

June 2001

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## Impoverished Home Schoolers

*I am much afraid that schools will prove to be the great gates of hell unless they diligently labor in explaining the Holy Scriptures, engraving them in the hearts of youth. --Martin Luther*

The home school movement flexed its growing muscle again this year, touting a first place win in the venerable Scripps-Howard National Spelling Bee, a third place finish in the National Geography Bee, and a first-ever win for a home schooler in the coveted Boston Globe Essay Contest. But not everyone is singing its praises.

Several “academics” dismissed the contests as exercises in memorization that contribute little to a quality education. And, the usual nay sayers who oppose alternative education, continue to question the wisdom in shielding children from the “real world” experiences of the classroom, arguing that doing so could lead to their “social impoverishment.”

I recently met an impressive young woman name Michelle at a Whatcom County Christian Coalition meeting in Bellingham. Although Michelle, age 20, received her education at home, she certainly didn’t strike me as “socially impoverished.” As she shared her testimony and details of the wonderful door of opportunity that has opened to her, I tried to imagine how she could appear to be needy in the eyes of the world.

True, if Michelle’s parents had enrolled her in public schools, she would have had some exposure to curricula guidelines developed by the Sex Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS). In 1994, the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) entered into a five-year agreement with SIECUS to promote comprehensive sexuality and HIV/AIDS education for schools in all 50 states. Following are excerpts from SIECUS guidelines:<sup>1</sup>

AGES 5-8: Both girls and boys have body parts that feel good when touched (p.11); Sexual intercourse occurs when a man and a woman place the penis inside the vagina (p.12); Some men and women are homosexual, which means they will be attracted to and fall in love with someone of the same gender (p.15); Touching and rubbing one’s own genitals is call masturbation (p.32).

AGES 9-12: Sexual intercourse provides pleasure (p. 12); There are ways to have genital intercourse without causing pregnancy (p. 12); Homosexual love relationships can be as fulfilling as heterosexual relationships (p. 15); Members of the same family may have different values (p. 25); Masturbation is often the first way a person experiences sexual pleasure (p.32); Many boys and girls begin to masturbate for sexual pleasure during puberty (p.32); Masturbation does not cause physical or mental harm (p.32).<sup>2</sup>

Trust me, you don’t want to read the guidelines for children ages 12-15 and 15-18.

Home school children like Michelle, could also be viewed by some as impoverished for not participating in the International Baccalaureate (IB) English program.

Students enrolled at Capital High School in the Olympia School District for instance, are expected to read *The Death of Artemio Cruz*, which can best be described as foul, pornographic, and particularly degrading towards women and Catholics. The sexually erotic book is literally awash in foul language. Variations of the “f” word are used 73 times—just between pages 136 and 140!

When a Christian student named Ben Block recently objected to the book as pornographic, school officials vigorously defended its continued use. In a letter to Ben, dated May 8, 2001, Pamela L. Farr, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services for Olympia Schools wrote: “...*The Death of Artemio Cruz* meets the district criteria for selection of instructional materials and represents material with significant literary value.” Ms. Farr acknowledged that the book contains “mature language and themes,” but pointed out that it is intended for (IB) or Advance Placement courses only.

Evidently, the “f” word is “mature language,” and eroticism and fornication are “mature themes” which are not suited for less gifted children with lower GPA’s.

And, home school students in Santa Rosa, California and elsewhere, missed another “real world” experience a few weeks ago called “Days of Diversity.” The week-long “left-fest” (my term) at Santa Rosa High School, featured classroom and school assembly presentations from organizations ranging from socialist to anarchists. Quoting from the May 26, 2001 issue of *WORLD* magazine:

“...students had learned in 17 different workshops that socialism trumps capitalism, animal rights trump human rights, and American free enterprise is rooted in greed. In five classes, facilitators ... coached schoolchildren to recognize ‘oppressive,’ authoritarian tactics of local cops, and encouraged them to support the police-monitoring efforts of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) ... And in 14 sessions, instructors urged students to embrace homosexual ‘civil rights,’ and the notion that homosexual sex is a natural form of sexual expression.”

Capping a week that *WORLD* dubbed “Daze of Diversity,” was a performance of *Sex and Stuff*, featuring sexual skits like “Condom Man” and the “abstinence” rap, “Sex can wait! Masturbate!”

Not surprisingly, home schoolers seem unconcerned with the risks of “social impoverishment.” They are busy in their work—out performing their public school peers by a full grade level during the first to fourth grades, and by 4 grade levels from the eighth grade on.<sup>3</sup> (*He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed* - Pr. 13:30).

Oh, did we mention our home schooler Michelle just landed her very first job? No, not at Burger King. First Lady Laura Bush has hired Michelle to be her personal speech writer. She will be leaving Bellingham in a few weeks to move into her new digs—at the White House!

Hmm...do you suppose the First Lady has ever read *The Death of Artemio Cruz*?

*Rick Forcier*

Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> Stormer, John A., *None Dare Call It Education*, 1999, Liberty Bell Press, Florissant, MO., p.62

<sup>2</sup> Schools often deny using SIECUS, saying materials are developed locally using “community-based standards.”

<sup>3</sup> *Alternative Parenting*, 1999.