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## Some Colleges Fail the First Amendment

Some schools don't seem to understand that those who study or work on college campuses don't relinquish their First Amendment rights. The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, FIRE, is a nonprofit organization "dedicated to defending liberty, freedom of speech, due process, academic freedom, legal equality, and freedom of conscience on America's college campuses."

Each year FIRE releases an annual report that spotlights schools with the worst free speech records and other First Amendment violations.

FIRE President Greg Lukianoff says of the newest compilation of the ten worst offenders:

This list shows that any expression—even expression as innocuous as a chalk message for a political candidate or a discussion of one's own health—is seen by some colleges as fair game for suppression. This type of censorship is not only unhealthy for institutions where debate and discussion should be paramount, but also dangerous for a free society.

FIRE's Lukianoff offered details of events that led to each institution's inclusion on the list in an article he wrote for HuffingtonPost.com on February 22, 2017. The schools on FIRE's 2017 list are presented here in alphabetical order.

### California State Univ., Long Beach

Cal State Long Beach is part of California's public university system. The college cancelled a September 29, 2016, performance of a satirical drama

performed by actors of Asian, Hispanic, and African descent because it was considered "provocative." But the play is deliberately provocative in an effort to challenge stereotypes.

Greg Lukianoff says that this cancelled event is just one example of the school's "troubled history" of failing to protect students' civil liberties.

### California State University, Los Angeles

Last February, conservative journalist Ben Shapiro was invited by the student chapter of Young America's Foundation to speak at this public university. When students threatened to protest, the college demanded that the hosts pay extra for security guards.

But university President William Covino "unilaterally" cancelled Shapiro's speech and said Shapiro could only be re-invited if he was part of a panel of those who disagree with him.

When Shapiro said he'd show up on campus anyway, Covino backed down and allowed Shapiro's appearance. But security was lax and student protesters went outside their rights to free speech by setting off fire alarms and blocking entrances forcing interested students to sneak in a back entrance under guard.

### DePaul University

Students at DePaul wrote messages in chalk on campus walkways in support

of Donald Trump last April. The college warned students that they weren't allowed to "chalk" political messages because it would jeopardize the school's tax-exempt status. FIRE has repeatedly explained to various institutions of higher learning that this isn't true.

The school banned conservative



journalist Ben Shapiro outright from speaking on campus. Shapiro had been invited by the school's Young Americans for Freedom chapter.

FIRE wrote a letter to DePaul about their violations but according to Lukianoff, the school "did little besides deflect and blithely repeat its illusory commitment to working with students to invite speakers from across the ideological spectrum."

Lukianoff says DePaul may be the worst school when it comes to allowing free speech.

### Fordham University

FIRE also gets involved when colleges infringe on the rights of liberal student groups. The Fordham University student government approved a Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) chapter at the college, but administrators decided that since members of SJP chapters at other colleges had engaged in bad conduct, Fordham students might do so as well. Fearing potential violations of the code of conduct, the university preemptively banned SJP.

A student who organized a rally against the ban was allegedly "retaliated against" by the school. The student was called into a hearing with administrators and was told he couldn't bring counsel.

FIRE is opposed to hearings where the school is "both the complainant and adjudicator," especially when students are not allowed to bring their own attorneys to protect their rights.

### Georgetown University

Georgetown erroneously stated that allowing partisan student political speech on campus would violate the school's federal tax-exempt status. As a result, the Georgetown University Law Center told students who supported Democratic primary presidential contender Bernie Sanders that they were not allowed to speak to fellow students about their candidate.

Georgetown eventually issued a somewhat revised policy but gray areas remained that led to confusion about "permissible speech" on campus during

(See *First Amendment*, page 4)

## Finnish Find No Joy in U.S. Schools

Finland is often held up as a role-model for education policy, strategy, and student achievement. Students there score well on global tests, often in first place, and Finland is considered by some to be the most literate nation in the world.

What happens when former Finnish teachers become teachers in American classrooms?

One big difference between Finland and America is the "high-level of trust bestowed on Finland's teachers." That sort of trust is no longer given to many of our nation's teachers.

In Finland, students don't begin formal instruction until the age of seven. Younger children attend play schools where they have lots of free time and are allowed to enjoy activities like outdoor play and singing.

Kristiina Chartouni is a "veteran Finnish educator" who holds a master's degree in foreign-language teaching

from the University of Jyväskylä. After a series of changes in her life, this past autumn she began teaching high school in Tennessee.

In an interview with *Atlantic* magazine, Chartouni says, "I am supposedly doing what I love, but I don't recognize this profession as the one that I fell in love with in Finland." She continues, "I have been very tired—more tired and confused than I have ever been in my life."

Chartouni says she often feels she's "under a microscope" because there are increased observation periods and evaluations by outsiders in her classroom. Some of this is because she's still getting licensed. But all American teachers are scrutinized in their classrooms on a much more regular basis than are their Finnish counterparts.

Being rushed and hurried is a feel-

ing Chartouni believes she shares with the students she teaches. She says of her Tennessee high school students, "They have five minutes to go from one location to another, [and] they have seven periods of intensive teaching." Students must immediately get to work once they reach her classrooms and they must leave as soon as the bell rings in order to get to their next class.

The *Atlantic* article says that in "Finland, students and teachers typically have a 15-minute break built into every classroom hour." Chartouni says she is looking into other career options instead of teaching and that right now she most likely "would not continue in this career."

The *Atlantic* relays the experiences of another former Finnish teacher who has taught for 16 years at a Maryland public elementary school. According to the article, "While teaching in Finnish schools, she had plenty of leeway to plan with colleagues, select curricular materials for the principal to consider purchasing, and influence decisions about schedules and responsibilities."

At her American school, this teacher doesn't regard teaching as a "career." Instead, "she describes it as a rote job where she follows a curriculum she

didn't develop herself, keeps a principal-dictated schedule, and sits in meetings where details aren't debated."

A third teacher who formerly taught in Finland is named Satu Muja. She received a masters degree in 2014 in the U.S. and has been teaching at a Maryland public high school for three years. She says she has "a reasonable amount of autonomy," but feels restricted by the structure of the school day and by non-teaching responsibilities.

Muja says, "My classes are at three different proficiency levels, and I have four minutes between classes to prepare for the next class." As students switch between classes, Muja must be in the hallway as a monitor and continue to check her phone for email updates that might affect the schedule.

Muja concludes, "I feel rushed, nothing gets done properly; there is very little joy, and no time for reflection or creative thinking (in order to create meaningful activities for students)."

The author of the November 28, 2016 *Atlantic* article is Timothy D. Walker, an American teacher currently in Finland. He wrote the soon-to-be-published book *Teach Like Finland: 33 Simple Strategies for Joyful Classrooms*.



## EDUCATION BRIEFS

The vast majority of public two- and four-year colleges report enrolling students – more than half a million of them – who are not ready for college-level work, according to Columbia University's Hechinger Report. High school diplomas often don't guarantee students are ready for college. It costs an estimated \$7 billion annually to fund the remedial math and English programs necessary before students are ready to begin actual "college-level, credit bearing courses." In the 2014-15 school year, 96% of colleges reportedly enrolled some students not ready for college. Remediation is more usual in community college systems but even in the California State University system, "more than 40% of incoming freshman were deemed not ready for college-level work in at least one subject." (HechingerReport.org, 1-30-17)

Obama administration-instituted Income-Driven Repayment plans lowered the monthly amount people had to come up with to repay their college loans by limiting the payment to a percentage of their income, which has done little to facilitate repayment. "Revised Education Department numbers show at more than 1,000 schools, at least half of students defaulted or failed to pay down debt within seven years." The American public was kept in the dark about how bad the student loan repayment crisis really is due to the Department having made record-keeping errors in 99.8% of cases. A *Wall Street Journal* analysis of new data resulted in discovery of this massive debacle. (1-18-17)

The only two Republicans who voted against confirmation of Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, Senators Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Susan Collins of Maine, have both previously received grade "A" approval ratings and financial support from the National Education Association (NEA) teachers union. Both the NEA and the smaller AFT "waged a fierce campaign against DeVos." (AmericanActionNews.com, 2-1-17)

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Web site: <http://www.pseagles.com>  
E-mail: [education@pseagles.com](mailto:education@pseagles.com)

## Abstinence is the Best 'Game Plan'

*Second in a series about making healthy choices.*

*Game Plan* is the first book in a series of excellent abstinence education resources. Each workbook is meant to engage students, providing spaces for them to write as they grow in knowledge about abstinence and the choices they have. The materials are interactive and include teacher-led demonstrations.

This workbook specifies grades 6-9 but even teachers in higher grade levels sometimes choose to use it. This series of abstinence workbooks is meant for classroom use with students' regular teacher, not some expert who comes to the school to present and then leaves. This is important because when students later have questions about the course material, they can approach their usual teacher.

Abstinence until marriage is the safest and healthiest lifestyle for students. An important message in *Game Plan* is that choosing abstinence doesn't mean sex is bad. The book says, "Sex is good. Save it, protect it, and preserve it so that you can enjoy it in a marriage relationship."

Parents are a vital part of abstinence education. The workbooks are meant to go home with students so parents can see what they are learning. Each chapter includes questions for students to ask their parents to open up discussions at home.

Births to unwed mothers have dramatically decreased in Collier County, Florida, since this abstinence program has been taught in public schools there.

For more information about abstinence, see the January issue of *Education Reporter*.

### I Got Game

The first chapter of *Game Plan* introduces former NBA player A.C. Green as a role model. Green was known as Ironman; he holds the record for most games played in a row and he won three championship titles with the Los Angeles Lakers professional basketball team.

But that's not all that sets A.C. Green apart. He made a commitment to himself: "I resolved not to be with a woman until I married." Green says, "Why don't we at least tell [students] how much better off they'll be physically, emotionally, mentally, and socially, if they wait until marriage for sex?"

Green relates that he was taunted by others who said he wouldn't keep his pledge. Abstinence until marriage wasn't his only goal. He developed many goals for himself, or a game plan for his life.

The Teacher's Guide for this chapter of *Game Plan* suggests that the teacher lead students with this:

All of us have goals and dreams for our lives. We may not think about them often, but we have pictures in our minds of what we would like our

lives to look like in the future.

What are some one-word descriptions that picture what you want your life to look like?

Student answers might include a college degree, marriage, success, health, children, nice car, and money.

In the workbook, students are instructed to list some personal career goals. Students write three things they will have to do in order to accomplish these goals. Following that, they list obstacles that could make it difficult to accomplish their goals.

This exercise is followed by Tom's Story, about a young man who will spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair after a motor vehicle accident that occurred when he decided to get in a car with a friend who had been drinking.

Students are asked to answer questions about what Tom could have done when his friend asked him to ride with him after drinking; how different Tom's life would be if he'd made a different choice at age 15; and what will it take for him to now accomplish his goals.

The next true story in the book is that of Steve and Tina. Tina cajoled Steve to engage in sex with her, but it turns out Tina was already pregnant after having had sex with another boy! She wanted Steve to think he was the father of her child. After this comes the story of the same Steve and his wife of 20 years, Karen. Steve remained abstinent and later met Karen, who had also decided to be abstinent until marriage. They now have four children and a happy marriage. By waiting, they avoided the pitfalls and emotional turmoil that come with premarital sex.

In this chapter, students are taught to not just delay sex until "later" but to save it for marriage.

### TV Time Out

Chapter Two is titled "TV Time Out," and explores how media affects attitudes and behaviors regarding sexual activity. Students explore how sex is used to "sell."

Once students notice that sex is everywhere in the media, they can begin to understand why. They discover that sex is used as a tool to promote products. Just like sugary cereals and fatty foods, what is sold to them isn't necessarily in their best interest. The media obsession with sex isn't bad because sex is bad, but because "sex is private."

In this chapter, students examine television, music, Twitter, billboards, the internet, magazines, and more. The workbook makes the point that media featuring characters who "have sex with

(See *Abstinence*, page 4)

## Book of the Month



The Tuttle Twins Learn About the Law, Connor Boyack, Libertas Press, 2014, \$9.99



This is the first in a series of Tuttle Twins books written by Connor Boyack to help teach children about "the principles of freedom." Boyack is the founder and president of the Libertas Institute.

When their teacher assigns them to ask someone they respect about something important, twins Emily and Ethan choose their wise neighbor Fred. He tells Ethan and Emily about laws, specifically about Frédéric Bastiat, a political economist who lived from 1801 to 1850.

Bastiat wrote a book titled *The Law*. Fred says that laws are not just about speeding tickets, but are more importantly about the rights of individuals — rights that others are not allowed to diminish. Laws "affect every person, every day."

Fred tells Ethan and Emily, "God gives us our lives, and He gives us our ability to think, learn, and act. God also gives us the ability to know what things are right or wrong." The book explains that we have the responsibility to preserve, develop, and protect those rights.

The next statement by Fred is the complicated part: "In many cases, the bad guys can become part of the government." Fred gives as an example his choice to freely share his tomatoes with his neighbors. When the government forces Fred to share from his garden, he has lost some of his rights.

This is based on Bastiat's premise that if the government does something that an individual isn't allowed to do, then it's illegitimate. So, if the government "plunders" and confiscates from one citizen to give to another, that is fundamentally wrong.

Fred says, "True laws protect people and their property from plunder." He continues, "When true laws exist and are respected, people work hard to improve their lives and they work peacefully with others. Everyone prospers together and is happier."

But when "the law lets people plunder, it turns everyone against each other." Often the end result is that "some people stop working hard and begin looking to the government to take care of them instead." This leads to government control of more and more of citizens' lives.

The takeaway message is this: "You have rights, and so you also have responsibilities. You should help people if they need something, but the law shouldn't force you to."

While some might find Bastiat and Fred too libertarian-minded, this book recommended for ages 5 to 11 will serve as an introduction to more complex political thought and start some interesting conversations.

### 'Quote of the Month'

#### In Their Own Good Words

"Life was not intended to be simply a round of work, no matter how interesting and important that work may be. A moment's pause to watch the glory of a sunrise or sunset is soul satisfying, while a bird's song will set the steps to music all day long."

— Laura Ingalls Wilder (1867-1957)

*Farm Journalist: Writings from the Ozarks*

# FOCUS: Should This Culture's Storytellers Have Access to Our Children?

by Jonathon Van Maren

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*Jonathon Van Maren is a columnist, radio host, speaker, and cultural activist. He regularly speaks on a variety of social issues at universities, high schools, and churches in both Canada and the United States. He is the author of The Culture War, published in 2016.*

I was asked recently by a conservative journalist what my opinion on some television show's decision to include storylines about abortion was—all, of course, were sympathetic, if not enthusiastic. I'd never watched the show (or even heard of it), so I couldn't supply any insight. But what I do find interesting is the way conservatives and Christians often interact with the television and film industry. For some reason, we seem to believe that we can consume the creations of post-modernists, relativists, and hedonists without imbibing any of those worldviews—and without getting indigestion.

Leave aside for one moment the most prominent problems pervasive within the entertainment industry: Blasphemy, sexually explicit and pseudo-pornographic material, the promotion of anti-Christian views, the consistent mocking of Christianity, and the macabre celebration of horror and darkness. What I rarely see mentioned is that for the most part, this is all we can reasonably expect from the entertainment industry.

It's just a story, Christians will say when defending some empty, time-wasting TV show they've decided to watch. But that is not the case. There is no such thing as "just a story." Stories have storytellers. If we want to know what the story is telling us, we simply have to look at what the storyteller wants to tell us.

Storytellers come with their own worldviews, biases, and beliefs. These beliefs will come through in the stories they tell—especially in the extraordinarily powerful mediums of film and television—whether they are attempting propaganda intentionally or not.

Stories are perhaps one of the most powerful methods of creating emotional responses and transmitting beliefs. The question posed to me by the journalist, concerning how parents should regulate the consumption of such stories by their children, has quite a simple answer. It is the answer to this question: Do you want to let that storyteller tell his or her stories to your children?

Many church-going parents allow their children to be raised on a diet of film, television, and music created by storytellers who despise Christianity and create narratives that run directly in opposition to it. They foment rebellion and celebrate lifestyles that run directly contrary to biblical beliefs—but often do so in tenderly rendered tales that have more power to persuade than a dozen philosophical treatises or political speeches.

"Friends" and "Will & Grace" did more for the mainstreaming of gay marriage than any academic ever did. Meanwhile, Christians in film and television are generally portrayed as stupid, mean, closeminded, and bumbling. Mockery is a powerful tool.

Compare this to the literature children used to be raised on and the storytellers parents used to invite into their homes, books like the *Little House* series by Laura Ingalls Wilder, the chronicles of the March family by Louisa May Alcott, the tales of *Anne of Green Gables* by L.M. Montgomery, and so many others. These books celebrate what I call the high drama of ordinary living, and this has been one of the key secrets to the longevity of their popularity. Long after the frontier days passed into history, more than a century after the American Civil War, and many decades since the occupants of Prince Edward Island lived like Anne and her friends, the stories of friendship, puppy love, courtship, and the tiny trials and tragedies that make up childhood arch over the years to remain as real today as they were then. Children still relate to Laura Ingalls and Jo March and Anne Shirley because their childhoods, despite sometimes extraordinary circumstances, were innocent and beautiful.

Even stories that focused on adventure contained familiar elements that everyone could relate with to ground them. Johan Wyss's wonderful book *The Swiss Family Robinson* emphasized the essential nature of family while the parents and their children created a new life for themselves on a tropical island where they'd been shipwrecked.

J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* trilogy combined the high drama of biblically proportioned battles and a fantastical Middle Earth with the utterly ordinary: thorough and detailed landscape descriptions as his hobbits make their journey, the taste of beer, the satiation of a long hunger with sumptuously described meals, and even a poem describing the loveliness of hot water after a long day's trek:

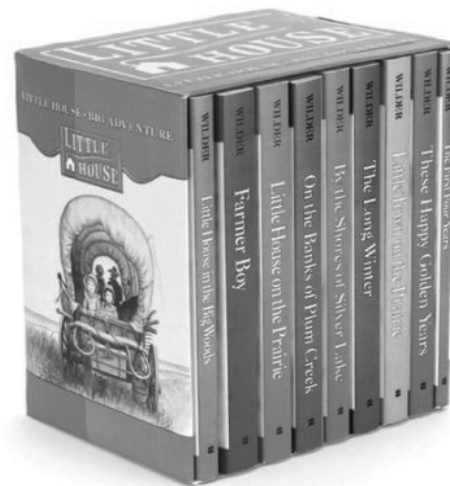
Sing hey! For the bath at close of day  
That washes the weary mud away!  
A loon is he that will not sing;  
O! Water Hot is a noble thing!  
O! Sweet is the sound of falling rain,  
And the brook that leaps from hill to plain;  
But better than rain or rippling streams  
Is Water Hot that smokes and steams.  
O! Water cold we may pour at need  
Down a thirsty throat and be glad indeed;  
But better is Beer, if drink we lack,  
And Water Hot poured down the back.  
O! Water is fair that leaps on high  
In a fountain white beneath the sky;  
But never did fountain sound so sweet  
As splashing Hot Water with my feet!

These master storytellers created a canon of literature that is often, unfortunately, only known to the rising generation through their retellings by other

storytellers of distinctly different worldviews, utilizing television and film instead of the written word.

I'm not trying to conflate or compare cinematography to literature—the art forms are too fundamentally different—but something essential is lost in translation, which is why films that seek to dramatize beloved books are nearly always fiercely controversial and generally disappointing to the fans of the written works.

Several years back, I had a few email exchanges with J.R.R. Tolkien's grandson, the poet Michael Tolkien, and I asked him if he felt his grandfather's work was unappreciated. "I think you are



right to use the world 'unappreciated,'" Tolkien replied. "Is 'Tolkien' now to the general public the generator of a series of films or a distinguished writing of superbly crafted fantasy with universal implications and dimensions?"

When post-modern artists create their own interpretations of great literature, the stories are often robbed of much of the beauty that made them so beloved in the first place.

Until the Sexual Revolution, much of the literary canon was marked by the assumption of Judeo-Christian values. Not that it was all explicitly Christian literature, but the context that produced it was a Judeo-Christian culture, and thus certain values were simply taken for granted. This fact has proven endlessly disturbing to the rootless post-modernists who can find no fictional heroes and role models in the literary canon. Thus, as I detailed in a column at *lifesitenews.com* on January 10, 2017, they have gone to work revising and reinterpreting until they can conjure up lurid lesbian liaisons in L.M. Montgomery's tales, something that anyone with the vaguest knowledge of Montgomery's biography must find laughable. She was a pastor's wife—one can actually visit her home and church in Leeksdale, Ontario, and sit in her spot in the pews, play her old organ, sit where she wrote the *Anne* books, and visit the glorious and fiery auburn autumn inspiration for *Rainbow Valley*.

It is the literary vandalism of these pagan professors that made me abandon my English minor in university: I was tired of seeing the wonderful books I'd grown up reading subjected to absurd

and stupid reinterpretations.

The question parents must answer when they are considering today's entertainment industry is whether they want to permit our culture's current storytellers to have access to their children. What is the worldview of these storytellers? What do they want to impart in their stories? Is any of it good, or consistent with the Christian worldview? Do these storytellers have any values at all, or do their stories promote relativism at best and overt wickedness at worst?

And this doesn't even approach the fact that exposure to the medium of film and television at an early age often has the potential to rob children of the ability to create their own imagination and discover early the worlds contained between the two covers of a book.

It's important to note that many of Hollywood's storytellers do not see blasphemy, sexually explicit material, and profanity as incidental to their storytelling—they see it as essential to the integrity (no irony intended) of their work. This is evidenced by the fact that most of the major film studios, at the behest of the movie directors, have worked hard to destroy any attempt to apply family-friendly filters to their films.

CleanFlicks was one attempt to offer edited movies, and that company was sued out of existence. VidAngel, the newest company to try offer filtering services, was recently forced to pull down their entire film library as the result of a federal court order.

The Hollywood storytellers want people to consume their stories replete with blasphemy, swearing, and pseudo-pornographic material—and will shut down any attempt at editing or what they call "censorship." Not even greed can explain their motives here—film critic and cultural commentator Michael Medved has spilled gallons of ink highlighting the fact that films devoid of swearing and sexual material generally make a lot more cash than the standard crude fare offered by most studios. The simple fact is that they see the components of cursing, crudeness, and carnality as a vital part of the stories they wish to tell.

The good news is that parents do not have to invite these smut-peddlers and storytellers into their homes. The greatest works of literature ever produced are cheaper and more widely available than at any other time in human history. Skilled storytellers of the highest calibre simply await an introduction. A host of men and women who defined eras and captivated entire generations with the tales and the characters they conjured up in their imaginations and breathed into life with their pens stand ready to usher a new generation on fantastic journeys of wonder, whimsy, and imagination, needing only a simple invitation. Their stories capture the great moral truths, the essential principles, and the high drama of ordinary living.

Give them a try. I promise you won't regret it.

## First Amendment *(Continued from page 1)*

the entire 2016 election cycle.

### Harvard University

Having made the decision to “blacklist” several off-campus organizations, including fraternities, Harvard violated students’ freedom of association.

The university president and a dean announced that students who wished to continue their membership in single-sex organizations would be banned from leadership positions in on-campus student organizations, including sports teams. The Dean’s Office also refused to give any recommendation for Rhodes or Marshall scholarships to those students.

### Northern Michigan University

This public university located in the town of Marquette has had a policy of prohibiting students from discussing their “suicidal or self-destructive thoughts or actions” with other students. If they did so, they would be subject to “disciplinary action.”

The policy was supposedly changed, but one student was apparently threatened with expulsion for having “dis-

cussed mental illness” with her friend. The student was allegedly forced to sign a “behavioral contract” that included agreeing not to mention her illness again.

FIRE is still trying to help students at Northern Michigan understand school policy, which remains vague and confusing. This NMU policy is also being scrutinized by the federal Departments of Education and of Justice.

### University of Oregon

A Halloween costume worn by a law school professor at an off-campus party troubled some students at this public university located in Eugene. The university chose to discipline the professor who said she wore blackface in order to start a conversation about racism.

Even if a Halloween costume could be considered offensive or in bad taste by some, it still falls under freedom of speech or of expression.

Lukianoff says the university’s Bias Response Team also reportedly tried to

influence the student newspaper to give more press coverage to “trans[gender] students and students of color.”

### University of South Carolina

A student, the Young Americans for Liberty, and College Libertarians filed a lawsuit with the assistance of FIRE after

a disagreement with this public institution over a pre-approved event. Posters meant to draw “attention to threats to free speech on campus” were to be displayed

in late 2015. Since some images on the anti-censorship posters might be considered “provocative,” the groups acted in a proactive manner and obtained prior approval for their event and their posters.

This didn’t stop the university from attacking the student in charge of the event on the day after the event. The student was given a “Notice of Charges” and told he must meet with the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs to respond to student complaints of “discrimination.”



Although the school dropped the investigation, FIRE remains involved because the school “provided no clarification on USC’s treatment of protected speech.” The ongoing lawsuit is part of FIRE’s Stand Up For Speech Litigation Project.

### Williams College

Student organizers of a campus speaker series called “Uncomfortable Learning” invited conservative commentator John Derbyshire to this Massachusetts private college. Derbyshire is considered a polarizing figure because his topics include race.

Williams College President Adam Falk disinvited Derbyshire, an action he described as an “extraordinary step.”

Falk apparently believes that although the speaker series organizer and president is African-American, he and other students should be prohibited from considering or debating this speaker’s topics. Some say this protection from real-world issues is how we end up with students that some call “snowflakes.”

## Abstinence *(Continued from page 2)*

lots of different people, and have no problem” is as real as a character successfully “jumping from a train onto a helicopter onto a boat, while being shot at.”

Media marketers are out to sell things and they don’t care how adversely their message affects the public. The workbook reveals that teens in America spend “\$259 billion.” Television companies “use sex to attract viewers and increase their ratings.” In turn, higher ratings mean “more money for the TV stations.” Students learn that deciding which media to listen to and watch is important.

Focusing on making choices, a *Game Plan* student activity is to keep a log of TV shows and the number of sexual scenes, the number of scenes that talk about sex, and the number of scenes that show the negative consequences of sex.

### Rules of the Game

The third chapter starts with “As in sports, life has rules.” It covers thinking ahead to the personal physical, emotional, mental, and social results of having sex outside of marriage.

Pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, infertility, and even cervical cancer are some physical results. Emotional results, or how the student feels about himself, include used, empty, lonely, broken-hearted, angry, bitter, or depressed. The mental results, or what occupies the mind, include stress, worry, fear, regret, pressure, confusion, and distraction. Social results include a bad reputation, being the subject of rumors and gossip, getting poor grades, having conflicts with parents, and losing friends.

As the workbook points out, “If you are sexually active, there is no way to know in advance which of the above consequences might happen to you.”

It further tells students that despite the use of contraceptives, “about one-third of girls become pregnant at least once before reaching age 20.” And about one-third of sexually active girls are infected with an STD before age 20.

The way to avoid these consequences is to practice abstinence by making a plan for self-control and making rules for oneself. For the student, that means proactive decision making that limits what he or she sees and hears; avoiding pressure situations; using the buddy system; and choosing friends who support their personal lifestyle choices.

### Avoiding the Penalties

Chapter Four of *Game Plan* details the sexually transmitted diseases teens can get, the symptoms, and possible long-term health consequences. Every day, 54,000 cases of STDs occur in the U.S. and half of those are among people under age 24. The severity of these diseases can be worse in the still developing young body. Symptoms are sometimes missed, causing the disease to worsen or to be spread to others. The workbook also informs students that condom use doesn’t provide protection from STDs. In other words, “safe sex” isn’t safe.

Sex outside of marriage means running the risk of contracting various diseases, and the workbook teaches students about chlamydia, syphilis, trichomoniasis, gonorrhea, genital herpes, genital warts, human papillomavirus (HPV), Hepatitis B, and AIDS.

### Half-Time

Chapter Five is about choosing to change behaviors and is directed at teens who may have already engaged in sex or other risky behaviors. Students examine how they can respond to situations in a healthy or unhealthy manner, whether it involves drugs, alcohol, violence, or sex. The lesson is that it’s not too late to start over. Rather than being stuck in a pattern of making rash decisions in the moment, they can instead plan for more positive behaviors in the future.

Real-life examples help students move forward by relaying situations that

actual young people have faced. From Maria they learn that just because she was pressured by a boyfriend to have sex at a young age and has had sex with more boys, it’s not too late for her to start over. Jeff’s story is one of depression and disappointment after he and his family moved away from a girl with whom he’d had sex. The workbook stresses that boys also are hurt and angry when young people engage in sexual relationships outside of marriage, which (inevitably) end badly.

### Building Your Team

Chapter Six teaches students to choose relationships wisely. They examine how to establish healthy and safe relationships, as well as how to avoid those that are dangerous. They learn the positive characteristics to look for in friends and those with whom they spend time, including respectfulness, responsibility, sincerity, commitment, courage, and caring.

This chapter’s directed activities include interviewing people of good character and having them relay stories about their past and how they ended up in good relationships. In this section, students learn that “love is a verb” and that healthy love strives to give, while unhealthy love strives to take.

Every section of the workbook has a “parent link” that involves the family at home. In this section the two questions for teens to ask their parents are:

1. What qualities or characteristics do you think are important for choosing a team of friends?

2. What was it like to date when you were a teen? What do you think has changed since then?

### Winning the Prize

Chapter Seven is all about happy marriages, and addresses shared values, commitment, respect, responsibility, and honesty.

Several couple interviews provide

examples for teens of how to be happy in a committed relationship. It is an encouraging look at the benefits of marriage, what it takes to have a successful marriage, and the important role maintaining abstinence until marriage plays in starting and keeping a good marriage.

A powerful activity in this section has students write a letter to their future spouse.

### Game Time

Chapter Eight is about making a plan. Students review the goals they listed in the first chapter. They learn to set boundaries in dating relationships and create defensive strategies to resist temptations and pressure to behave in ways that decrease their chances of achieving their goals. These include learning to speak up, stand up, and walk away.

Activities in each section of *Game Plan* visually demonstrate the chapter’s theme. In the final chapter activity, students pass around two soda cans, one full and one empty. They compare how easy it is to crush the empty can as opposed to how difficult it is to crush the full can. The full can represents students filled with goals and fully informed about how to reach them.

The workbook offers specific “pressure lines” and responses that make it clear the student intends to resist all pressure to betray his or her goals and intentions.

On the final page of this chapter is My Game Plan where students write down their purpose, goals, attitudes, and actions, and then sign their names. There is also a place for signatures of “fans,” people the student chooses to help accomplish their goals.

The teacher edition of *Game Plan* offers additional interactive learning activities students and teachers can do together, because people best remember what they see in concrete demonstrations.

For more information or to order *Game Plan*, contact Renate Ferrante, executive director of CCAP at RenateCCAP@gmail.com or call 239-272-5092.

