

How School Workbook Discusses Pot

A WORKBOOK used in some Oklahoma public schools during the current term has a student arguing in a suggested dramatization that the drugs she is using "are no worse than the pills her mother is always taking or the coffee and cigarettes her father takes."

(For those who refuse to believe that such "values clarification" materials exist, reference is to a chapter titled "Drug Scene" on page 295 in "Action Biology" published by Allyn and Bacon.)

At the end of the same chapter a boy asks: "Why shouldn't pot be legal?" A girl responds that pot is a harmful drug, but a cartoon below concludes "Mom took two tranquilizers and went to bed and dad got very drunk. It's very confusing." Some clarification of values!

With public school education of that caliber, it is not surprising that pot smoking has become an epidemic involving more than one-third of the state's junior high and high school students. One might wonder whether drug pushers are supplying some of the materials.

Surveys show that about 10 percent of the American people are regular users of psychotropic drugs, primarily tranquilizers. If this is profitable, consider the potential if everybody used drugs!

The fact that drug pushers can make big profits from their evil trade keeps it going. They have little fear of being arrested or incarcerated. Recent reports indicate that low morale and lack of cooperation between federal drug enforcement agencies allow almost uninterrupted flows of illicit materials into this country.

As for pot, The Daily Oklahoman reported in November that investigators estimated 500 tons of marijuana was growing in this state last year. As long as people refuse to believe the truth about permanent debilitating effects of marijuana it will be available and your children will be urged to use it.

The situation is complicated by a mammoth drive by scientists and drug manufacturers to develop a "Choose Your Mood Society." Recent publicity dealt with a drug in-

troduced by researchers at the National Institute of Mental Health, a sort of "smart pill."

They claimed that vasopressin, a natural hormone, could be synthesized and used to improve memory and learning in both normal people and victims of depression.

Previously, various scientists have advocated use of drugs to disperse somnolence, trances and illusions, purge the mind of unpleasant memories, and create recollections of things that never happened.

Arguments claim that people should decide for themselves what state of mind they may prefer and indulge in drugs to attain it.

During World War II a term frequently used was "brainwashing." It referred to manipulation of human thought or action against the will or knowledge of individuals. Are drug pushers brainwashing our entire nation so that we will accept addiction as normal?

Drug-use propaganda seems to be overcoming non-use education and supply control systems. We need a change of attitude -- without drugs!

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*To judge, get
all facts first*

TO THE EDITOR:

The article written by Ferdie Deering concerning "Values Clarification" and humanistic education is simply an example of excising parts of a program or group of studies in order to alarm the public. Once again we are dealing with taking something out of context in order to suit our own needs.

Being a teacher in the Oklahoma City Schools, I have from time to

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time used "Values Clarification" materials and have experienced very rewarding results. In addition, humanistic education is not designed to replace the teachings of home or church.

The human being possesses many qualities that humanistic education is sensitive to in the development of the total person. For a child to understand others, he must have some basis for understanding himself.

To provide a setting to talk about matters of security, love, competency, self-worth, expressing human feelings, self-awareness and control, and the development of social and personal maturity, is not an inappropriate thing for a school teacher to do.

We bring children into a school and require that they study a prescribed set of courses, and then expect that child to be a literate, functioning, humane individual at the end of 12 years of school. Yet, behind all the subjects taught and all the activities that occur, there is a more basic and critical goal: We want people to be able to think, to recognize their own worth and the worth of others, and to realize that being a human being carries with it the quality of being humane.

If Deering thinks that working with students in "Values Clarification" or using a more humanistic approach to education is jeopardizing family secrets or invading privacy, he needs to know that in the development of values, one of the basic points learned is not to make value judgments prior to knowing all the available facts. I am afraid Deering did exactly this, he judged before he knew all the facts.

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