

MORALITY FORUM UPDATE

October 2003

Morality Forum Action

A bit of effort can bring big results

By John O'Neill

In fact, my first example shows that a big effort can bring huge results. Well done the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children.

The Family Planning Association, which receives substantial funding from the taxpayer, brought an action in the Northern Ireland High Court claiming that the Law on abortion is unclear and trying to overturn it. SPUC lead the opposition to any such claim.

Few things have infuriated the international pro-abortion movement more than the Northern Ireland law. Northern Ireland has strong Christian communities, both Protestant and Catholic, who take their faith very seriously and this is reflected in the strong anti-abortion public opinion. The pro-abortion lobby all over the world appear to oppose anyone whose faith and family orientation rejects their own views. For this reason there was worldwide interest in the case.

In the High Court in Belfast, Mr. Justice Kerr upheld the clarity of the anti-abortion legislation and, thereby, the importance of public opinion. This conflict was a little bit like the shark versus the minnow financially. But the minnow turned out to be more of a piranha thanks to the support of ordinary SPUC members.

I have suggested several times that taking part in 'phone-in' radio programmes can be a very wonderful way of reaching a lot of people with our point of view.

On Sunday night there is a programme on national radio called "Talk Sport". Recently the topic discussed was, "Should there be a place for God in politics?" and this was triggered by the fact that, when Tony Blair was asked about his religion, Alistair Campbell had commented, "We don't do God!"

I telephoned and was able to express my personal views on the subject. When I was a boy it was the

usual thing for children to go to Sunday school, even into their teens, and the country was guided by the Christian ethic.

Since the nineteen fifties, there have been huge increases in crime and depraved social behaviour, which have gone hand in hand with the decline of moral and spiritual values.

I was given time to explain and clarify several points. Steve Norris, who was presenting the programme, said that he would have liked to speak to me for a longer time.

A Morality Forum friend has found another way of reaching many people at once. He has been placing information on a B.B.C. website — BBCnews.com — regarding moral issues. Several of these pieces have been picked up and published in newspapers.

We should never be shy about speaking out. We can not count on someone else doing it for us! I might also mention that, if you are holding a public meeting and would like me to do so, I could make a presentation on moral issues. I

News Snippet

In dire need of Hope

Roy Hattersley had a very telling and true full-page article in the Daily Mail of July 30th. He was writing after the death of Bob Hope, whom he admired, and comparing the quality of Hope's humour with that of today's offerings. The following snippet shows the message Hattersley was conveying.

"In an age when so much of what is called humour depends on sexual innuendo — and often appears to be based on the belief that mouthing an obscenity is in itself funny — he never told a dirty story or made a smutty joke. He could make an audience laugh without descending to the depths to which some modern comics plummet. He was elegant where they are crude and smooth where they are coarse."

Articles in this update may be amalgamated from publications of various organisations, as well as original material. The views expressed are not necessarily those of any particular organisation.

Corruption of Infants

By Bryan Warner

What happened to the age of innocence? Childhood has always had a natural rhythm, which goes in three stages. Up to seven years of age is real childhood; an age of wonder when everything is new and magic, a carefree time when 'Beauty and the Beast' is real and the family is a haven of warmth, love and safety.

From seven to fourteen starts as a time of innocence, and develops into a period in which the world outside the family gradually intrudes more and more into our consciousness and challenges our values and views. We gradually acquire some serious knowledge and take on responsibilities. Fourteen to twenty-one sees the emergence of a mature adult. That is what my wonderful Grandmother told me and I am sure that it is the way that nature intended.

My own experience of growing up and of school followed that pattern. For me, school was a place where we played all kinds of sports, gained knowledge, had fun and also learned good standards of social interaction and personal relationships.

In stark contrast, we now learn that thousands of parents are worried sick about video taped sex programmes produced by Channel 4 television company to show to infants. The series of three fifteen-minute videos is targeted at five to seven year old children in primary schools and is called 'Living and Growing'.

An article in the Daily Mail of July 19th carried the headline "**Parents in tears at sex video for five-year-olds**". The article itself began, "A graphic video designed to teach five-year-olds the facts of life reduced parents to tears at a preview screening. Horrified mothers, shown just the first fifteen minutes of the series made by Channel 4, condemned it as 'virtually pornographic' and begged teachers not to use it."

Officials, who want these videos to be in schools by September, say that thousands of packs have already been sold. We wonder if the majority of Health and Education authorities even know what is really being pushed forward by the government, under the guise of 'Life Processes' in the Science curriculum.

The government sponsored Advisory Group on teenage Pregnancy is calling for five-year-olds to be given sex education, as well as advocating ever more erosion of parental influence. Why? Did parents ask for infants to be given graphic sex education? Even if parents thought that some kind of introduction would be a good idea, would they have chosen Channel 4 to provide the material?

What is going on in the minds of people who produce explicit videos for five-year-olds? Illustrations show naked men and women and ask the infants to name body parts such as the clitoris, which is described as soft and nice to touch! For slightly older children, an animation shows a couple copulating and then discusses masturbation, homosexuality and the purpose of condoms. Children should be too busy to even think about such things.

The director of Family and Youth Concern says, "We have had lots of complaints about these videos. It is totally inappropriate to be giving this sort of sex education at that age. It is a violation of childhood and people who promote these things have very weird ideas about young people."

The government's line, that sex education cuts pregnancies is totally discredited and we must ask ourselves why they stick so determinedly to it. Is 'Big Brother' alive and well? With 'grooming' of young children by pedophiles about to be banned on the Internet, how can educators justify doing the same thing in schools? Schools are rapidly becoming dangerous places for our children to be.

Jenny Bacon, founded 'Parents Against Oral Contraceptives for Children' after her daughter Caroline died from a stroke at the age of 16. The stroke was caused by taking the oral contraceptive pills, given without her mother's knowledge and consent, when she was 14. Mothers who saw these videos are convinced that, far from reducing teenage pregnancy, they will encourage earlier experimentation.

Children are precious members of families. What gives anyone the right to usurp the role of their parents and debauch them? How dare 'experts' presume to destroy their childhood?

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Teenage pregnancy

By Basil Gurney

For thirty years now, the official response to the problem of teenage pregnancies has been to offer young people secret supplies of contraceptives ("This is confidential and we will not tell your parents.") This initiative is then reinforced with sex education in schools, which is no better than lessons in how to get pregnant.

I see very young women on my television, calmly explaining that they can not manage on their social security money and that lack of childcare facilities make it impossible for them to go to work. I feel so much sorrow to see that they have no idea that this should not be regarded as a normal situation.

What happened to their carefree years between fourteen and twenty-one? Those should have been years of growing to maturity and of wonderful new experiences, years of discovery and adventure. It used to be so!

The corruption of our youth has gone on unabated now for thirty years or more and parents trusted schools and health authorities to know what they were doing. Maybe they did know, but the trust was misplaced. Even though the official policy is totally discredited, vested interests persist in forcing it on us. Matters have become so extreme now that parents have to assert their rights.

The facts speak for themselves. Moral and spiritual values have been in constant decline in Britain since the nineteen fifties and this has contributed in no small way to a tenfold increase in crime and a huge increase in social problems. We have the highest rates of divorces and teen-age pregnancies in Europe. Sexually transmitted diseases amongst young people are at epidemic levels and over one third of these are incurable! There has been a 176% increase in rapes in the last ten years. Do we want more of the same?

We often see the Netherlands quoted as the shining example of how explicit sex lessons will reduce teenage pregnancies. The fact is that sex education in Holland is very open and explicit. It is also true that, amongst women aged 15 to 19, 14 per 1000 became pregnant in Holland while 62 per 1000 did so in England and Wales and 38 gave birth in the UK compared with 5½ in Holland.

A fact sheet, produced by the Family Education Trust and based on a great deal of serious research, shows clearly that factors other than those put forward by sex education 'experts' are involved in

the Dutch situation. In the first place, not only is there a great variation in the way different schools teach about sex but also it is not so politicized, while the influence of the churches and the involvement of parents are very much stronger.

In practice, Dutch sex education is often taught within a firm moral framework and Dutch teenagers appear to be guided by moral principles to a much greater degree than their British counterparts. They abstain from sexual intercourse until a later age. In the Netherlands, teenage motherhood is stigmatized. One Dutch woman who became a mother at sixteen said, "You have humiliation and discrimination every day. The social services do everything to make your life difficult; no one listens to you or takes you seriously; people give you dirty looks on the street; you are always in debt."

In Holland very few mothers with young children work and a 'motherhood ideology' prevails with traditional family values still very strong. Single mothers are expected to live at home. They do not qualify for social security benefits until they are eighteen and even then rely to some extent on their parents until they are 21.

Blind worship of the god of free sex is obviously not the Dutch way and, in all probability, should not be our way either.

Copies of the full report or the fact sheet are available from Family Education Trust, The Mezzanine, Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London SE1 7NQ. They can also be downloaded from www.famyouth.org.uk

Write Letters

Letters to MP's, Managers and officials are effective in influencing the way that their organisation works. Public opinion still counts for a great deal. Public statements of sincerely held beliefs encourage like minded people and make others consider their position.

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There is no shortage of teams who will gladly visit schools to explain the value and importance of pure love, abstinence and self-respect. **Their message** definitely does reduce teenage pregnancy, venereal disease and teenage stress.

Please raise these matters with your council and, in particular, with your Health and Education authority. Parents, please check thoroughly. They are your children, discover what degrading material is being used on them.

News Snippets

Children's Rights!

We are just about to be treated to an expensive new bureaucracy if we don't watch out. The government is creating a children's commissioner for England because Wales and Scotland have got one. The 'children's rights' lobby says that our children might be left behind and let down!

Family and Youth Concern, who show more sense than all the 'experts' lumped together, have made a submission to the parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights in which they expressed concern about a number of possible adverse effects of such a Commission.

(a) It would undermine the position of parents, the majority of whom are well able to care for their children's interests.

(b) It would threaten the autonomy of the family unit, which is the foundation of a happy, safe and secure childhood. Children are first and foremost members of a family, which is the obvious source of their social, cultural and religious attitudes.

(c) It will threaten the unique nature of childhood and there are grounds for fear that the office would be used as a vehicle to advance a carefully defined 'children's rights' agenda. The remit and powers of a children's commissioner are likely to grow increasingly intrusive.

"It seems that there is a determined and organized lobby, which is bent on destroying the family—the very foundation of a stable, loving and harmonious society. We cannot sit idly by while our children, our families, our society and our culture are stolen from us—."

The full text of the submission can be downloaded from the FYC website: www.famyouth.org.uk.

Youth for Truth

We hear that Tracy Harkin and her husband Tom have been working to update their CD-ROM which offers abstinence education and factual information to secondary school students. This is part of a programme called *Youth for Truth*, which Tracy and Tom have presented many times in Northern Ireland. The CD-ROM includes a visual presentation and backup notes.

The revised version was presented to a group in Bristol on 8th June so that they could offer input and hear about Tracy's experience in schools. The Bristol based Abstinence Education cell, *Truth for Teens* sees this as the springboard for an abstinence education programme in local schools. Students appreciate being given the facts and are really angry when they realise that they have been deceived and that condoms give little protection from anything, including STDs.

The Parents Network is also promoting a US gold-award video called "Time to Wait for Sex" which they feel is the best on the subject. It gives hard-hitting facts and figures of STDs. Youths are spellbound by this video and it is strongly recommended. It costs £20.

Good decision

Parliament has done something right at last! In June, homosexual rights groups made a last ditch attempt to prevent churches from using Christian standards to choose whom they will employ. A proposed ban on churches refusing to employ homosexuals was voted down. Further, the government climb-down included allowing religious organisations to dismiss staff who renounce their faith. Unfortunately, it is now much easier for these same staff to claim harassment. We have the European Employment Directive to thank for this interference.

Addresses

Your MP:	House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA Tel: 020 7219 3000
Adv. Standards Authority:	2 Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HW Tel:020 7580 5555 Fax: 7323 4339
Board of Film/Video Classification:	3 Soho Square, London W1V 6HD Tel: 020 7439 7961 Fax: 7287 0141
Broadcasting Standards Commission:	7 The Sanctuary, London SW1P 3LS Tel: 01233 237 700 Fax: 01233235 870
Head of Programme Complaints Unit:	BBC, Broadcasting House, Portland Place, London W1 1AA Tel: 08700 100 222
Internet Watch Found'n:	E.View, Coles Lane, Oakington, Cambs. CB4 5BA Tel: 020 7233 0554 Fax: 7233 0397
Media March:	PO Box 53, Cheltenham GL53 7ZQ Tel: 020 8467 6452
Family and Youth Concern:	Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London SE1 7NQ Tel:020 7401 5480 Fax: 7401 5471
Media Watch:	3 Willow House, Kennington Road, Ashford, Kent TN24 0NR Tel: 101233 633 936
SPUC	5/6 Saint Matthew Street, London SW1P 2JT
The Christian Institute	26, Jesmond Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4PQ 0191 281 5664 Fax: 0191 281 4272
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