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RELEASE: AUGUST 28, 1984

CLASSROOM CURRICULA PROMOTE SUICIDE AND MURDER

Suicide is the second highest cause of death among teenagers. Whenever there is a rash of suicides, schools and psychiatrists initiate studies to search for explanations of this unprecedented phenomenon.

They ought to look directly at the classroom curricula -- textbooks, films, workbooks, and classroom games -- which encourage suicide. A shocking statement? Yes, but the corroborative proof is available in the 1,300-page transcript of the U.S. Department of Education Hearings held in seven cities, March 13-27, this year.

One Michigan mother told how, after her own son had committed suicide, she found many class papers in his room which he had written for his high school psychology course pertaining to psychic experiences, ESP, psychokinesis, astro-projection, dream analysis, and even suicide. After that, the mother inspected the school materials of her other children in the same high school and found they also had been taught about the occult world, a Ouija board, transcendental meditation, yoga, and suicide.

She concluded her testimony: "Just seven weeks ago our neighbor boy, also 22 years old like my son Joe, committed suicide. How many more families must suffer through this kind of anguish before you put a stop to this insidious cancer that is destroying our public educational system?"

A Colorado mother told about a 7th grade English class which had a segment on "death education." In the manual, 73 out of 80 stories had to do with death, dying, killing, murder, suicide, and what you want written on your tombstone. One 9th grade girl blew her brains out after writing a note that said what she wanted on her tombstone.

A Massachusetts mother put into the record the text of an exercise in an 8th grade English textbook: "Write a suicide note." An example given in the book reads: "I am finally going to do it. Unemployment drives me crazy. Inflation makes me angry. The cost of living turns my stomach. Big business raises the cost of candy and gum. Teachers expect too much. School takes away my freedom. I can't communicate with my parents. My parents don't understand me. I have said my goodbyes. I fought a good fight, but I have

met defeat."

A Florida mother told how her daughter was given a questionnaire in 7th grade Health class which listed ten ways of dying, including violent death, and was asked to list them in order of "most to least preferred." She was asked what should be done to her if she were terminally ill; two of the five choices listed were euthanasia.

Another Florida mother told how her child in a 7th grade Health class was asked, "What reasons would motivate you to commit suicide?" Another mother told how 1st graders in her area were required to make their own coffins out of shoe boxes.

A North Carolina mother told how a course billed as "drug education" actually included "death education" and required children to write their own epitaph or obituary. Another testified how upset her 4th grader was because he was forced to write an explicit report, with a picture, on the death of his pet.

The Survival Game is a widely used psychological "game" to condition children to make a judgment in the classroom, in consultation with their classmates, as to whose life is worth saving and whose isn't. As described by the witnesses at these hearings, the Survival Game appears in several formats: the lifeboat, the fallout shelter, and the fatal disease and miracle drug. The dilemma thrust on the children is that only six out of eleven people can live; the others must die (by being thrown overboard from the lifeboat, or locked out of the fallout shelter, or denied the miracle drug, etc.).

In a 9th grade Oregon Health class, the children were shown a film with actors in the lifeboat situation, sinking because too many people are in it. The decision must be made to throw half of them overboard; the children are called upon to evaluate the lives of the doctor, the handicapped person, the youth, the parents, the attorney, etc.

In the 8th grade New Hampshire and Maryland Health classes, eleven people are in a fallout shelter with provisions enough for only six persons. The children were required to decide which six should live; they must eliminate those too old, sick or unproductive.

Once a student has acted out the murders, he has rationalized the concept of murder. Such death exercises have been written into federally-funded programs for at least ten years, and show why we need immediate enforcement of regulations to protect pupil rights.