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TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND SEX EDUCATION

The prevailing liberal dogma is that "sex education" is the solution for teenage pregnancy, one of the nation's growing public health problems. On the contrary, it is more probable that sex education is a principal cause of teenage pregnancy.

That's the conclusion of research by Dr. Rhoda L. Lorand after reading a mammoth collection of sex education materials put out by Planned Parenthood, the Alan Guttmacher Institute, public health departments and drug companies. Dr. Lorand, Ph.D., is a practicising psychotherapist in New York City, a Diplomate in Clinical Psychology of the American Board of Professional Psychology, an expert witness before many Congressional committees, and the author of "Love, Sex and the Teenager."

Most parents have the naive idea tht sex education means telling children the anatomical and biological facts of life. Not so, Dr. Lorand says. "The message beamed to school children, often from the fifth grade up, is that everyone has the right to engage in sexual intercourse, the number of sexual partners purely a matter of personal preference."

The child is taught in explicit detail all the varieties of normal and abnormal sexual activity and sensual arousal. The child is taught that moral standards and judgments should have little or nothing to do with sexuality.

In addition to eliminating morality, the sex education advocates have deliberately concealed from the children the medical evidence of the dangerous consequences of early and permissive sexual behavior -- facts which would cause any reasonably normal teenager to abstain from sexual activity, even if he had no moral scruples.

For example, there is a mountain of corroborative evidence of the direct connection between early coitus and cervical cancer in females. Yet the sex education advocates have censored all this evidence out of the materials they thrust at teenagers.

Some sex education materials mention venereal disease, but always within the context of an unquestioning acceptance of promiscuity and the assertion that VD is curable.

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None of the sex education materials examined by Dr. Lorand mentions the painful and dangerous VD, genital herpes, which is not curable, or that some strains of gonorrhea are penicillin-resistant and sterility may occur during the time a cure is sought. Nor do the materials tell about Cytomegalovirus, another incurable sexually-transmitted disease which cripples and retards more infants than German measles.

"The emotion of fear," Dr. Lorand points out, "is a fundamental life-protecting response to the perception of danger." It is very healthy for a young girl to be deterred from promiscuity by a fear of contracting a painful, incurable disease, or cervical cancer, or sterility, or the likelihood of giving birth to a dead, blind or brain-damaged baby (even 10 years later when she may be happily married).

It is shocking that the sex education advocates promote the "everybody's doing it" syndrome withouth warning of the tragic consequences. It is a cheat on our teenagers who are thus led into mistakes for which they may have to pay a bitter price all the rest of their lives.

Graphs on VD in Sweden and the United States indicate that sex education is a cause of the epidemic rise in VD. Sweden started a steady upward climb in 1954, the year sex education became compulsory. In the United States, VD declined until the mid-1960s, when it began a sharp rise upward. That was when U.S. schools introduced Swedish-style sex education.

Sweden is certainly not a model our country would want to follow. In 1976, the illegitimacy rate in Sweden was 33 percent of all live births, even though half of all teenage pregnancies ended in abortion.

Planned Parenthood is the principal agency pushing for the most extreme Swedish-style sex education in the schools. In its Annual Report for 1978, Planned Parenthood speaks openly of its "role as agent of social and attitudinal change."

What masquerades as sex education is not education at all. It is selective propaganda which artificially encourages children to participate in adult sex, while it censors out the facts of life about the unhappy consequences. It is robbing children of their childhood.

Dr. Lorand's complete article is available from the Heritage Foundation, 513 C St., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. Ask for Education Update Vol. 3, No. 3. (end)