' Privacy Mean?

"Can you get your mommy or daddy to do what you want to do, instead of what they want to do?" "Does whether or not mommy or daddy like you depend on how you act?" "Should your mommy or daddy decide what you should do?"

That is a sampling of the intimate questions given to primary school children in the Greenwood (WA) Elementary School last year. Various versions of this survey were given to all first- through eleventh-grade pupils. The school did not notify the parents ahead of time; the children were treated like guinea pigs in a laboratory and ordered to answer the questions.

The questionnaire came to light when one 2nd grader brought a copy home to her mother. Most of the children didn't do that and, obviously, the "social engineers" who designed this impertinent study of parent-child relationships hadn't counted on that.

It's no wonder the parents were upset, and many of the teachers who gave the survey were upset, too. The executive director of the Seattle Teachers Union said that his union thinks the questions were "completely inappropriate" and put the teachers "in a very difficult position."

These probing questions were not created by some curious teacher in an isolated public school; they are national monstrosities that could be in any school in the country and for which the teacher is just as much a pawn as the pupil. The survey for the first three grades is the Nowiki-Strickland Internal-External Control Scale. The survey for the 4th through 11th grades is called Survey of Academic Responsibility (SOAR) and was developed by David Ryckman, a psychology professor at the University of Washington.

This type of invasion of family privacy is an example of why parents demanded and got the Department of Education to issue regulations to implement the Pupil Rights Amendment. The regulations became effective November 12, 1984, and require prior parental consent before schoolchildren are asked such nose personal questions.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development recently released a survey which shows that the average 4th grade classroom spends about a quarter of the school day on "extra-instructional activities." This conclusion was based on a survey of 1,500 randomly selected elementary schools.

According to this survey, school principals said that time constraints are the most serious block to improving the quality of education in public schools. They say they suffer from a lack of time to cover both the basics and social concerns.

Not enough time in the school day for the basics? Well, well.

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Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002
ISSN0556-0152

Published monthly by The Eagle Trust Fund, Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002.

Second Class Postage Paid at Alton, Illinois.

Subscription Price: \$10 per year. Extra copies available: 50 cents each; 4 copies \$1; 30 copies \$5; 100 copies \$10.