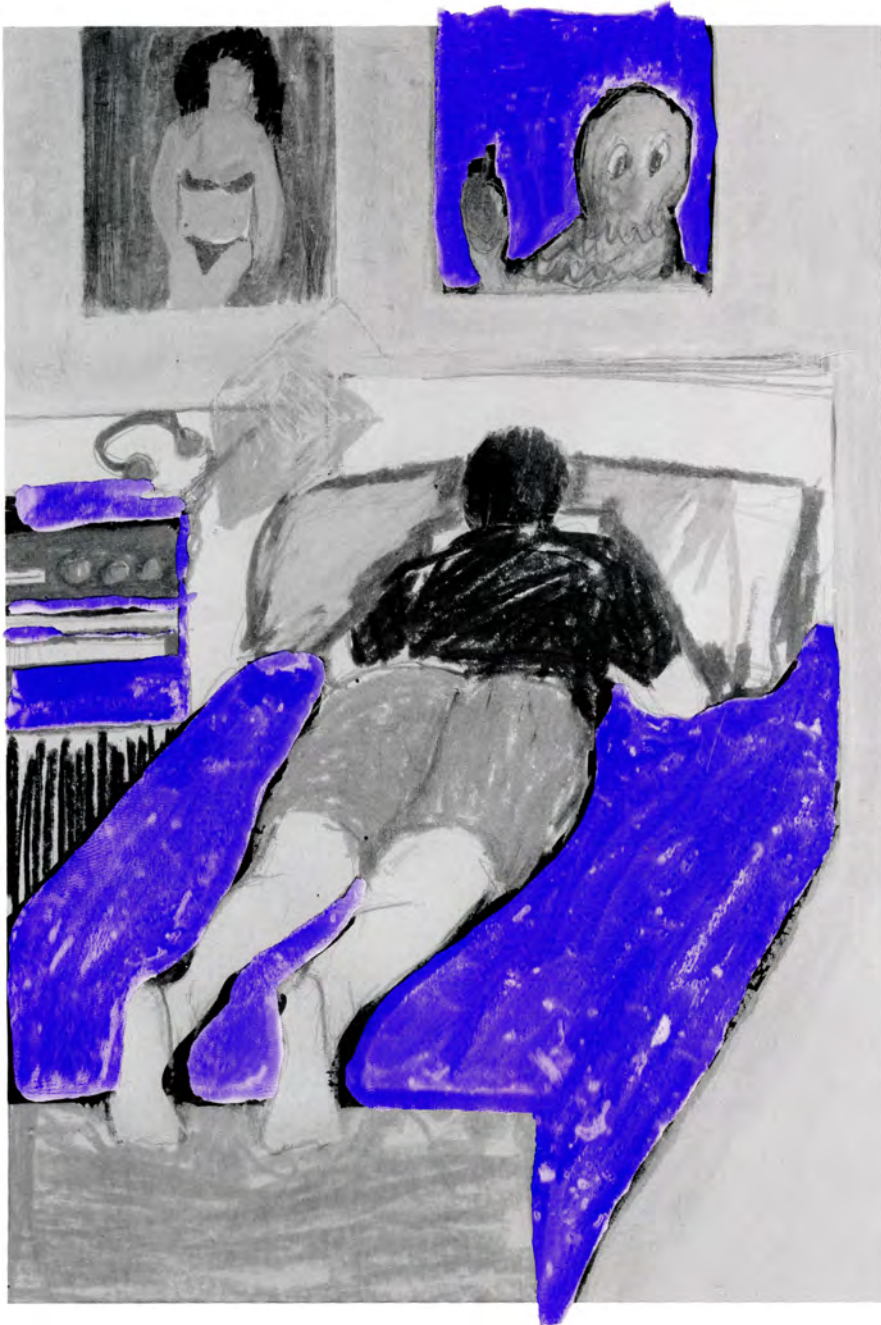


CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL



COUNSELING
KINGDOM
STUDENTS IN
CONTEMPORARY
CRISES

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Do They Have Gangs in Iowa?

"We're rowdy," my student guide informs me as she walks me from the office to my friend's inner city middle school classroom.

"Oh, you're just spirited," I counter.

"No, we're rowdy," she insists as we enter the classroom. My usually confident teacher-friend seems nervous as she tries to maintain some semblance of order in the class. She has urged me to come, so I try to put her at ease. She asks me to sit on the stool at the front of the room so her students can ask me questions. They ask about jobs, about crops, about schools in my part of the country.

"Do they have gangs in Iowa?"

The question is innocent, the questioner streetwise. Later my friend explains that young Troy himself is a member of a gang. In fact, every kid in her class lives in some kind of crisis.

The teacher next turns to the student I-Search papers. She has tried to help the students select specific topics of lasting value for their illustrated reports. They settle on generalities like "Cocaine," "Gangs," "Guns," "Abuse." She wants them to grow beyond the world they know; they don't think they want to grow. She is serious; they are not. They do not listen, but they know she loves them. That is why they come to class, they tell her, not to do her assignments.

The 10:00 bell interrupts the pandemonium. The room clears. My friend looks weary. I say I must go. "You can't," she says. "Have some tea. I need to talk." Mentally I cancel my other plans. I drink tea. She talks.

She tells me about the new curriculum this fall: Say "No" to Drugs. She will spend English class periods teaching her multi-racial middle schoolers a method to respond to drug pushers. They will practice what to say and how to say it.

Slowly I sip my tea. I am

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speechless. Nothing I say will encourage her. I feel sad that schools must teach about abuse and AIDS instead of *Animal Farm* and *Anne Frank*.

I try to imagine teenage gangs on Main Street in Sioux Center, Iowa, where I will soon return. The thought amuses me. I wonder if people would still leave their keys in the ignition while they run into Casey's Bakery.

"What's funny?" my friend asks.

"Nothing much," I say. "They know you love them. Did you hear them say so?"

"They know I'll be back here tomorrow, asking them about their reports. That's one thing they can count on."

She tells me then of Heather, whose sister and physically disabled nephew live with Heather's family. Heather resents the attention they take away from her. Then I remember my student Joan, who resents her bulimic sister for the parental attention her condition steals from Joan's outstanding athletic feats.

"Then there's Vanessa," my friend continues. "She's afraid of her mom's boyfriend." I recall an essay written by my first hour freshman, who still lives with guilt because her parents cannot talk with her about her sexual molestation years ago by junior high boys in a Christian school. No, Troy, we have no gangs in my town. But we

too have kids in crisis, inside our restored, oak-paneled, front-porch Midwest homes.

"Can't you adopt Cha?" My friend shifts the focus. "He needs to get out of this environment. He has a chance yet." Cha is Laotian. My young friend Lan is Vietnamese. Lan needs my love. Her family remains in Vietnam. She tells me sometimes of her escape—how she was sent out in the night, pack on her small back filled with provisions she had believed were for her father, only to lose them all in the sea while helping a smaller girl who could not swim to the escape boat. We have heard similar stories of courage, but we assume Southeast Asians can endure their loneliness—they are survivors by nature.

That's what people say about good teachers too—they are survivors. But that's not quite fair. Maybe they are really mothers and fathers first of all, people who must love without overindulgence. Look at Lan, Heather, Troy . . . all with mothers, yet motherless . . . all with fathers, yet fatherless.

My friend is quiet now. My teacup is empty. The morning is gone. The challenges are not. But we have communed—not in church, not with bread and wine, but in the classroom, with tea and talk. We will go out and love. LVG

"Silence is never so impenetrable as when the whisper of steel on paper strives to pierce it."

Beryl Markham, *West With the Wind*

Speaking in Silences

BY BENEDICT AUER

I hear of you
only in rumors:
you've dropped out
of college or never
begun, taken a job
as a short-order cook,
gotten engaged
to an old girlfriend,
rumors unverified
except by patterns
usually followed.

My hand reaches
for a pen, it's
a ritual every few
months, I write you,
you don't write me.
You called me Father,
said I was
your second dad,
but now my words
are soundless echoes,
reverberating off
my wondering about you.

I go through the script,
each letter written
in blood, yet the envelope
doesn't come back—
there is hope,
at least you're
not dead.

Satanism: a Ritual of Deception

BY WAYNE A. VAN KAMPEN

Reprinted with permission of Bethesda Bulletin, Summer 1987.

"Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

Increasing numbers of today's youth are experimenting with such things as fantasy role-playing games, black magic, the occult, and satanism. For many adolescents, this dabbling simply provides an element of excitement and stimulation, creating a mystical sense of imaginary power and control as they wrestle with issues of growing up. But for others the results can quickly become self-absorbing and self-destructive.

Satanism is the worship of Satan, who personifies darkness and evil.

Satanism has an attractive drawing power in today's world. "And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11:14) Satanism advocates self-preservation, self-gratification, and self-redemption. It stands against Christianity, offering a ritualistic lifestyle of self-indulgence. Consider the following passage from *The Satanic Bible*: *The seven deadly sins of the Christian church are greed, pride, envy, anger, gluttony, lust and sloth. Satanism advocates indulging in each of these "sin" as they all lead to physical, mental, or emotional gratification.*

With the extreme emphasis in today's world which highlights taking care of "number one" and getting our individual needs met even if it calls for winning through intimidation, it's not so amazing that young people are being drawn increasingly toward a variety of satanic practices as a way to claim power and control in their lives. Satanism essentially blesses and encourages the expression of all that is quite natural to adolescent development, namely, rebellion, defiance, and a sense of highly prized specialness, without providing any constructive relational framework. There is absolutely

"Satanism taps directly into the adolescent's focus on the temporary with little concern for the eternal."

nothing in satanism that is socially acceptable in terms of healthy adolescent development. The focus is on self-fulfillment, vengeance, violence, and death. There is total disregard for relational, social, and religious boundaries and values.

Satanism taps directly into the adolescent's focus on the temporary with little concern for the eternal. It blesses that dimension of self which desires to be lord and master of the universe. It provides powerful rituals and symbols that become a literal bondage of self-destruction and death for those who suddenly realize they are victims of their own self-deception.

Signs and symbols are utilized within satanism to undo their original intent. The pentagram, a five-pointed star symbolizing early human spiritual aspirations when the point faces upward, is inverted in satanism to symbolize bestiality and contrary meaning. The Christian cross is inverted as a direct sign of opposition to the Christian Gospel of Christ. "The Beast" and "666" are taken from the book of Revelation and used to visibly display commitment to the powers of darkness and evil.

In the Black Mass of satanism the following phrases leap out with a force almost beyond belief: "I deny God, Creator of heaven and earth . . . Do as thou wilt shall be the whole of the law!" The alter in the true Black Mass is the naked body of a young virgin.

Participants drink wine, blood, and urine either separately or mixed. The blood may be that of animals, others, or one's own. The Lord's Prayer is recited backwards. Sacrifices may consist of small animals or, as has been documented, unbaptized human infants. Black candles, various colored robes, chalices, incense, and knives also are commonly utilized in the dramatic and dynamic ridicule of the Christian worship and sacrament.

Satanism distorts, twists, inverts, and perverts "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious." (Philippians 4:8) It fosters a negative sense of self, power, and control. It lacks any sense of respect or reverence for life. Sanctification comes through the *destruction* of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23)

In satanism, death rather than life becomes the primary focus and obsession.

While the above may sound far out, it is actually happening close at hand within many communities. Obvious signs are going frequently unnoticed, or else being brushed off as just crazy adolescent behavior not to be taken seriously. Books, mail order catalogs, movies, fantasy role-playing games, and heavy-metal rock music are full enticements that adolescents find attractive, tempting, and seductive rituals of power and control. The ever increasing utilization of alcohol and drugs contributes to a false sense of self, which fuels the journey of grandiosity.

To ignore the increasing involvement of adolescents in satanism or to pretend that it's nothing serious will not make it go away. Currently law-enforcement agencies, mental health professionals, and educators are significantly concerned about the impact of satanism on our youth. All the

"The Church has chosen frequently to tell individuals how to live, rather than honestly wrestling with the overwhelming and complex demands of decision-making in today's world."

above groups are looking for ways to address the problems with sensitivity, compassion, and authority. My involvement has been as teacher, counselor, and pastor assisting these professionals to understand more fully what need Satanism fills for adolescents and how to attempt effective intervention.

My frustration is this: I'm not convinced the Church has considered the serious reality of adolescents' increasing gravitation toward Satanism. This must change. Perhaps in some ways, the Church has contributed to the movement of youth in this direction historically by being overly judgemental of adolescent behavior, rather than providing a context in which adolescents were encouraged to work through their all-too-obvious developmental turmoil. Traditionally, the Church has often sought more to overcome evil by preaching good than it has sought to comprehend the void out of which individuals are attracted to a

self-destructive lifestyle. The Church has chosen frequently to tell individuals how to live, rather than honestly wrestling with the overwhelming and complex demands of decision-making in today's world.

It is imperative that the church demonstrate a renewed capacity to walk with adolescents through the "valley of the shadow" so that they do not become lost in darkness. Educational sessions, workshops, and seminars need to be provided to inform parents, pastors, adolescents, and community leaders about what's going on in the marketplace. We need to articulate clearly a process of values formation and responsible decision-making in terms of community living. We need to provide a safe, acceptable, and secure communion within which adolescents can work through "with fear and trembling" their necessary search for relational identity. We must not, indeed cannot, be fearful of or intimidated by

TYPICAL PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

- Most often quite intelligent, creative, and curious
- Most often male Caucasian, middle or upper-middle class family
- Possibly an under-achiever
- Low self-esteem
- Conflicting peer relationships
- Alienation from family and family religion

EARLY CLUES OR PHASES

- Evidence of much stress along with increasing anxiety and fear
- Growing feelings of inadequacy, helplessness, and loss of control

EVIDENCE OF ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT

- Obsession with fantasy role-playing games
- Obsession with heavy-metal rock music
- Books on magic, witchcraft, paganism, Satanism, gremories (personal "Book of Shadows")
- Candles (tapered or in human form), incense, knives, pentagram, markings of 666
- Symbolic jewelry
- Unexplained paranoia or fear of the world
- Extreme secretive behavior
- Drug use
- Fear of discussing behavior or involvement

the all-too-normal raging storms of adolescence. Rather, we need to be a "refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1)

Bethesda PsycHealth Institute is a newly established center committed to research and treatment of deviant ritualistic behavior, and providing education to clinicians, educators, law enforcement agencies, clergy, and the community. It is a collective professional network which has come together in response to individual and collective trauma resulting from deviant and abusive ritualistic practices in today's society.

The roots of the institute reach back about seven years. At that time, I was working with two cases: one involving "demonic possession" and another involving "satan worship." My work was very much that of a beginner. It was new and frightening pastoral ground for me. I had worked previously with one person who had broken away from the bondage of a cult, but this was quite different. I read, thought, reflected, and prayed.

About that time, a student chaplain suggested that a man in Boulder named Jim McCarthy might be a helpful contact person. Jim was a nationally respected informational resource on cults, sects, paganism, and satanism. I arranged for Jim to do a three-hour workshop at Bethesda. Those three hours were the beginning of what has become a significant professional relationship in which we have worked closely as colleagues, educators, and co-learners.

Over the years various cases, seminars, and media experiences firmed up our mutual belief that some kind of center was needed to effectively coordinate information, education, and treatment. Jim was finding himself overwhelmed with calls, referrals, and requests for help. He was traveling extensively around the country providing consultation and education to mental health and law enforcement agencies. While my traveling was not as extensive, my involvement was becoming rapidly more demanding. Jim and I began working together

on seminars for the Colorado Mental Health Association, the Colorado Juvenile Council, Fort Logan Mental Health Center, and Bethesda. Professionals were hungry for information and direction in dealing with the dramatic increase of ritualistic practices to which adolescents and adults were being drawn.

Given the above, our informal discussions took on serious intent. We began to identify individuals representative of various disciplines to provide a broad professional spectrum of inclusiveness. We called a loosely organized meeting for the purpose of getting a reading on interests, needs, and goals. This initial task group of ten became a group of fifteen for a second meeting, and then a final group of twenty, which organized as Bethesda PsycHealth Institute the end of May 1987.

The institute consists of the following three components:

RESEARCH

- Data Gathering
- Documentation
- Writing
- Disseminating Information
- Publication

TREATMENT

- Consultation
- Therapy
- Support Groups
- Hospitalization
- Referral Network

EDUCATION

- Clinicians
- Educators
- Law Enforcement
- Clergy
- Community

We are just beginning. Our plans include local, regional, and national expansion for providing consultations, seminars, and workshops. We also plan to make written materials available upon request for only the cost of prepa-

ration and mailing. Our mailing list is building as calls and letters are already being received from interested persons and groups.

If you wish to be added to our mailing list or wish specific information or services, please contact Wayne Van Kampen, Bethesda PsycHealth Institute, 4400 E. Iliff Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80222, or call 303-759-6040.

Advice to CEJ readers is offered free of charge. **CEJ**

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Bob and the Rookie

BY JAMES CALVIN SCHAAP

Greenway High had no bells. Without looking at the clock, you could tell the period was ending because books slapped closed and kids craned toward the small fluorescent light jutting from the wall like a sideways paperback just beneath the clocks. When the light glowed, class was officially over.

But those final minutes were the same as they are anywhere in North America, bells or no bells. I would position myself at the front of the classroom to illustrate, via body language, that I was still in control, despite the finality of the clock's sweeping minute hand. But then I'd lean up against the desk behind me, to indicate, I suppose, that these last fleeting moments were free. In those few minutes, one day, I goofed.

Bob, the gymnast, sat right in front, a kid with Popeye's powerful forearms and a saint's pale blue eyes. I'd never known a gymnast before. In my previous life as a high school student, I'd known cocky shortstops, thick-headed defensive tackles, thoroughbred point guards, and track stars of every shape and size. But I'd never been at a big city high school, a school big enough to sport a gymnastic team.

"I love to watch gymnastics," I told him one day at the end of the class, in a voice strong enough to surround the restless cowboys near the door in the back. "It's amazing what Olga Korbett does when she flips around the you-know—"

"—the uneven bars," one of the girls up front said.

"Yeah, whatever," I said, keeping an eye on the clock. "Guys don't do those, do they?" Bob shook his head, sheepishly.

"How come?"

I meant the question seriously. In my mind I saw Korbett's muscular body slapping itself around those bars, upper to lower, lower to upper, her waist a fulcrum balancing the speed of her arms and legs as they pinwheeled as if spun from a machine. To me, the uneven par-



RICH BISHOP

allel bars looked deadly, and my question didn't strike me as dumb. Why not boys—with all their additional muscular advantage? Think of the speed.

Nobody answered, but there were some giggles.

"What's the deal?" I said.

Bob simply rolled his eyes, as if his teacher had flunked.

"Mr. Schaap," one of the girls said, "just think."

I stood there for a moment and looked up at the clock once again. How should I know?—I asked myself. Boys, zipping around on those bars. Is that so dumb?

I looked at Bob and he grimaced in a male way, a look that said we were talking about *apparatus* here all right, not simply the gymnastic kind.

"Oh, wow!" I said, as if some wall-sized graphic diagram from Physiology 101 suddenly stood there unveiled before us. I'm sure I turned seventy-seven different colors, all before the light finally glowed.

That day the teacher suffered for his ignorance.

But in many ways back then I was a rookie in the world, growing up as I did in the loving security of a Midwestern small town. I had only one friend who ever talked back to his father, and I'd never seen my parents fight, if in fact they ever did. I'd seen drunks, but they were all fun-loving kids with their fingers wrapped around short-

ie Pabsts. I'd read about bad things, but my Christian home had not really prepared me for the lives some people live, day in and day out.

One day after school this same Bob came up to me and told me that he didn't have a paper finished. He was a nice kid, quiet and unassuming, never bold.

"What's the deal?" I said, "You need another day or two?"

He looked down at the books he had pinned up against his waist. "I don't know if I can."

He'd passed a test or two, not sailing exactly, but he never struck me as someone who couldn't do the work.

"When can you get it in?" I said. "Give me a day—next Monday?"

His eyes searched the rug as if there were some answer down there folded up in a note. But once I saw the way his mouth tightened, his teeth down over his bottom lip, I knew there was more to the story. The big kid—the kid with the arms and the shoulders, the kid who wore his shirtsleeves rolled up above the swell of his biceps—that kid cried.

"I can't get anything done at home," he said. "I just can't."

"What's the matter?" I said.

He brought his hands up to his eyes. "My folks," he said. "They're on each other all the time and I just can't take it. You ought to hear it."

"If teaching means giving and loving, then one doesn't teach without trust; and trust is always risky."

I didn't know any easy answers. We'd never talked about something like this in English Methods class.

"Every night," he said, "every last night it goes on, and if I go away I can't get my work done. I don't know what to do."

I reached for Kleenex. In all my years of teaching since, I don't remember another guy crying as Bob did, eyes turning red and bruised by the way his hands constantly pushed, as if to stanch what, it seemed, had to flow.

"It's okay," I said. "I understand. I understand." I didn't, of course, but I didn't know what else to say.

"All my classes," he said, "everything's just falling apart—bad. Everything's just crazy."

"Listen," I said. "You get that paper in whenever you can, all right? I understand." I put my arm on his shoulder because it seemed so abundantly right.

When he left that afternoon, I felt as if I had something to write home about—how the world was an awful place and how I really didn't know sin so well as I did now that I was there, in the city.

A day or two later I met my friend John, one of the counselors, coming up the walk toward the English building, rocking on his toes the way he always did, rolling along that way as if simply a smile weren't enough to show the need for happiness.

"Schaap," he said. "This kid—Bob Ranzig. You got him, don't you?—short guy, muscular?"

"Sure," I said. "I ought to talk to you about him. I thought of it but then I forgot—"

"I know," he said. "I know it all." He turned his head away and looked down at the cracks in the sidewalk as if what he had to say wasn't going to be easy. "You're a sweetheart, you know that?" he said, and he looked up in my face. "All of you smalltowners are such sweethearts." Then he giggled, his head snapping back a little. "He pulled one on you the other day, you know that?"

I had no idea what he was talking about.

"Ranzig—he pulled one on you just as he has lots of others. You aren't alone."

Then I knew. "He said his parents were screaming," I told him. "He claimed he couldn't get anything done."

"Partly true," he said, "but I've got twelve hundred other kids with the same problem—lots of them much worse."

I felt duped.

"He's been pulling that all three years he's been here, and I've been telling him that he can't do it anymore. It's a crutch. He's got to learn to live with who he is."

John never once struck me as a hard person to live with. It seemed odd that he could be telling me to temper my sense of mercy with an injection of justice. "You're sure?" I said.

"Schaap," he told me, "don't ever do that again. You want to help the kid? Then don't let him pull that stunt. I don't care what he's got at home, he can't get by that way anymore. He's using it. And he can't."

I felt green, perfectly green.

"You're not the only one, Schaap," he said. "We're all vulnerable." And then he put his hand on my shoulder, just as I had done two days before with a teary gymnast.

That night I suppose the rookie felt he had some more evil to write home about.

Today I pulled out some of the remnant memories of those teaching years, including a dozen stapled pages or so by a girl named

Theresa, who wrote out some assignments on the topic of family. That same year, Bob's junior year, I had red-penciled the spelling on those assignments during Christmas break, just a week before hearing on the television news how Theresa's father had murdered her mother, then shot himself, the whole bloody business carried out in front of the kids right there in the trailer on the northern edge of the city.

I don't ever want my mother to die," Theresa had written less than a month before her mother was murdered, "but life is just that way. Everyone has to die when their time comes. I will always remember my mother for just what she is—my mother."

I suppose there's nothing profound about those specific words, but I kept the assignment because they were—and are—profound for a rookie. Holding this assignment right now is, to me, like a realization of the reality of darkness.

But a rookie is, I suppose, what, I still am. If teaching means giving and loving, then one doesn't teach without trust; and trust is always risky. You get burned. You get calloused. You get deceived.

But you keep giving—or else, most likely, you quit.

It seems to me that those of us who stay in this profession likely stay rookies. We're all vulnerable. Like Ishmael, in Melville's *Moby Dick*, most of us have seen the darkness of Ahab; but we're saved by our sense of hope for what our kids can be.

Perhaps one can't teach any other way. Sometimes I wonder whether it's possible to live any other way.

Finally, I think, there's more to write home about than darkness.

CEJ

James Calvin Schaap is associate professor of English at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa.

Why Hire Full-time School Counselors?

BY AGNES STRUIK

Recently I attended a Catholic high school retreat on sexuality. At the end of my session on relationships I encouraged the students to take their time in finding a life partner. I encouraged them to experience being independent by living away from home, to perhaps travel and explore other cultures and ways of being. "It will make your eventual relationship with your partner deeper and richer. You'll be better prepared to deal with the ups and downs and crises that you will experience in a marriage relationship."

Suddenly my eye caught an attractive young girl who was looking at me with disbelief as she cuddled closer to her boyfriend. "Look, lady, I don't really care about all that stuff in the future," she seemed to be saying. "I've got what I need right here." This was confirmed later in other sessions when students told me, "If you don't have a boyfriend you're really out of it. It doesn't matter who he is, just so you're not alone. Lot's of our classmates," they told me, "are sexually active and every year a few get caught."

Teenage pregnancies are one of the rising concerns in North American high schools, along with alcohol and drugs. Of even greater concern is the drastic increase in teenage suicide. Depression, alienation, and purposelessness haunt the teenage population. Our Christian schools are not exempt; we have had to struggle with all of these same problems, including suicide.

These problems are much deeper than they seem on the surface. Donald Posterski, in *The Emerging Generation*, shows in his survey of Canadian high school students that their number one priority is their relationships. William Glasser, noted American educator, psychologist, and medical doctor, points out that the number one

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PRIORITY LIST OF NEED

RANK	NEED	DESCRIPTION OF NEED
1	belonging	loving and caring
2	power	gaining in importance
3	freedom	choosing
4	fun	playing and learning

need of young people is belonging (loving, cooperating), followed by power (gaining importance), freedom (choosing), and fun (playing and learning). Glasser says these needs are even stronger than the needs for survival, as indicated by Maslow and his hierarchy of needs. Unless students can fulfill their needs in a healthy way, they will find other ways to repress the emotional pain they feel. Some immerse themselves in their studies or in sports. Others turn to drugs or alcohol or seek intimacy in relationships they do not have the emotional maturity to sustain. If the situation becomes desperate enough, students will kill themselves to kill the pain. Problems of drugs, alcohol, and teen pregnancies are symptoms of a much deeper problem. Students do not seem to have the emotional security, sense of self, and confidence to

"If the situation becomes desperate enough, students will kill themselves to kill the pain."

make the choices and decisions required of them in their teen years.

At this point, it is much too late to attempt to reach students with the fact that they are important, that they are loved by God, and that they have a purpose in life. We need to start building a strong sense of self in kindergarten and then continue nurturing students through all their stages of development.

Classroom teachers have shared with me that they do not have training in enhancing their classroom activities so that the emotional well-being of students is honored. In-service programs would be helpful, but teachers long for the support and guidance of someone who has expertise in this area. They know that unless students feel emotionally secure, learning cannot take place. Unless a student has a good sense of self, all the other areas of life are negatively affected.

High schools have counselors, but usually they have so little time allotted to counsel that sessions with students are reduced to career counseling. High school teachers tell me that they themselves are not prepared to deal with problems of drugs and alcoholism. A sympathetic ear is not enough when problems have reached this stage.

What teachers need is a trained support person who has the expertise to handle the problems before and as they arise. If the task of the school is to help students

live a Christian life—to have a sense of self, to be confident, radical, dynamic Christians who approach life with zest and enjoyment—we need to nurture their emotional and social well-being in an integrated, wholistic way from kindergarten through high school. This requires having a school counselor on staff.

I do not envision the counselor as a troubleshooter or a person who "fixes" problems. Rather, the school counselor would be instrumental in setting a positive tone in the school, in helping teachers, students, and parents exemplify what it means to be a Christian community. The focus of his or her task would be to promote a healthy environment among the students, staff, and parents. The qualified counselor would have a view of the person as image-bearer of God and an understanding of what that implies. An understanding of the stages of life and faith development would be a must. If the counselor has been a teacher, credibility among the staff would be assured. Love for children and teenagers, coupled with a good sense of humor, would be an asset to effective counseling with students. Each school would have to determine what it needs from the counselor to most effectively carry out its nurturing task.

I envision the task of the counselor as three-fold:

1 Support to the staff. The counselor would be part of a staff team assisting teachers in implementing ways to enhance a student's sense of self in the classroom structure and activities. Both communal and personal learning would be encouraged and supported. The counselor could give teachers suggestions on ways to incorporate decision-making, communication, and self-awareness into their teaching and learning.

The counselor's task would always be one of positive support rather than critical evaluation.

The counselor would facilitate a sense of community among the staff and be available for personal counseling of teachers should they require it.

2 Support to the students.

The counselor would encourage a community of learners in the classroom. The counselor could have a powerful influence in building a Christian way of life by providing a safe non-judgmental place for students to air their concerns and problems. Personal or group sessions would be key to a variety of counseling opportunities. In the Middle Ages, people had spiritual mentors who acted as sounding boards for them as they moved along their spiritual journey. This kind of discipling would be powerful and valuable to a relationship that is established without being hindered by a fear of repercussions on grades or treatment in the classroom. This kind of guidance and redirection would allow students to bring their problems and concerns to the counselor before they reached the desperate level.

The counselor would also provide resources to the students on a variety of topics that are of concern to growing young people.

3 Support to the parents.

The counselor would act as a resource person, providing parents with information and support as they live with their growing children. Whenever necessary the counselor would network among parents, students, and teachers and involve them in working at the difficulties experienced by the students. The counselor would be instrumental in creating "crises teams" to support the school community at the time of a death, during a son's or daughter's addiction,

or during the break-up of a family. Once again, the counselor, along with the administration, would be a powerful force in facilitating an opportunity for the students to experience being in the body of believers in a positive, uplifting way.

Having a counselor doesn't mean there will be no problems in the Christian school, but it does mean the school will be better able to deal with the problems when they come. The counselor can be instrumental in preventing some problems from arising because of the supportive, caring nurture experienced by the students through all the grades.

I know that some of you will dismiss this article because it is financially not feasible to have a full-time counselor on staff. Perhaps we need to look at some creative alternatives or re-evaluate our priorities and our vision statements. What do we want for our children? Yes, we want children who are successful, but don't we want more? Don't we want young people who are excited about living and experiencing abundant life in Jesus Christ? That's something we can't measure on an exam.

We have to take a leap of faith and do all we can to nurture a total sense of well-being in our students. John Westerhoff III concludes his book *Bringing Up Children in Faith* with the beautiful and encouraging thought that God did not give us a blueprint for bringing up our children in faith. All that he asks is that we are faithful to him with the opportunities and the resources that we have. No, our schools cannot be perfect, but we can be faithful. **CEJ**

Agnes Struik is an educational consultant from Toronto, Ontario.

"Self-Abuse"

BY H.K. ZOEKLICHT



RICH BISHOP

"... we've got a lot of students and a lot of people in our society who turn their problems into self-abuse—whether it's by overeating or starving themselves, or smoking or drinking or doing drugs, or ultimately suicide . . ."

Lucy was back. Bob DenDenker, her late husband whose accidental death a year and a half ago had stunned the Omni Christian community, had always been a popular though provocative part of Asylum gatherings and deliberations. But now Lucy was back, after a two-year absence, eager to be teaching again, though her two small children allowed her only a part-time involvement for the time being.

She had just settled next to Ginny Traansma, ready to enjoy a last cup of coffee before the afternoon classes began, when Principal Carpenter entered the faculty lounge and gestured to Lucy: "Mrs. DenDenker, Marilyn Balk would like to see you a minute."

Lucy put her coffee on the table and proceeded to the door. Ginny watched her go and exclaimed when the door closed behind her, "Wow, she sure looks good again, doesn't she? She must've lost 50 pounds during the last six months. Wonder how she did it," Traansma added wistfully, suddenly very self-conscious of the extra ten pounds she had been battling since her 45th birthday.

"Yeah," sighed Steve Vander Prikkel, "what a beautiful couple they were in more ways than one. But it's really good to have Lucy back, isn't it? I think the teaching will be very good for her."

"I think you're right," responded Dr. Esther Carpenter while soaking a cinnamon orange-spice

teabag in a cup of steaming hot water, "but it's also so good for our students, especially the girls who need some adult female support and friendship. This Marilyn Balk, for example. That girl has problems but has simply not been able to reach out to anyone for help. Now she's building a trust relationship with Lucy, and I think that's wonderful."

"I just hope Lucy has enough energy for all this and her two kids, too," Ginny added. "We have to protect her, I think, from burning herself out because she wants to give 100 percent all the time, you know."

Just then Lucy reentered, picked up her cup, and put it in the microwave for a quick warmup.



"How's Marilyn doing?" inquired Ginny.

"I bet if she'd lose 100 pounds, she'd feel a lot better," offered Matt DeWit.

"No, Matt," Lucy responded, "it doesn't work that way. If she felt a lot better on the inside, she'd probably lose that extra 100 pounds. But I think we're getting somewhere."

Before both sat down by the center table, Esther Carpenter put her arm around Lucy's shoulder and said, "I'm so glad you won her trust, Lucy; nobody has been able to do that before."

Lucy smiled gratefully at her late husband's successor. "Well, I pray that I can do something to help her. I just went through a

compulsive eating streak myself, you know. I never thought I would. But I'd look at Scotty and Monica and I'd think how they'd never enjoy that wonderful man who could've been such a great dad."

Lucy paused, struggling with the rising emotions. Carpenter reached out and touched her arm briefly. Then Lucy resumed. "I'd go to the kitchen, and I would just grab something and start stuffing myself. And I wouldn't stop. I'd hate what happened to my life more with every bite I took. I did not know how to cope. So, I took it out on my body; and somehow, in some perverted way, that made me feel better temporarily."

John Vroom sat on the sidelines eating his lunch. He had saved his favorite jelly doughnut for last. Now he stared at it; he sensed with regret that somehow the timing for the first luscious bite wasn't quite right.

"And how did you lick it?" came softly from Ginny.

It seemed as if the old Lucy was back, Lucy whose brown eyes twinkled when she responded, "Through much prayer and fasting."

Chuckles from the Asylum crew broke the tension. Vroom began to unwrap his special treat.

"No, really," Lucy continued, "it took a lot of good counseling first. And I still need it. There's many a night when I feel that I don't want to see another day—without Bob." She paused, then added, "Maybe that's why I can empathize with Marilyn—because I've been there, where everything seems absurd and meaningless. There's a lot of pain in her life we know little about. She needs counseling, and she needs our prayer."

The principal spoke for her staff when she said, "She certainly does. And we want you to know that our prayers also continue for you and your two children. I can't tell you how much we appreciate your sharing your struggle with us and what an inspiration you are to all of us."

John Vroom looked at the enticing feast in his hand again, but he had not yet put his mouth where his desire was.

"You know, I've got an idea," came from Steve Vander Prikkel. "I'm on the Special Emphasis Week committee, and it just occurred to me that we've got a lot of students and a lot of people in our society who turn their problems into self-abuse—whether it's by overeating or starving themselves, or smoking or drinking or doing drugs, or ultimately suicide, of course. Wouldn't that be a good topic for our Emphasis Week this year?"

Vroom succumbed. His mouth greedily closed around one-third of the confection while his tongue eagerly sucked at the jelly.

"Yeah, I think that's right," agreed Matt, "provided you don't put kids on the defensive; you know, like putting them on the spot and pointing fingers at them?"

Vroom quickly put the doughnut down again.

"Oh, absolutely," Steve agreed. "I'd like kids to know *why* problems can lead to self-abuse, the emotional factors, you know. And then I'd like them to have a vivid inside look at just what happens when a body is overfed or underfed, or invaded by alcohol, nicotine, or cocaine—the physical and chemical consequences, you know. And because I hear a lot of people say, 'It's *my* body—I can do with it whatever I want,' I think there should be a look at the spiritual implications of self-abuse, too."

"Sounds as if you have the program practically planned already, Steve," reacted the principal, "and I think it's a very good idea too. It will require a good many community resources like doctors, psychologists, and pastors, and that's all for the good. What do you think, John?" Carpenter turned to Vroom as she stood up to rinse out her empty cup.

John Vroom ignored the question. But as his principal strode briskly to the door, he rewrapped the piece of collapsed jelly doughnut carefully, strained his bulky body as he reached for the lunch bag on the floor beside the chair, and muttered as he removed temptation, "I think I've lost my appetite."

CEJ

Your Baby, My Baby; Society's Games

BY JAMES VAN HOWE

Nicole was sixteen when she came back to her former school to talk to me. She thought she was pregnant, and she wanted to talk about it. Two other alumni of our Christian elementary school had given birth in their early teens, so I was not taken completely off guard. But I didn't expect to talk to Nicole about this subject. She was a good student from a strong Christian home. We discussed a few options, but it became clear after a short while that she had everything planned out. I suppose she wanted to talk to me just for reassurance.

I brought up the idea of abortion just to find out what her position was. To her credit I heard a resounding, "No!" I believe for many Christians the discussion ends there. They believe that the problem is taken care of because the mother has made the correct decision about abortion. But the difficult task of providing for a new life is just beginning.

We talked about many different possibilities, but I suppose her position on the situation could best be summed up in these words: "This is my baby, and with God's help I will take care of it." Immediately I saw a fundamental flaw in such a position. The father of the child was conspicuously absent from this part of our talk. Earlier in our discussion we had talked about Nicole's boyfriend—an intelligent young man, college bound. Now, however, her boyfriend was not part of the discussion. He was totally free of any responsibility. In fact, he had not even been informed of the pregnancy. He would be away at college when the baby was born.

To Nicole, *sharing* responsibility for this child seemed to be something that had outgrown its cultural time. Father and mother united in love to raise a family was an anachronism. I stressed to

"... sharing responsibility for this child seemed to be something that had outgrown its cultural time."

Nicole that the father should share the responsibility of raising this child. She listened patiently but did not agree. I was laboring to change a different value structure, and I was losing. A pervasive cultural attitude of her society had influenced Nicole to take this stand. Her society had said that it was okay for a single woman to have her child and raise it alone, that it was natural not to expect male involvement. And her society had given her plenty of examples to show her that she could succeed in this manner.

I emphasized the God-ordained absolute of the family. I could have started with Adam and Eve and worked my way through the Bible showing a pattern of marriage and family—the servant of Abraham going out to find a wife for Isaac—the list goes on and on. But I didn't belabor the point. Already I had lost Nicole. She was no longer listening because what I had to say had little to do with her reality. Nicole had learned—and believed—that men are not to share in deciding what will happen to the children they help to conceive.

I encouraged her to marry her boyfriend; she viewed that as impractical, too much of a financial burden. She would live with her aunt and collect Aid for Dependent Children. The father was completely left out of any decision to be made concerning his child.

We teachers can help to change this attitude of exclusion. Along with parents and church leaders, we help to shape the values of young people. Unfortunately, so does the "outside" world. We have an obligation to make our students understand that abortion is wrong, to not only respect the rights of the unborn but to cherish those rights. We also need to go a step further. We need to instill in our students an understanding of their responsibilities as parents. They should be willing not only to accept responsibility as Nicole had done, but also to expect responsibility from the other parent. Both parents should work together for the welfare of the child.

We could start to encourage our students to think about the responsibilities of husband/wife and father/mother simply by talking about it in class. Once a student sees that others have the same values, it is easier for them to maintain those values. Otherwise, students tend to think they are alone. Yet, we do not face the influence of modern culture alone. God is with us, and others who share our views are there to help. Talking about family roles helps to clarify the issues; any questions or uncertainties can be addressed. Speakers can be brought in to talk about family responsibilities, or films can be shown and discussed. Teachers should be accessible; students should be able to talk about their problems and concerns on a personal and confidential basis.

Once students understand the absolutes God has provided for family structure, once they realize the enormity of the responsibilities of parenting—the emotional, spiritual, physical, and financial commitment—it is time for them to make a decision to say *no* to sex outside of marriage. It is a sin of possible life-shattering consequence. However, if a child is to be born under such circumstances, the parents of that child need our love, prayers, and support as they begin sharing the responsibilities of two parents dealing with their child.

CEJ

James Van Howe teaches at Roseland Christian School in Chicago, Illinois.

I Corinthians 13

AN ADMINISTRATOR'S REFLECTIONS

BY KAREN MUTSCH

If I speak with the tongue of strength and authority and have not love, I am only a merciless figurehead. If I have the gift of leadership and understand all school intricacies and know all budgetary matters, and if I have faith in all school personnel and yet lack love, I am nothing. If I provide the classrooms with all the aids they need, and if I surrender my body to endless hours of meetings to satisfy the needs of community and staff, and have not love, the school and I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind when handling staff problems. Love does not envy when seeing the progress of a sister school. It is not proud nor boastful of its seemingly own accomplishments. It is not rude, self-seeking, or easily angered when dealing with delicate parent relationships. It keeps no record of the wrongs incurred in the position. Love does not delight when evil is discovered among students but rejoices in their healing and forgiveness. It always protects the integrity of an individual's worth. Love trusts, hopes, and perseveres even in the midst of daily trials. Love never fails.

But where there are school boards, they will cease; where there are PTAs, they will be stilled; where there are organizational heads, they will pass away. For all of us know only in part, and are accomplished only in part. We seek to put aside childish things, those formed in our weakness. For when all else is said and done, and our school grounds are an empty shell of memories, of laughter, and learning, there are three remaining memories: that of faith in our students, hope in our Lord, and love for all mankind. But the epitome of these three is love.

Karen Mutsch, former vice-principal of West Covina Christian School in West Covina, California, has recently moved to Monte Vista Christian School in Watsonville, California.

On this continent there exists a holocaust—abortion. Today, in the United States alone 4,000 innocent, defenseless human beings will be senselessly slaughtered. Why? One reason is the general public's lack of awareness of life in the womb.

Education regarding the value of *all* human life needs to begin at an early age. The purpose of this unit is to instill pro-life attitudes in young children by teaching them the fascinating story of life before birth. Students will focus on the miracle of development; however, an optional section has been included that briefly introduces the destruction of human life before birth.

All children will sooner or later be confronted with the abortion issue, and, unfortunately, some students may directly experience such a situation by age 13. Therefore, a unit such as this should be replaced with straightforward information on abortion as students reach junior high age.

General Objectives

Students will understand the progression of human development from conception to birth.

Students will learn that abortion is the destruction of human life before birth.

Students will discover their uniqueness as image-bearers of God.

Students will appreciate that everything about them was known by God before they were born.

Students will learn the value that Jesus places on children.

Students will develop a respect for human life.

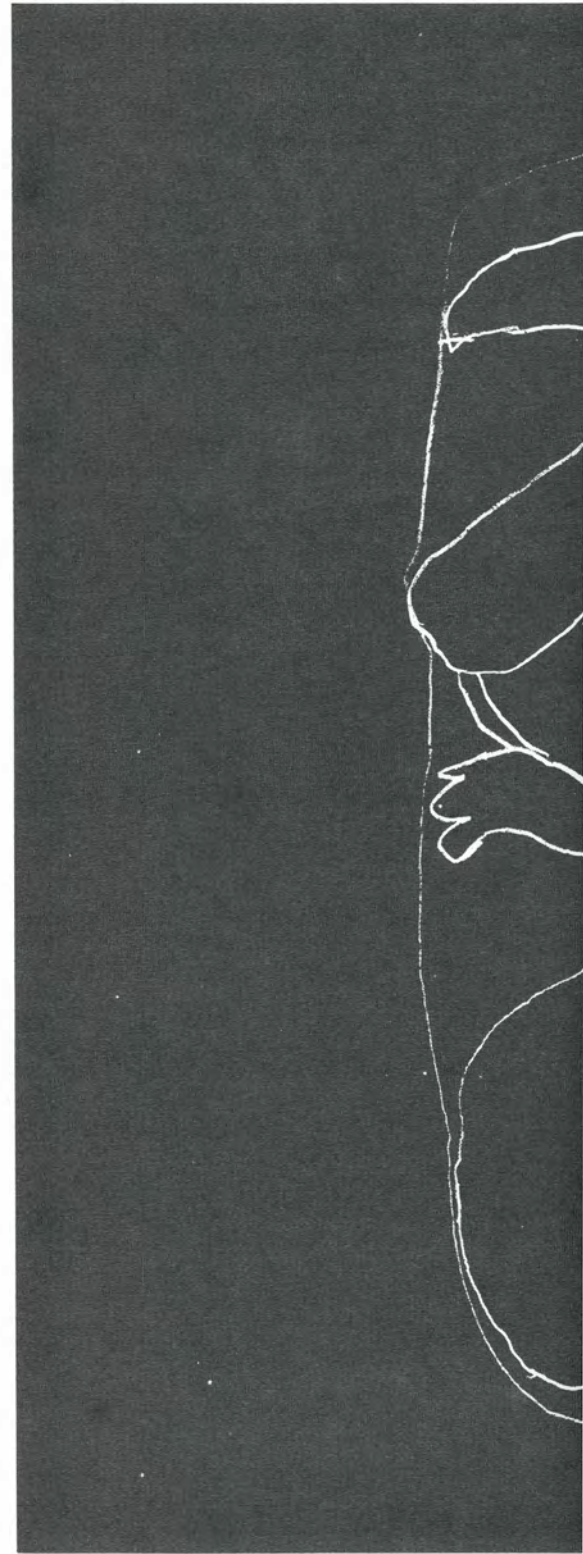
Students will become acquainted with the Roe vs. Wade decision.

Students will analyze the definition of life as given by Roe vs. Wade in the context of new neo-natal medical techniques.

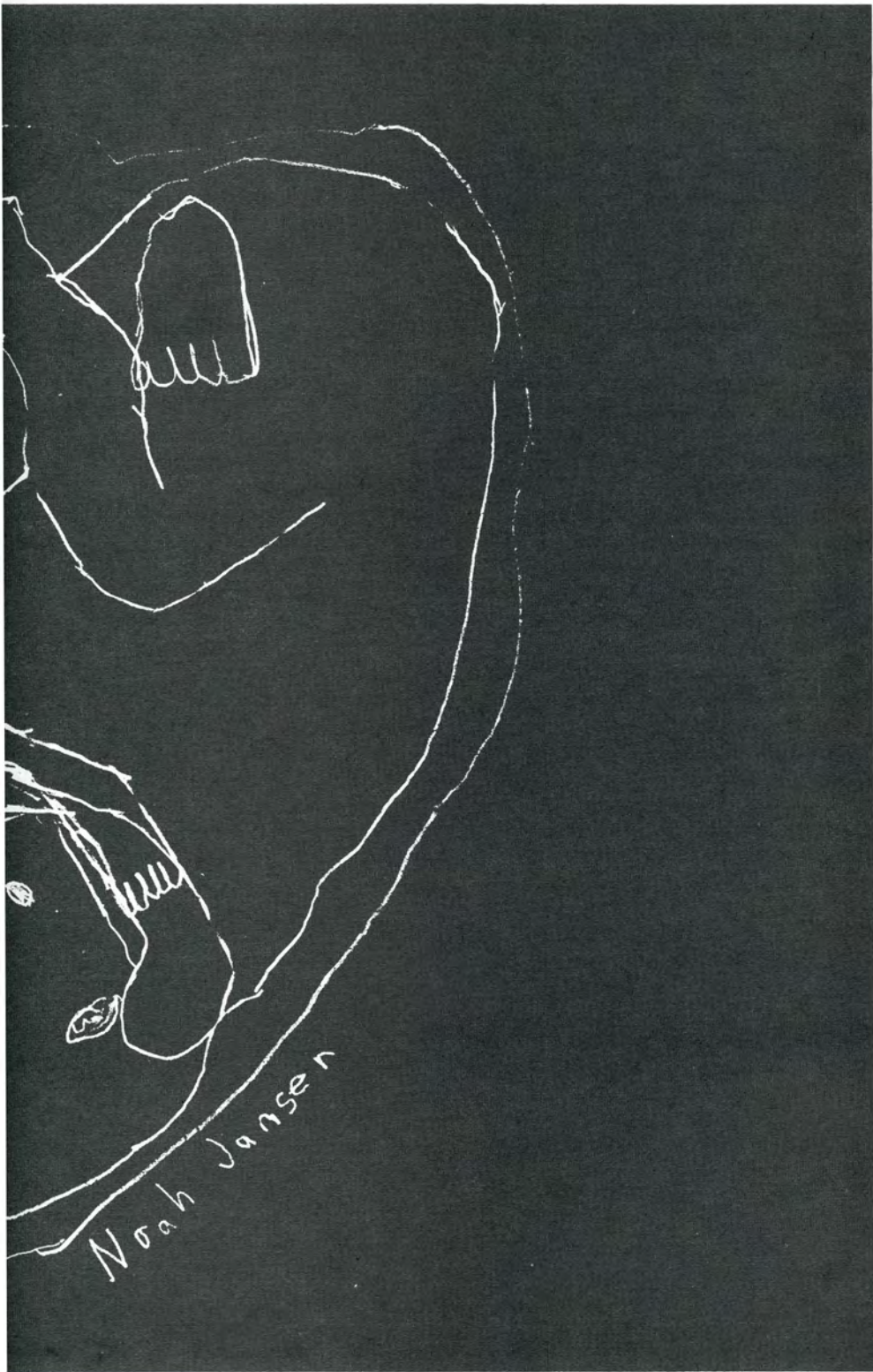
Students will be reminded that women who have abortions can be forgiven.

Students will explore ways they can help unborn babies.

Before Your Birthday: God's Special Secret



BY LAURA NIEBOER



Noah Jansen is a third grade student at The Potter's House Christian School in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Initiating Activity

Preparation: Collect baby pictures of the students in your class. Display Psalm 127:3 on a bulletin board: "Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord." (Later this bulletin board will be completed with the baby pictures.)

To initiate the unit, discuss Psalm 127:3 with the children. What does it mean to be a heritage of the Lord? Talk about how each child is special to us, to his or her family, and especially to God. Gradually lead the discussion to the topic of their birth and how the birth of a new baby is one of the nicest things that happens to a family.

After the discussion show each baby picture and let the children guess the identity. As each picture is identified let that child place it on the bulletin board, then allow the child to briefly tell the class about his or her interests and hobbies. Stress each child's special individuality. Use scripture to illustrate how God made us all in his image, yet unique. You may wish to further emphasize the children's uniqueness by taking their fingerprints—not one is alike.

After this activity ask the children, "Do you know what you looked like before your birthday, while you were growing inside of your mother? That is what we're going to be exploring the next few days."

The Miracle of Development

Begin by showing the students a blank slide with a pinhole in it. This will allow just enough light through to illustrate the beginning of life—a single cell. (If you use Dr. John C. Wilke's slides, "How Babies Grow," a slide like this is included.) Tell the students, "Everything you are today—red hair, green eyes, a fast runner—was already determined in that single cell. Nobody knew what you were like except God. You were *God's special secret*."

- Follow the story of life from conception to birth using the slide/cassette program "How Babies Grow" or "The Wonder

- of Being Alive."
- Use the recommended brochures, reprints, books, and posters to help tell the story of life. (See following information.)
- Borrow fetal models from your local Right to Life chapter. A set contains eight beautiful life-sized models that children can handle. Your local chapter may have trained speakers available who will talk with your students about fetal development.
- Detail what babies can do at each stage of development. Perhaps some students have felt a baby "kick" inside of its mother.
- Ask your local obstetrician to make a fetal heartbeat recording from a Doptone for your class.
- As children learn the chronology of development, have them each make a personal time line poster on which they note what happens at the specific stages of development. Let them accent the time line with pictures from brochures and reprints, or even with their own drawings of little feet or a little heart beating. The time line should be concluded with their own birthdate and baby picture. Entitle the poster with Psalm 139:14a: "I praise you, Lord, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."
- Invite a neo-natal intensive care nurse who has worked with premature babies. She can tell the children about her job and show them at what stage of development some of the surviving babies were when they were born.
- Collect ultrasound photos.
- Memorize Scripture that deals with life before birth: Psalm 139:13-16, Jeremiah 1:4,5, Luke 1:15, Galatians 1:15, Luke 1:41-44, Job 10:8-12.
- Make a mobile using some of these verses. Include verses that talk about children, such as Psalm 127:3.
- Jesus loves *all* children—both born and unborn. Tell the story of Jesus and the little children (Luke 18).

- Sing songs that tell of Jesus' love for children as well as those that celebrate life: "Jesus Loves the Little Children," "Jesus Loves Me," "Birthday Song" by Anne Herring, "Butterfly Song" from *Kids' Praise*, "Children of the Lord" by Bob Bennett, "I Am a Promise" by the Gaithers, "Let Me Live" by Pat Boone, and "Welcome to the Family" from *Kids' Praise 2*.
- Give students a quiz or crossword puzzle as a measure to determine what they have learned about life before birth.

When Life Isn't Welcomed

Be sensitive and brief when discussing abortion with children. Children below junior high age do not need to hear details of abortion methods or see pictures of abortion. When defining abortion, you may wish to explain it in a way such as this:

"Most of the time babies are born into a family where they are eagerly welcomed. But sometimes parents get confused and scared when they discover they are going to have a baby. They don't know their unborn baby is alive or that it is a special gift from God. They decide they'd rather not have a baby. They choose to force their baby to die when it is still growing inside of its mother. This is called abortion."

Choose the following activities which are appropriate for your grade level:

- Present the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion (Roe vs. Wade). Use the brochure on the U.S. Supreme Court (Hayes Publishing) as an aid.
- There are laws that protect whales, bald eagles, and even pregnant lobsters. Compare the legality of killing babies with the illegality of killing animals.
- Have a neo-natal intensive care nurse come in to explain the functions and purposes of a neo-natal intensive care unit. Compare the life-saving capabilities of such a unit to the

life stage at which the U.S. Supreme Court says an abortion can be performed.

- Unborn babies are helpless. Jesus wants us to help people who can't defend themselves (Proverbs 24:11,12). One way children can help is through prayer. Discuss with students how to pray about this issue. Pray for the babies, for the mothers who've aborted theirs (forgiveness), and for a change in the law. Lead a class prayer. Let volunteers participate.
- Introduce existing community organizations such as Bethany Christian Services or Birthright, which help parents choose alternatives to abortion.
- Have the children participate in a walk, hula-hoop, or roller-skate for life. Give the proceeds to a local Bethany or Right to Life group.
- Let the children express their feelings about abortion through poetry, writing, or art. Invite groups of students to design and create banners to be used in local churches on Sanctity of Life Sunday.

Culminating Activity

Bring out the balloons and streamers and celebrate the gift of life with a class birthday party! Let the students help decorate for the party.

Invite several moms with new babies as guests. Ask the mothers to demonstrate baby-care techniques (diapering, bathing) to small groups of students. Allow the students to participate. Encourage older students to learn more about baby care by taking a babysitting course. After the demonstrations, have the students present the moms with bibs they've made prior to the party.

At the party sing songs, play party games (some of which review facts from this unit), give the students a small pro-life gift such as the tiny feet pin or the "I Love the Unborn" teddy bear stickers, and, of course, eat cake and ice cream! At some added expense you can even launch helium balloons that carry pro-life messages

written by the students.

Conclude the party and the unit with a circle prayer. Direct each child to pray for the child next to him or her in the circle—thanking God for that child's life and for the particular unique qualities he or she has received. CEJ

Laura Nieboer, formerly an elementary school teacher in Pella, Iowa, is the mother of two young children and president of her community's Right to Life chapter. She concludes her Idea Bank editorship with this column so she can devote more time to her family and her community. We thank her for three years of valuable Idea Bank contributions.

RESOURCES

Audio-Visual

"HOW BABIES GROW"

A ten minute slide/cassette program for grades 1-8 narrated by Dr. and Mrs. J.C. Wilke. It tells the story of human life from conception to birth in a simple, positive manner. Hayes Publishing Co., 6304 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45224, Phone: (513) 681-7559.

"THE WONDER OF BEING ALIVE"

A 17-minute slide/cassette program for grades 1-4. A presentation to help children develop a sense of self-respect as well as respect for others. For Life, P.O. Drawer 279, Tryon, NC 28782.

Books

BEFORE YOU WERE BORN

By Joan Lowery Nixon. A beautifully illustrated story of life before birth giving God, the Creator of all life, the credit for our being. Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., Huntington, VA 46750.

SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL FROM GOD

By Susan Schaeffer Macauley. This book tells the wonder and worth of life in a clear and simple way. It is complemented by remarkable, in-the-womb photos in full color, as well as delightful photos of children. A special section touches on the need for loving care when "something goes wrong" and children are born handicapped. Crossway Books, Westchester, IL 60153.

Pamphlets/Reprints

"8-WEEK OLD DEVELOPING BABY"

Photos and developmental landmarks. Hayes Publishing Co.

"LIFE BEFORE BIRTH"

Large color reprints from *Life* magazine. Time/Life Education, Box 834, Radio City Post Office, New York, NY 10019.

"THE U.S. SUPREME COURT HAS RULED . . ."

Discusses Roe vs. Wade and also has developmental information and photos. Hayes Publishing Co.

"YOU ARE SPECIAL"

Excellent! Easton Publishing Co., P.O. Box 1064, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

Pins/Stickers

TINY FEET PIN

Hayes Publishing Co.

TEDDY BEAR STICKER

A fuzzy sticker that says "I Love the Unborn." Bowling Green Right to Life, P.O. Box 1092, Bowling Green, OH 43402.

Posters

BABIES POSTER WITH PSALM 139:13, 14.

Sun Life. Thaxton, VA 24174.

"8-WEEK PRE-BORN BABY"

Hayes Publishing Co.

"YOUR FEET WHEN YOU WERE 10 WEEKS OLD"

Hayes Publishing Co.

Visual Aids

FETAL MODELS

State or local Right to Life group.

"YOUNG ONE"

Model of an 11- to 12-week pre-born baby for children to cradle in their hand. 30c each.

Project "Young One," 2125 W. Lawn Ave., Racine, WI 53405.

INTERNATIONAL

International Right to Life Federation, P/A Francois DeSiebenthal, Avenue Dapples 23, 1006 Lousanne, Switzerland.

UNITED STATES

The National Right to Life has free information packets for teachers.

NRL Education Trust Fund, 419 7th Street NW, Suite 402, Washington, D.C. 20004.

CANADA

Alliance for Life—Canada (Publishes PRO-LIFE NEWS), 314 Lake Crescent, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Alliance for Life—Canada, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3C 4H1, (204) 942-4772.

Campaign Life—Canada, 17 Queens Street, E. 346, Toronto, Canada.

Dr. Stanley Hudfcki, 112 Conferdate Building, Ottawa, Canada.

AUSTRALIA

Right to Life Association of Western Australia, P.O. Box 6087 Haystreet, E. Perth, Australia 6001.

Right to Life, c/o Mary Tighe, P.O. Box 70, Brunswick, East, Victoria 3057.

Dr. Joe Santamaria, M.D., Dept. of Community Medicine, Victoria Rd., Ritzray, Melbourne, Australia 3065.

Many of these resources will be available from your local Right to Life organization.

Ouch

An Open Letter to Teachers

BY ARDEN RUTH POST

To the Teachers—

What is the job of a high school teacher? The principal job of a teacher should be to love his or her students, and to care about them and what happens to them outside the classroom. Teenagers need to be loved more than they need an education. Why don't I feel loved by my teachers? Is it just me? Teaching on any level involves more than just educating students. The most ineffective teachers (the ones I had the least motivation to learn from) that I have had are the ones that I feel don't care [at all] about me. The following poem is on behalf of the student population . . .

Teacher, am I just a name?
Am I just a grade?
Teacher, do you ever cry?
Do you ever hurt inside?
Let me know.
Teacher, do you love me
even if I fail your class?
Teacher, can you see my pain?
Are you sensitive to it?
Teacher, I don't feel like learning today;
I just want to die.
Teacher, if I shot myself
in the head, would you cry?
Teacher, don't get angry with me;
I'm only human.
Teacher, I don't think you care
about me
Show me different.
Teacher, I am not the only one
that feels this way.
Teacher, Teacher, Teacher,
please . . . hold me.

A Student

This letter was recently published in an independent, student-produced high school newspaper. It spoke to me in two ways. I asked myself, "What am I doing, as a college professor of education, to sensitize future teachers to the needs of students, not only academic needs, but personal needs as well?" Second, a nagging thought persisted, "Could this student have been in my classes when I taught in the schools? Can such a student be in my classes even now as I teach college students? If so, how did I fail to see this student crying out for help? How many hurting students are there with problems and needs undetected by teachers and professors who see them daily?"

Several easy, conscience-salving responses come to mind:

The student didn't come to me.
How could I have helped if I didn't know a hurt existed?

I am not a trained counselor and, therefore, would not be qualified to help.

My job is to teach, and that means my subject area(s): reading, foreign languages, math, science, history.

However, none of these answers eases my conscience. For a Christian teacher these answers are not permissible; they are too easy a way out. They deny a basic premise of a Christian perspective of the child: we are to educate the whole child.

Jack Fennema in *Nurturing Children in the Lord* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1977) reminds us that the child is a unity. "He is one—body and soul . . . The child is . . . a rational, emotional, spiritual, physical, and social being" (11). For teachers and professors, there is a tendency to focus

on the rational, the intellectual part of the child, and neglect the other parts. The student who wrote the above letter tells us that.

But Fennema reminds us:
"The child exists as a total, unified, integrated person. His physical actions are related to and dependent on his emotional and rational dimensions. His social actions . . . interrelate with his physical and emotional dimensions as well" (11).

Christian teachers need to recognize and respond to a unified view of the child. To teach the child means to teach the whole child, all parts of the child, as these parts interrelate with each other and as they interact with the world around them. How can I expect to motivate students to pursue the rational goals I have set if they are dealing with divorce at home, peer pressure at school, or substance abuse in the neighborhood? Should I not be available to listen and counsel for any aspect of my students' lives, recognizing my limitations while acknowledging my Christian responsibility?

This issue of CEJ focuses on contemporary crises: substance abuse, sexual immorality, abortion, suicide, and eating disorders. These are ugly words for ugly problems. I don't even like to write them. I would rather that they didn't exist. But they do, and they affect my students' lives. So I, who teach students every day, will publish this response to the student above and to all my future students:

Arden Ruth Post is assistant professor of education at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

To my Students—

Your letter tugs at my heart. I want to cry, too, as you do. I want to say I'm sorry if I failed to recognize you as a whole person. I admit that I tend to focus on your rational or intellectual side and ignore the other aspects of you as a person. This shouldn't be. I know that as a Christian teacher I am responsible for educating the whole person, and that includes the emotional and social needs your letter demonstrates.

I love my subject area and I want you to love it too. Perhaps that will be possible if I show concern and offer help with those areas of your life that may have more immediate need. I don't know all the answers to your problems; in fact, teaching my subject area is a lot easier than helping with the difficulties you face. But I am willing to try, and I'll help you pursue other sources who may provide the specialized help that I can't provide.

Yes, I do care about you and what happens to you outside the classroom! I love you. I'm sorry if I haven't showed it. Give me another chance.

Your Teacher

Substance Abuse

How Much Do You Know?

BY JEANE L. GRYS

During one of my classes as a student teacher, one of the students was crying. She got up and left the room, and I followed her to find out what was wrong. She said, "My best friend's dad died this morning." She further stated the man had been a Christian, yet he was an alcoholic. This incident along with my own life experience prompted me to admit that Christian homes are not immune to substance abuse. There is a need for knowing what substance abuse is, what the effects are on the family members, and how it can be dealt with.

Substance abuse is the overuse of prescription and non-prescription drugs as well as alcohol. Not only does it cause harm to the substance abuser himself, but it also causes ill effects on close family members. Often these family members are unaware of the cause of the emotional stress and distorted thinking they are experiencing.

My own life is an example of not recognizing the effects of living with substance abuse. For twenty-seven years I've struggled with who I am. I grew up thinking it was wrong to express my feelings, and I never really trusted anyone. I was the quiet, shy kid who sat in the front of the room. I would never admit there was something

wrong. What would have happened if a teacher at my school would have been able to detect the cause of my difficulties? Would I have been open to speak about what was happening in my life or how I was feeling? I'll never be able to answer those questions. However, my own experience as well as the incident in my class lead me to suggest that we need to give students opportunity to express themselves to a caring and informed listener.

I wonder how many of the youth in our classrooms are influenced by substance abusers. Observing the behavioral extremes of such young people can be frightening to a teacher, especially one who cares enough to link a problem with its cause. Some victims withdraw; they don't talk, trust, or feel. Others are outspoken. They misbehave until teachers find themselves drawing away from them—when what the students actually need is our willingness to understand and reach them. Yet, the ill effects may be more subtle. They may show up in the areas of academic achievement, social skills, emotional maturity, or spiritual growth.

If substance abuse is a problem within the family of one of our students, we need to be willing to help. We can start by becoming educated ourselves. This will aid us in discerning when substance abuse within the family is the cause of a student's problems.

The sources available are numerous. Channing L. Bete Company, Inc. (South Deerfield, MA 01373) publishes scriptographic booklets that deal with subjects such as drug abuse, alcoholism, and sexual abuse, to name a few. The booklets are brief, yet informative. Two definitive books written by Claudia Black on the subject of children of alcoholics are *It Will Never Happen to Me* and *My Dad Loves Me, My Dad Has a Disease*. They are available through a local bookstore or from MAC Publishing, 5005 E. 39th Avenue, Denver, CO 80207; Ph. (303) 331-0148.

Another helpful resource is *Help & Hope for the Alcoholic* (Tyndale House Publishing, Inc. 1982). The author, Alexander

DeJong, provides information concerning his own problem with alcoholism and states: "Alcoholism is a family disease. Not a single member can escape its devastating power. It stunts the growth of love, clogs the channels of communication, makes ugly what God made beautiful" (6). He further describes the importance of the love and care needed in helping those involved in substance abuse.

As educators, we are not professional counselors. However, we may begin by being aware of the nature of the problem. We will then be able to listen with greater understanding to students who approach us about this problem. We also need to be prepared to refer them to the support services available.

Support and information are available from many private and public agencies, facilities, and individuals. They offer help both to the substance abuser and to the family members. For example, drug treatment centers and clinics specialize in treating people with drug problems. Hospitals treat patients on an in- or outpatient basis. Mental health centers and counseling centers can treat people with drug problems. Public health agencies can give practical advice and make referrals. Halfway houses provide residential treatment. Detoxification centers deal specifically with alcoholism and related problems. Alcoholics Anonymous provides help and support to people who have problems with alcohol; Al-Anon and Alateen offer counseling and support to their families and friends. Other sources include the family physician, clergy, alcoholism counselors, psychiatrists and psychologists (Resources are taken from *What Everyone Should Know about Drug Abuse*.)

What difference does it make if the student is a Christian? In view of my own life experience I have discovered that God plays a large part in the healing process, along with the help and support we

may receive from these other sources. If it were not for the strength he provides, I may not have been able to endure the struggles I have faced in my encounter with the disease of alcoholism. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). If the student is a Christian, we should be careful to direct him or her to seek the Lord and the truth in his Word for daily refuge and strength.

In the past few years I have observed efforts to bring programs on alcohol and drug awareness into our schools. These programs are informative and are deserving of our consideration. A student who is suffering from the effects of living with a substance abuser may be so unaware of any other way of life that he or she cannot accurately see the source of problems in the home. The student may not know the reason for certain behavior or feelings or even how to help oneself. If these programs give such a student the information needed in order to get help, they are worthwhile resources.

The part we play as educators in reaching out to our students is an important one because the adults who should have been their best support in growing up have let them down. We must help them see that it's okay to talk, trust, and feel.

In his letter to the Philippians Paul sets for us a challenging mandate: "Each one of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:4-5). The sooner we reach out to our students who may be silently suffering, the sooner the healing can begin. CEJ

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Television and Schooling

A Review of Neil Postman's Views

BY ROBERT W. BRUINSMA

Based on three books by Neil Postman: *AMUSING OURSELVES TO DEATH*, New York: Viking Penguin, 1985, 184 pp. *THE DISAPPEARANCE OF CHILDHOOD*, New York: Delacorte Press, 1982, 177 pp. *TEACHING AS A CONSERVING ACTIVITY*, New York: Delacorte Press, 1979, 244 pp.

For over two decades Neil Postman, professor of communication arts and sciences at New York University, has been writing provocative books about the impact of modern communications media on American culture. He has a particular interest in the role that mass schooling plays in both subverting and conserving traditional Western cultural values. With the publication in 1979 of *Teaching As a Conserving Activity*, Postman argued that television has become the first curriculum in the lives of North America's youth and is a serious threat to the curricula of formal schooling. He reiterated this theme in *The Disappearance of Childhood*, and extended it to include the whole of American cultural life in *Amusing Ourselves to Death*.

Neil Postman recounts how in 1969 the new children's program "Sesame Street" was hailed as an educational innovation because it was designed to use the most sophisticated media techniques to instruct pre-schoolers in those skills that would make them ready to benefit from formal schooling. It was especially felt that such TV-centered programming would be a boon to the socioeconomically disadvantaged child who was known to be a heavy television user and who was also at most risk academically upon school entry. Postman recounts how the format for "Sesame Street" was taken from successful commercials and how parents loved the program because it removed from them the guilt of having their children spend time

watching TV because now it was educational and, even better, it was fun. But, says Postman, "We know now that 'Sesame Street' encourages children to love school only if school is like 'Sesame Street.' Which is to say, we now know that 'Sesame Street' *undermines* what the traditional idea of schooling represents" (*Amusing* 143).

What Postman holds these traditional values to be and how he sees television as undermining them we will come to presently, but he does *not* want to imply that programs such as "Sesame Street" are not educational—to the contrary, they are educational in that they promote a very particular orientation towards learning. Yet, the television style of learning is, by its very nature, hostile to book-learning and its handmaiden, school-learning. Thus Postman argues that "Sesame Street" and programs like it do not encourage children to love school or anything about school; they encourage them to love television. Again, Postman is not saying that TV programs can't teach children any content, including the content of the alphabet and numbers. He is, however, less concerned about *what* TV teaches than *how* TV teaches what one learns. As he says, "The content of a lesson is the least important thing about learning The most important thing one learns is always something about *how* one learns" (*Amusing* 144). How one learns from television is just the opposite of how one learns from print, which is the chief technology of school-learning. In fact, says Postman, "This point—that reading books and watching television differ entirely in what they imply about learning—is the primary educational issue in America today" (*Amusing* 144-145).

Postman asserts that it is important to realize that television is a curriculum: "a specially con-

structed information system whose purpose is to influence, teach, train, or cultivate the mind and character of youth" (*Amusing* 145-146). By its power to control the time, attention, and cognitive habits of youth, television has gained the power to control their education.

TV has convinced us that teaching and entertaining are inseparable. It is true that educators in the Western intellectual tradition have at various times argued for the need for education to be of interest to the young, to be rooted in robust emotional ground, and to be best facilitated by a loving and benign teacher.

But no one has ever said or implied that significant learning is effectively, durably, and truthfully achieved when education is entertainment. Educational philosophers have assumed that becoming acculturated is *difficult* because it necessarily involves the imposition of restraints. They have argued that there must be a sequence to learning, that perseverance and a certain measure of perspiration are indispensable, that individual pleasures must frequently be submerged in the interests of group cohesion, and that learning to be critical and to think conceptually and rigorously do not come easily to the young but are hard-fought victories. (*Amusing* 146)

Television offers a delicious and original alternative to all of this. In the three books under consideration, Postman has described a baker's dozen of ways in which TV is explicitly hostile to these values as they come to expression in schooling.

The Curriculum of TV vs. the Curriculum of Schooling

1 TIME. In North America a child/adolescent spends approximately 12,000 hours in school from kindergarten through grade twelve. Recent studies show that, by present viewing habits, these same children/adolescents will have watched approximately 15,000 hours of television in the same

period of time.

2 NO PREREQUISITES. Every television program must be a complete package in itself. No previous knowledge is required. There must not be even a hint that learning is hierarchical, that learning is sequential and cumulative. This is why you will never hear or see a TV program that will begin with a caution to its viewers that if the previous programs have not been seen, this one will be meaningless. Television is a non-graded curriculum, and, in doing away with the idea of sequence and continuity in education, television undermines the idea that sequence and continuity have anything to do with thought itself.

3 NO PERPLEXITY. "In television, perplexity is the superhighway to low ratings. A perplexed learner is a learner who will turn to another channel" (*Amusing* 147). This means there may be nothing that must be remembered, studied, applied, or, worst of all, endured. It is assumed that any information, story, or idea can be made immediately accessible since the pleasure and contentment, rather than the growth, of the learner is paramount. *TV is inherently attention-centered while school is inherently content-centered.* Unlike school, which selects its subject matter first and then tries to devise methods to attract interest in it, television first selects ways to attract interest, allowing content to be shaped accordingly.

4 NON-PUNITIVE. School is, to a considerable extent, a penalty-laden curriculum (as is life itself). Not television. There is no penalty for not attending to one's TV lessons, and none is needed.

5 ANALOGICAL VS. DIGITAL. TV is an analogically-based information system: pictures have a real and intrinsic relationship to what they signify; they are concrete, unique, and nonparaphrasable. On the other hand, school prizes the word. Words are digital forms of information: they are entirely abstract and arbitrary, having no natural correspondence to nature. For example, the word *dog* has no

intrinsic relationship to the real animal. Words are representations of *ideas* about reality. Thus, words are fundamentally abstract, conceptual, and paraphrasable—the same idea can be expressed in many different ways. Words require an entirely different mode of intellectual activity for their mastery and use than does the experiencing of pictures. To the extent that TV supplants the book, civilization will begin to lose the ability to conceptualize in language.

6 EFFECT- VS. COGNITION-CENTERED. Related to the distinction between analogical and digital presentation form is the fact that the TV curriculum appeals directly to the emotions and largely unreflective response (response to pictures), while the school curriculum, relying as it does on digital symbolism (words), requires sophisticated cognitive processing. Pictures on TV make statements in the sense that they evoke feelings about what is seen. There is no way, for example, to show that the feelings evoked by the imagery of a McDonald's commercial are false, or indeed true. Such words as *true* and *false* come out of a different universe of symbolism altogether. Propositions are true or false. Pictures are not.

7 NARRATION- VS. EXPOSITION-CENTERED. Of all the enemies of TV-teaching, none is more formidable than exposition. Arguments, hypotheses, discussions, reasons, refutations, or any of the components of reasoned discourse turn television into radio or, worse, third-rate printed matter. Thus television always takes the form of story-telling, conducted by dynamic images and supported by music. Thus television is inherently moralistic and value-laden because narratives of any kind—in this case picture stories—are inevitably aphoristic and metaphorical. Exposition, on the other hand, works through definition, assertion, explication, and analysis—an ensemble that in contrast with the TV form of narration is relatively value-neutral.

8 PRESENT- VS. FUTURE-ORIENTED. Perhaps the most powerful bias of TV is its stress on immediate gratification. Attending to TV is its own reward. The pleasure of total comprehension and involvement is immediately accessible. "The Kingdom of God is of this world, now, and not of any other, later" (*Conserving* 60). Schooling has, on the other hand, always been based on the need for delayed gratification, on the sense that some things are, in fact, worth waiting for.

9 RANDOM, INCOHERENT. The TV curriculum is a random and incoherent one, as any examination of the daily TV schedule will soon demonstrate. There is little connection between one show and the next (or, for that matter, between the show and its commercials). There is an almost overwhelming sense of incoherence in the TV curriculum. A school curriculum, even one that has not been very well thought out, always tries to proceed from some organizing principle. It may be based on a hierarchy of concepts, as in math; or it may move chronologically from one point to another, as in history; or it may be held together by a theme, as in literature. In television there is no chronology, theme, or logical sequence. The world to which TV is the window is presented as fragmented, unorganizable, without structure of any kind.

10 INDIVIDUAL- VS. COMMUNITY-CENTERED. Whereas the school curriculum is community-centered—that is, learning takes place in the presence of others in something approximating a ritualized context—the TV curriculum is individual-centered.

11 PERSONALITY- VS. IDEA-CENTERED. In a medium in which the image captures most attention, personality supercedes—in fact all but obliterates—ideas and issues. Thus, for example, newscast ratings are largely determined by the viewers' perceptions of the personalities of the news readers and *not* by the accuracy or insightfulness of the reportage. Thus, while the individualism of the book leads to

the dominance of the mind, the individualism of TV leads to the dominance of the personality.

12 AUTHORITARIAN VS.

INTERACTIVE. In the TV curriculum information can move in one direction only. Output is not possible in the TV curriculum. The school curriculum, for all of its legendary demands for obedience and passivity, is far less authoritarian than the TV curriculum. School has, at least, the potential for interaction; TV does not.

13 CHILDHOOD-DESTROYING VS.

CHILDHOOD-AFFIRMING. In *The Disappearance of Childhood* Neil Postman argues that childhood as a stage distinct from infancy and adulthood is a post-Renaissance "invention" that required considering children as existing in a transitional stage between infancy and adulthood. Partly, this meant conceptualizing childhood as a period of time in which children were protected from the full responsibility as well as the full knowledge of adulthood. The advent of universal schooling, with the delayed gratification and delayed induction into the adult world that it implied, greatly aided the development of childhood. School helps to "guard" the secrets of adulthood, becomes a central agent in formulating the "rites of passage," and creates the dependence of children on adults that is necessary for the maintenance of a distinct stage of childhood.

Television, on the other hand, obliterates the distinctions between the world of the child and the world of the adult. It eliminates all the "secrets" and encourages individualistic independence in children. Thus, whereas school tends to be childhood affirming, TV tends to be childhood destroying. TV, in child developmentalist David Elkind's words, "hurries children into adulthood." Adult life is where the action is, and since TV knows nothing of delayed gratification (see # 8 above), the child is socialized to become an adult quickly in the image of TV's conception of the adult: a hedonistic, self-centered consumer who is "worth it," where "it" means anything one can obtain to provide

pleasure, that is, entertainment and amusement. And so, in the end, TV reduces everything to amusement and thus reduces everything to the trivial—politics, religion, education, and even childhood itself.

What Can Be Done?

Television is not going to go away. Postman views pleas for the abolition of television as a luddite response to history. Reducing the amount of viewing that children and adults do is certainly part of the solution, particularly for Christians who are encouraged to think about "whatsoever things are true, lovely, beautiful, gracious, and peaceable" (Phil. 4:8). But, of course, the problem is not so much *what* we watch on TV as *that* we watch it. The solution, according to Postman, must be *how* we watch.

The desperate answer is to rely on the only mass medium of communication that, in theory, is capable of addressing the problem: the school. This is the conventional (North) American solution to all dangerous social problems and is, of course, based on a naive and mystical faith in the efficacy of education . . . And yet there is reason to suppose that the situation is not hopeless. Educators are not unaware of the effects of television on their students. Stimulated by the arrival of the computer, they discuss it a great deal—which is to say, they have become somewhat "media conscious." . . . [I]t is an acknowledged task of the schools to assist the young in learning how to interpret the symbols of their culture. That this task should now require that they learn how to distance themselves from their forms of information is not so bizarre an enterprise that we cannot hope for its inclusion in the curriculum; even hope that it will be placed at the center of education. (*Amusing* 162)

In the end, suggests Postman, we ought to be far more worried

about the spectre presented to us in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* than in Orwell's *1984*. Orwell warned that we will be overcome by externally imposed oppression. But in Huxley's vision, no Big Brother is required to deprive people of their autonomy, maturity, and history. As he saw it, people will come to love their oppression, to adore the technologies that undo their capacities to think. In the end, we will simply amuse ourselves to death.

Postman admits that his views have been shaped by Marshall McLuhan, whom he met as a graduate student thirty years ago. In a sense Postman's writings have been a constant reiteration of McLuhan's aphorism, "the medium is the message," which is to say that "the clearest way to see through a culture is to attend to its tools for conversation" (*Amusing* 8). Postman then confesses that his interest in this point of view was, in fact, stirred by studying the Old Testament. He was especially struck by God's insistence in the second commandment and elsewhere that he was not to be depicted iconographically.

The God of the Jews was to exist in the Word and through the Word, an unprecedented conception requiring the highest order of abstract thinking. Iconography thus became blasphemy so that a new kind of God could enter a culture (*Amusing* 9).

Those of us who have a conception of the Word made flesh ought no less to realize that forms of media favor particular kinds of content and therefore are capable of taking command of a culture. When that command seems so much at variance with what that Word commands, we do well to heed the words of latter day commentators such as Neil Postman.

CEJ

Robert Bruinsma is associate professor of education at The King's College in Edmonton, Alberta.

Is It Necessary to See All Parents at Conferences?

With all of the work involved in getting ready for parent-teacher conferences, is it really necessary to see all of the parents? Some conferences can be done in five minutes while others really need a half-hour. Especially in the spring, wouldn't it be a better use of time just to omit conferences with parents of students who are above average and use the extra time instead for the parents of those students who really need it?

I can understand some of the feelings you are expressing. To properly prepare for parent-teacher conferences does take a lot of time and energy. Yet, I believe that they are one of the most important pieces of the educational puzzle. Particularly in the fall, but also in the spring, conferences are an integral part of the on-going process of communication that is so necessary to effective education. Certainly, conferences should not be the only form of communication between the home and school during the year. But they do represent a significant part of that effort, especially if the conference is truly a dialogue.

Even when there are no major problems to discuss, conferences still give parents and teacher an opportunity to touch base, to have personal contact, to feel comfortable with each other, and to open up the lines for any future communication. It is important for parents and teachers to ensure that the child is not just doing "okay" but is reaching his or her maximum potential. It is also important for the parent and student to know that this is a cooperative effort and that every player is important. Time spent communicating is never wasted. And while this may result in the necessity of setting up an additional conference or of scheduling a double time slot for the parent of the child who is having more difficulty, the time with the parent of the more able student will certainly have been well spent.

Who Is Responsible for Failure?

I teach high school English and am having trouble with one particular student. He is bright and when so moved will add positively to class discussions. He will not, however, do any of the homework or take materials to class, and he consistently fails quizzes and tests. I enjoy him as a person but am at a loss as to how to handle the situation. I want to help him, but he seems determined to fail. What should I do?

I have had a similar situation in my own teaching career. Near the middle of the term the failure pattern was obvious in Danny (not his real name), so I pulled him aside. He was pleasant enough in our conversation, yet nothing changed. These talks occurred several times throughout the semester, and I found myself becoming increasingly frustrated. During our last conversation I became the most upset I have ever been with a student. I so wanted him to pass, and it was obvious that he just was not going to succeed.

At that point Danny spoke wisdom to me. He said, "You know, Ms. —, this is my choice. You can't take responsibility for my decisions. I appreciate the fact that you care about me so much, but you must realize that if I really wanted to pass I would. I realize you can't understand, but I'm not sure you have to. You know, that's the problem with some of you teachers. You say you're preparing us for the outside world, and yet you coddle us and protect us. Please let me make my own decisions."

His words shook me. I backed off, and I have found this approach allows me to respect my students more as individuals and adults. I do make clear the options and the consequences, but beyond that I allow them to make their own choices and then live with them.

We introduce a new question-answer column designed to help educators who wish to grow from the experience and perspective of others. *Query* will be edited by Marlene Dorhout, who has more than twenty years of experience teaching at the middle school level on both coasts and now at Denver Christian Middle School in Colorado. Herself a mother, Dorhout has received excellent response to a number of seminars she has offered for parents of her students as she deals with skills, self-image, sexuality, and service projects for adolescents.

You are encouraged to send questions on any topic related to the Christian teacher's role and response, regardless of grade level. The editor will solicit responses from additional sources when appropriate. Address your questions to:

Marlene Dorhout
CEJ Query Editor
2135 S. Pearl
Denver, CO 80210

Confidentiality is assured.

Query.

KATIE HAAN

"My role is to help children equip themselves to live in a world of opposing forces," says fifth grade teacher Katie Haan, who began her teaching career in Edgerton, Minnesota.

Now starting her twenty-fifth year in education, Katie has taught every grade, kindergarten through sixth, except first and second. And whether in Edgerton, Edmonton, Pittsburgh, Liberia, or now in Sioux Center, Iowa, she touches the hearts and lives of her students.

This energetic teacher is also involved in the community. She coordinates Friendship Classes, which are Bible study classes for the mentally impaired, and she serves as teacher trainer for the education department of the Christian Reformed Church, a role Haan has held for twelve years. As a teacher trainer she holds workshops for church school teachers in Northwest Iowa, Southern Minnesota, and South Dakota.

Several years ago Katie was awarded membership in Delta Kappa Gamma, an international society of women educators, whose area chapter selected her on the basis of her active involvement in her profession and the community. In addition, she is past president of the area Alumni Association of Dordt College.

Being single allows this versatile teacher the flexibility to travel and teach in various parts of the world. She has spent several weeks touring in Europe and in Mexico, learning about local culture and customs of each place. On a Fulbright-Hayes Group Scholarship, Katie spent three

weeks in India at the University of Poona, learning from lecturing professionals, and three more weeks touring factories, farms, and various culturally-rich areas, including places influenced by the work of Mother Teresa. For ten months Katie taught in Liberia, where she was responsible for the education of ten missionary children. Working in this West African country gave Katie a hands-on experience of functioning in the Liberian culture. "Traveling helps me accept my own situation better," she says, "but I also grow to appreciate other cultures. My travels help me to be a better teacher because I can make my lessons about other parts of the world more realistic for my students at home."

How does Katie Haan make education real for her fifth grade students? By dressing as a native Liberian and letting her students discover the differences and similarities with their own attire. By giving vivid descriptions of the sounds and smells typical of an Indian marketplace. By leading her students to the nearby park to identify leaves and tree bark and tree shapes. Then when test time comes, the students go onto the schoolyard and run from marked tree to marked tree, looking for identification clues. Following a study of the United States, Katie has each member of the fifth grade dress as a representative of one state.

Perhaps the students would not rate every lesson fun and exciting, but their teacher believes they must be able to learn in a way that will enable them to remember and take





"Those children have been placed in my care by God to be trained for discipleship"

those lessons with them as they go into the world to serve. That is why Katie's students go out to the field in the fall to glean corn, that is why they rake leaves for elderly people in the community, that is why they make hospital visits—to live the lessons they learn.

For Katie Haan teaching Christianly is the only way to educate. She strongly believes that children who come to school belong to the whole community of believers. "Those children have been placed in my care by God to be trained for discipleship—that's their calling," she says. Teaching Christianly, as Katie Haan attempts to do, blesses the community of believers. CEJ

Evie Kooistra teaches junior high language arts at Sioux Center Christian School in Sioux Center, Iowa.



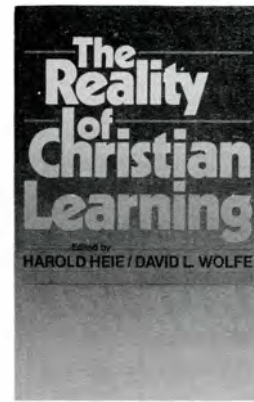
Observes Her Silver Anniversary as a Teacher

BY EVIE KOOISTRA

A Time For Celebration

LUCILLE GRIPP MAHARRY

Help me,
O Lord, to appreciate
gray haze on the horizon,
flaming boughs of sumac,
and milkweed pods
whose silky down
drifts
in the sun;
help me to welcome
stirring leaves and late flowers
and rain showers which follow;
help me to celebrate
unexpected winds.



THE REALITY OF CHRISTIAN LEARNING

Edited by Harold Heie, Professor of Mathematics, Northwestern College, and David L. Wolfe, Professor of Philosophy, Gordon College, Christian University Press, St. Paul, MN
Subsidiary of William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI 1987, 339 pp, \$19.95, pb.

Reviewed by Peter Van Tuinen, S.T.M., Minister emeritus, Christian Reformed Church

Many of us were taught early in life that Christ is Lord in every sphere of life and, therefore, every academic discipline should be pursued from a Christian perspective.

Attempts to reach this ideal, however, often resulted in artificial and superficial ways of introducing Christian faith into the discussion of scientific endeavor.

We have profited in recent years from a variety of new efforts to deal with the problem, such as Nicholas Wolterstorff's *Reason Within the Bounds of Religion* and other general studies related to Christian learning. But it is sometimes easier to enunciate principles than to implement them, and much remains to be done.

This book is unique in this field; it offers models of implementation. The editors have enlisted fourteen scholars to write essays—two for each of seven disciplines—developing strategies for integrating their respective disciplines with the Christian faith in the areas of political science, sociology, psychology, biology, mathematics, the arts, and philosophy. "The purpose of each principal essay," the contributors were instructed, "is to treat a concrete issue which exemplifies the way(s) in which basic Christian concerns and your academic discipline interrelate. The purpose of each respondent essay is two-fold: first,

to identify the integrative strategy that the principal author has pursued. . . and to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of this strategy, second, the respondent should suggest at least one alternative strategy in the context of the given concrete issue"

Basically most of the essays are concerned with epistemology: how do we know, and how is our knowledge affected by our creatureliness and our sinfulness? Factors complicating these pursuits involve questions as to how much general revelation has been impaired by the fall, and what has been the effect of sin on human reason. Shall we begin with the "Creation Mandate," as James Skillen does in his essay on political science, or with the gospel proclamation of Christ, as John Yoder does in his *Politics of Jesus*? Each writer deals with these issues in his own way. In some disciplines the practitioners' training and other background variables are significant considerations. Such variety is usually fruitful. Sometimes the Christian scholar finds it necessary to re-examine the structure and contents of his or her Christian perspective and to modify it in terms of new insights.

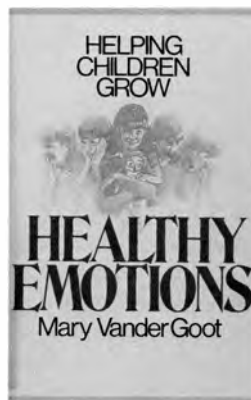
The essays do, in a briefer form, what Howard Van Till has done for us in the field of astronomy in his recent book *The Fourth Day*, and what Mary Vander Goot has done for the field of psychology in *Healthy Emotions* (reviewed in this column). But the essays are generally harder to read, especially for the uninitiate in each case. The contributors to the book write mainly for their peers.

David Wolfe's introduction to the volume, however, and the late Ronald R. Nelson's conclusions, as well as the editors' commentaries preceding each pair of essays, are very helpful. Wolfe offers definitions and explanations of relevant concepts. Nelson is especially helpful in analyzing the various approaches to integration of Christian concerns with scientific motives and techniques. He uses three procedures, two of which are explored in the book. One is the Compatibilist approach; the second is the Transformationalist strategy. The first finds elements in the dis-

cipline that are compatible with the Christian perspective, readily susceptible to integration. The second finds some common ground but recognizes the need for transforming some of the factors that he encounters in the discipline. The third strategy does not really involve integration. It is a Reconstructionist strategy, because it recognizes no common ground between the Christian faith and the discipline, and thus requires complete reconstruction from a Christian perspective, which is the strategy of the Creation Science people and is not represented in this volume.

To explain the presence of the compatible elements, Nelson chooses the theological concept of common grace, but he also suggests the factors of general revelation and the presence of the Judaeo-Christian in our culture as possible explanations.

The book is stimulating and useful. It embodies a good deal of competent scholarship. But, like the wealth and prosperity produced by way of some economic systems, whether and when its benefits will filter down to the common level is problematic. The jargon of the respective disciplines is sometimes a formidable hurdle, and some philosophical background is a prerequisite in coping with some of the material. But it is rewarding to plow through it all.



HEALTHY EMOTIONS
by Mary Vander Goot
Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI
1987, 148 pp., \$8.95, pb.
Reviewed by Ruth Van Tuinen
Modesto, California

With so much of Dobson, Swindoll, Landorf, Zigler, and others available in books, on tapes,

and on film, reading *Healthy Emotions* is like a breath of fresh air on a smoggy day in Los Angeles. Mary Vander Goot, a licensed psychologist and mother of two children, has given us a well-written, intelligible book from a Christian perspective.

Part I, "Living with Feelings" (chapters 1-7), gives us the substance of the author's concerns. For those interested in the academic underpinnings of her work, she has added Part II (chapters 8-10), "What Are the Background Theories?"

Scientists have found emotions an elusive quarry. They are strong, complex responses to events or situations. Lie detector tests, for example, are based on bodily changes a person experiences when under stress. In earlier days, suspects in Britain were made to eat a "truth sandwich" consisting of bread and cheese. If they were guilty, it was thought, the mouth would be too dry to swallow the sandwich.

Chapter 1 provides familiar examples of emotions. A man is riding downhill in his automobile when he suddenly senses that his brakes are not working. The emotion of fear that he experiences is based on a situation or event. Other emotional qualities are more dependent on personality, as is apparent, for example, when we speak of a jolly or a bad-tempered person.

The emotional maturity to which we must aspire avoids both careless, undisciplined emotional responses and the notion of artificial goodness—the claim by some, based on a misreading of such passages as Gal. 5:22-23, where Paul lists the fruits of the spirit, that we must always be "nice." Sometimes anger and even outrage are justified.

The goals we seek are especially these three: *Richness*, or a variety and range of emotional feeling; drawing from this diversity, *Appropriateness* of response to events; *Control*, the necessity for purpose and direction in life.

Chapters 3 through 7 focus on adult-child relationships. With great insight Vander Goot discusses emotions based not only on extraordinary events but also on

ordinary ones, which we communicate through facial expression, gestures, and tone of voice. She speaks wisely of the powerful role of adults whom children emulate as they confront the often bewildering array of events and relationships that life generates. Adults—and they include auxiliary adults, especially teachers—and children enter into an emotional partnership that can provide effective ethical guidance. And the author writes effectively on the subject of sexual development. She contends that a child's curiosity about how bodies function and about how to achieve proper intimacy can best be satisfied in the context of family relationships.

Part II begins with chapter 8, "An Introduction to the Academic Study of Emotions." After pointing out how much academic theory is popularized through mass media, with both desirable and undesirable consequences, she provides, in chapter 9, a discussion and summary of four scientific psychological theories. They are (1) the ethological view, which is based on Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest; (2) Freud's psychoanalytic view, based on the pleasure principle and its conflicts with mores of family and society; (3) the humanistic view, which is based on the view of the goodness of man and the importance of self-expression; and (4) the cognitive view, our understanding of people based on the way they think and act, and the assumption that reason controls emotion. Each of these theories, despite their limitations, are useful, but only when we interpret them by our identity as Christians.

Child-rearing and education must transpire in the rich context of the full range of biblical truth and wisdom. Redemption history, entailing our obligation to love God and neighbor, together with our faith—sometimes weak and sometimes strong—and the reality of God's love and forgiveness all provide the matrix for nurturing our children. The book concludes with an appropriate chapter, "A Sacred View of Persons."

Vander Goot's book fuses idealism with practical information and guidance. Read it, recommend

it to your friends and colleagues, and keep a copy available for reference and reflection.



FREE TO KNOW, FREE TO CHOOSE: AN ALCOHOL AND DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

Published by Harper & Row by arrangement with the Hazelden Foundation, 1988.

Reviewed by Ken Bussema, Professor of Psychology, Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa

Free to Know, Free to Choose is a structured educational program designed to engage 12- to 15-year-olds in Bible study and discussion around the complex issues of alcohol and drug use. The program attempts to meet three basic objectives: to provide "honest, accurate information"; to learn how to say "NO"; and to help the early adolescent recognize and utilize the support of peers, parents, and community in making responsible decisions about drugs. To accomplish these objectives the curriculum is divided into four one-hour segments covering knowing, choosing, caring for self, and caring for others. Each component employs a brief written exercise, a guided Bible study of pertinent passages, and discussion questions based on a short film or situation. These discussions are the heart of the program with a twofold emphasis on the recognition of feelings and consequences and on responsible decision-making.

Overall, these materials seem appropriate for the junior high level and are flexible enough to allow for variation in content and time frame for discussion. The program is most successful in meeting the first and third objectives; however, the goal of helping the students

learn to say "NO" is not adequately addressed.

One other weakness is the lack of suggested reference and background reading materials for the leader. A teacher or counselor should not attempt to use this program based on the provided information alone. The leader should be familiar with the dynamics of co-dependency and dysfunctional families as well as the indicators of drug abuse in order to deal responsibly with the questions and disclosures that may arise in the course of discussion.

Video for Teens Examines Dating Violence

"The Power to Choose" can be purchased for audio-visual use in any videocassette format for \$150. Previews will be provided to prospective purchasers in the United States at no charge except for return postage.

Video Program Identifies Eating Disordered Young People

"Wasting Away" can be purchased for audio-visual use in any videocassette format for \$180. Previews will be provided to prospective purchasers in the United States at no charge except for return postage.

The program can be leased for broadcast, cable, and video duplication by schools, public television stations, and other educational agencies.

Further description plus details about preview, purchase and leasing arrangements for both of these videos can be obtained from the Agency for Instructional Technology, Box A, Bloomington, Indiana 47402-0120, or by calling 800/457-4509 or 812/339-2203. In Canada contact Kinetic Film Enterprises, Ltd., 408 Dundas Street East, Toronto, Ontario M5A 2A5, or call 416/963-5979.