

Education Quality Questioned

A Massey University study, commissioned by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and conducted in February 2005 (but only released this month), showed employers are generally *unhappy* with the quality of graduates from universities and polytechnics. The UMR survey of 750 respondents showed that 24 percent have little or no confidence in tertiary-education quality with a further 36 percent claiming to be “neutral”. Only 36 percent of New Zealanders have a positive view of what tertiary institutions produce.

Business NZ chief executive Phil O’Reilly said the wider community’s lack of enthusiasm should be a wake-up call for the tertiary-education sector. He surmised that the tertiary sector had hurt itself by offering too many low-value, low-relevance courses. “Underneath that, I suspect there are some public concerns that some tertiary institutions are a bit out of touch and that a number of graduates may be coming out educated but aren’t really properly prepared for life and work.”

Association of University Staff national president Nigel Haworth was unhappy with the study, claiming its methodology was below par. He said that public confidence in the tertiary sector might have been undermined by politicisation and media ridicule of some of the courses. Well, yes, Prof Haworth; that’s what the media do. Welcome to the real world. Was he expecting the media to ignore what the universities do?

Auckland-based Massey University

researcher Paul Spoonley said some institutions are considered to be too detached from the labour market and that more employers are consequently resorting to in-house training. This could spell good news for home educators if it means employers will look beyond paper qualifications to see what the candidate’s character is like, what the young person is “made of”.

Prof Spoonley’s Auckland study last year indicated there was a high degree of employer frustration by a lack of generic skills and good work habits. Employers complained that many new workers lacked basic literacy and per-

sonal skills and had a “laid back” attitude, even though the labour market has been booming and the skill shortage is at a 30-year high.

In addition, the perceived quality of tertiary qualifications is affected by “inflation”: that is, too many people having tertiary-level qualifications. The more people there are out there with BA degrees, for example, the less your BA degree is worth in terms of giving you an edge over the competition.¹

Down in USA

Same phenomenon is happening in the USA. Michael Gorman, president of the American Library Association and a librarian at California State University at Fresno, said, “Only 31 percent of college graduates can read a complex book and extrapolate from it. That’s not saying much for the remainder.”

While more Americans are graduating from college, and more than

Portable Lectures Will Bring Degree Programs Home

Canterbury University is starting to offer more portable lectures: downloadable podcasts. MP3 players, iPods, laptops, desktops or even cellphones can play the podcasts, which have been released both to the public and to students from February this year.

Canterbury University associate professor Tim Bell, who lectures in computer science and software engineering, came up with the idea after listening to podcasts from Harvard and Berkeley universities in the United States.

“I started off looking for podcasts so I could be learning while biking,” Bell said. Each week as part of a course called Working in a Digital World he plans to record a

discussion about a subject on the syllabus and broadcast it on the web. The sessions would complement lectures and tutorials, rather than replacing them, Bell said.¹

Such technology will bring all but the OHP and Powerpoint diagrams to you while you exercise or work or travel. If the Universities and even high schools want to, they could issue qualifications to those who learn off campus this way. Anyone can gain a top education this way now, virtually free; it’s the certificate that costs.

Note:

1. *The Press*, 27 February 2006, “Portable lectures excite student”, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3586406a11,00.html>

ever are applying for admission, far fewer are leaving higher education with the skills needed to comprehend routine data, such as reading a table about the relationship between blood pressure and physical activity, according to the federal study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics.

“What’s disturbing is that the assessment is not designed to test your understanding of Proust, but to test your ability to read labels,” said Mark S. Schneider, commissioner of education statistics.

The results were based on a sample of more than 19,000 people 16 or older. The test measures how well adults comprehend basic instructions and tasks through reading — such as computing costs per ounce of food items, comparing viewpoints on two editorials and reading prescription labels. Only 41 percent of graduate students tested in 2003 could be classified as “proficient” in prose — reading and understanding information in short texts — down 10 percentage points since 1992. Of college graduates, only 31 percent were classified as proficient — compared with 40 percent in 1992. Schneider said the results do not

separate recent graduates from those who have been out of school several years or more.

Dolores Perin, a reading expert at Columbia University Teachers College, said that the issue may start at the high school level. “There is a tremendous literacy problem among high school graduates that is not talked about,” she said. “It’s a little bit depressing.”

One bright spot in the report is that the average rate of prose literacy, or reading, among blacks rose six percentage points since 1992. Prose and document reading scores for whites remained the same.²

Notes:

1. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 21 April 2006, “Education quality questioned”, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3644355a11,00.html>
2. *The Washington Post*, 25 December 2005, “Literacy of college graduates is on decline”, <http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051225/SCHOOLS/512250407/1026/METRO>

one holds a patent on the education, but only on the piece of paper that says you have the degree. Home educators are ideally situated, and sufficiently outside the box already, to acquire such an education and to do so virtually for free.

The trail to this free education is not as clear as the university one is, but then we home educators are pioneers, blazing new trails in many areas. There are innumerable resources out there; here are only three for your consideration:

First

Many public libraries and local museum/science centres offer regular evening programs at which you can learn from experts about a wide range of subjects.

Most libraries offer free Internet access: imagine the possibilities of combining the Internet with the resources of a good library, museum, science centre, contact with local mentors and the free course notes, outlines, and syllabi from the MIT Open Courseware program from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A self-learner who harnesses the potential of those resources could conceivably master the most technical or philosophically challenging material without paying a cent in tuition.

Second

Redirect the money earmarked for university tuition into travel and be amazed at how far it can take you. I’m not talking about weekend in Paris package deals. I’m talking about washing dishes at a restaurant in France for a year or two, harvesting apples in Germany’s Black Forest or working as a chambermaid in a holiday lodge on England’s Isle of Wight. I think you get the picture. Perhaps you have a yen for adventure travel, intellectual travel – the off-the-beaten-path variety. You know, things like a transcontinental rail journey, a several thousand-mile walk, a bicycle ride from Canada to Mexico or earning passage as a deckhand on a merchant ship. Such options can also be excellent paths to a rich education.

Third

Volunteer and become amazed at

TEACH Bulletin

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Hear, my son, your father’s instruction,
and reject not your mother’s teaching.
— Proverbs 1:8

Uni May Be Poor Choice, Even Obsolete

Universities are businesses selling a product called a degree. The price of these things is going up all the time, while the value of the degrees seems to be going down, a casualty of inflation (too many degrees out there flooding the market and driving down the price employers are willing to pay for them).

Some people reckon they can get the education the degree is supposed to represent without paying the asking price (which may include tuition, books, food, lodging and lost income while studying). It is true that no

how many opportunities there are. I started as a tour guide on a submarine after lots of reading, learning from former submariners and tagging along on tours. Interacting with the guests often supplemented my knowledge. Each time I volunteered, I walked away intellectually enriched. Now I guide tours through a history museum. Along with permanent exhibits, we also have regularly changing displays. So every few months I get to learn about a new field of study. The museum provides excellent training, makes available a resource centre from which I can borrow materials whenever I please and, of course, gives my family free admission. If history's not your thing, there are science museums, art museums and more. And don't forget local parks, historic sites and community organizations which are always looking for enthusiastic volunteers. A glowing work reference from any of these institutions will open many doors.

Conventional wisdom says you need a degree to be a success. Truth is, there are many lucrative livelihoods out there with limitless possibilities that don't require a degree as a condition of entry. Who needs to sit through endless, boring classes, take multiple choice tests and pay tuition? With passion, hard work, faithfulness and initiative you may find yourself unswayed by the carrot of the "higher status" promised by university degrees. Freed from those mental chains, you could very well be in a position to invest your time and money in getting a real education; an education more satisfying and soul-enriching than you may have ever imagined.¹

Obsolete

The modern university is a relic that will disappear in a few decades. That prediction was made by Peter Drucker, the management genius who just died at 95 and usually got things right.

His words brought an uncharitable smile to my face as I recently strolled across the ivied campus of Brown University, in Providence, R.I. At the time, maintenance crews were busy removing leaves. Campus officials were still dealing with the aftermath of an especially

drunken Saturday night. And most everyone was excited that the football team had taken the Ivy League championship.

No doubt, some education was going on, but the question nagged: Is this an efficient setup for improving young minds? Not very, according to Drucker. "Today's buildings are hopelessly unsuited and totally unneeded," he said. Satellites and the Internet can easily make classrooms obsolete.

We now read that professors at Purdue, Stanford, Duke and other universities are recording their lectures. Students download the talks on their iPods and listen to them whenever. The "whenever" can be while driving, lifting weights or between songs by Black Eyed Peas and the Pussycat Dolls.

The profs say that letting students hear the lectures on their own frees classroom time for penetrating discussions. The same conversations, however, could be held over the Internet — or, for that matter, in a room at the public library.

Furthermore, the professors could let non-students download their lectures and charge them royalties, just like the Black Eyed Peas. Ordinary folks already buy courses on tape or CD. For example, The Teaching Company is now selling a virtual major in American history — 84 lectures on 42 audiotapes — at the bargain price of \$109.95. It covers everything from "before Columbus" to Bill Clinton, and the lecturers are top-drawer. Some of them teach at Columbia University, where a single history course runs you \$3,207.

Herman Melville said that "a whale-ship was my Yale College and my Harvard." Melville didn't need college to write *Moby Dick*. He needed to read and spend time in the world. Before sailing out on a whaler in 1841, he had already worked on his uncle's farm and as a cabin boy on a ship to England.

Peter Drucker urged high-school graduates to do likewise: Work

for at least five years. If they went on to college, it would be as grown-ups.

Colleges spend huge numbers of "education dollars" on other things, such as keeping their football coaches happy. For example, the University of Texas is giving Mack Brown a compensation package this year totaling \$3.6 million. UT's highest-paid academic, Steven Weinberg, earns about \$400,000, and he has a Nobel Prize in physics.

University presidents, meanwhile, are working on their own pay packages. Several already make more than \$1 million, which has become the new goalpost. Most justify their incomes by their ability to raise money for new buildings. These are the buildings that will soon be relics, according to Peter Drucker.²

Notes:

1. Adapted from John O. Anderson, 30 August 2001, "College may be a poor choice if you're seeking a real education", <http://www.unconventionalideas.com/realeduc.html>
2. From a Harrup, 25 November 2005, "The modern university has become obsolete", <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1528312/posts>

Update on WINZ Work Test Requirements

Nicky Dirks of the Ministry of Social Development provided the following updated information on April 13, 2006.

Exemptions from Work Test Obligations for partners who are home schooling their children

A partner may be exempt from their work test obligations if they are home schooling a dependent child.

They must provide their Certificate of Exemption from Enrolment at a Registered School (issued by the Ministry of Education). If it is not a recently issued Certificate, you will need to contact the Ministry of Education to check the status.

If the child being home schooled is

aged 17 or 18 years, then to apply for an exemption from their work test obligations, the partner would need to make a personal statement stating that they are home schooling the child and that the child is not attending a registered school.

The Ministry of Education only issues a Certificate of Exemption from Enrolment at a Registered School for the years of compulsory schooling, that is for children aged 6-16. They do keep information about children who continue to be home schooled after the age of 16, and you can contact the Ministry of Education to check these cases.

There are two situations where partners who have children studying by correspondence can apply for an exemption from their work test obligations. These are:

1. Partners who have a child who is studying by correspondence and who cannot attend school for behaviour or health reasons, may apply for an exemption under Caring for a Child with Special Needs.

These partners are not "home schoolers" and do not need to have Ministry of Education approval to home school.

2. Partners who home school under the Ministry of Education can purchase courses provided by the Correspondence School as part of their child's education programme.

These partners have a Certificate of Exemption from Enrolment at a Registered School from the Ministry of Education and can apply for the Home Schooling exemption.

The Home Schooling Allowance is disregarded as income for benefit purposes.

Does Sex Ed Work?

A review of the quality of the NZ Health Syllabus' Sexuality Education by a number of NZ Government agencies will take place during Terms 2 and 3 of 2006. According to the *Sunday Star-Times*, it is to try and understand how such education affects the sexual behaviour of students. "Education Review Office

staff will review 100 randomly selected schools with the aim of identifying programmes that are working effectively and where they can be improved."

The review is a collaboration between the Education Review Office and the Ministries of Education, Health, Pacific Island Affairs, Women's Affairs, Youth Development, Social Development and Te Puni Kokiri.¹ One assumes the object is to find sexuality programmes that "work" or that one could term "successful".

So what does it mean to say that a sexuality education programme in government schools is successful? Because it is "sexuality" education these days instead of the old "sex" education, the agenda is automatically loaded with homosexuality and lesbianism. Is it successful if it simply covers a certain list of subjects? What would you say about this list: human reproduction (biology, mechanics, politics, morality, social and ethnic practices, fertility, assisted technology, contraception, abortion); non-heterosexuality (homosexuality, lesbianism, transgendered, intersex, bisexual, Takataapui, Fa'afafine, asexual); non-reproductive sexual activity ("outercourse", fellatio, cunnilingus, fisting, gerbiling, etc.).

Does a sexuality education programme "work" if it results in a change in student behaviour and attitudes? What kind of changes are we looking for? Abstinence? Practicing "safe" sex? Showing responsibility by visiting the local Family Planning to get free prescriptions and supplies?

The definitions that count are the ones used by the people putting these programmes on. Home educators can write and deliver their own programmes rather than going along with whatever everyone else seems to be going along with at the local school only to discover with horror a few weeks later what exactly the school programme's designers and deliverers did and did not include.

The New Zealand Aids Foundation is concerned about these

things and offers lots of help by way of programmes and talks in schools. It affirms, "Abstinence from sexual intercourse represents a healthy choice for teenagers. However, few remain abstinent until marriage and many do not or cannot marry, and most initiate sexual intercourse and other sexual behaviours as adolescents. (Therefore) abstinence from sexual intercourse, while theoretically fully protective, often fails to protect against pregnancy and disease in practice because abstinence is not maintained."²

One can learn a lot from this statement. Clearly abstinence is not one of their aims. This crowd is so committed to non-abstinence that they have actually said (read it again) that, "...abstinence...often fails to protect against pregnancy and disease...". Give me a break. Abstinence cannot fail in these areas. But they say it does because when it becomes non-abstinence, then it fails. Well, yes. If this crowd ran Alcoholics Anonymous, their thinking is so messed up that they'd say while becoming a teetotaler is a sure-fire way to avoid inebriation, being a teetotaler often fails to prevent drunkenness and hangover because the teetotaler goes out drinking. For that reason they won't encourage people to become teetotalers! This crowd is saying that abstinence is an ineffective remedy to recommend because young people don't practise it.

That's not their only agenda, of course. The statement also says that many do not or cannot marry. What do they mean? "The 'wait until you're married' message actively discriminates against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth. The term 'marriage' is almost exclusively associated with heterosexuality, so 'no sex before marriage' messages will exclude non-heterosexual youth, causing them to completely miss out on information they need to stay healthy."² And of course how could anyone ever suggest abstinence to homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender types: why should they wait? What have they got to wait for?

All of this, remember, is in the context of compulsory, secular, government schooling. It is all about sex-

cial interest groups like the Family Planning Association and the NZ AIDS Foundation making decisions about what kind of sexual morality will be fed to the school inmates. Don't buy the garbage that these groups try to be amoral: they argue that it is *unethical* (that is, morally deficient) to withhold from teenagers information they need to make informed choices!

Does sexuality education work? In the greater Manawatu, the Mid-Central Health Sexual Health Services (PN Hospital) gives talks to high schools, letting the kids fit condoms on wooden models, handing out free condoms and lubricants and Sexual Health W.O.F. quizzes and "tutu" packs with essential information such as "If I have sex once, do I have to keep having sex?" (Answer: It's always your choice), and referring kids to some of the most vile web information I've ever seen (sorry, I think it would be irresponsible of me to print the addresses. If you'd like copies of this stuff, I'll send it to you). The NZ AIDS Foundation says, "New Zealand is experiencing record rates of sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancies in its teenage population."² Since this is after a generation of intensive sex and then sexuality education, it appears that the kids are learning a part of their lessons really well.

Notes:

1. *Sunday Star-Times*, 16 April 2006, "Sex Education – officials to check if it works", <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3638894a11,00.html>

2. Rachael Le Mesurier, NZ AIDS Foundation, 31 January 2006, "No Thanks to Just Say No sex education in schools", <http://www.nzaf.org.nz/articles.php?id=561>

What NZ Can Expect

It's starting already with a NZ twist. Bullying morphs into text bullying and then turns into a homosexual blackmail scheme by a 16 year old. This kid convinced his best friend, a 15 year old, at one of Christchurch's top schools that a mysterious person named "Goth" was going to do them harm unless the

younger "submitted to increasingly serious and frequent sexual contact with his friend."¹

Another top school in the US, Stuyvesant High School in New York, with an enrolment of 3,000 only takes the top 3% of its applicants. The school administrators are very tolerant and accommodating. During a free period of the school day, one group gathers in a section of the second-floor hallway for what is known as the Cuddle Puddle: there are girls petting girls and girls petting guys and guys petting guys.

*Elle is watching, enthralled, as two boys lock lips across the hall. "Oh, my," she murmurs. "Homoerotic. There's nothing more exciting than watching two men make out." And everyone is talking to another girl in the puddle who just "came out," meaning she announced that she's now open to sexual overtures from both boys and girls, which makes her a minor celebrity, for a little while. When asked how many of her female friends have had same-sex experiences, Alair answers, "All of them." Then she stops to think about it. "All right, maybe 80 percent. At least 80 percent of them have experimented. And they still are. It's either to please a man, or to try it out, or just to be fun, or 'cause you're bored, or just 'cause you like it . . . whatever."*²

Ten years ago in the halls of Stuyvesant you might have found a few goth girls kissing goth girls, kids on the fringes defiantly bucking the system. Now you find a group of vaguely progressive but generally mainstream kids for whom same-sex intimacy is standard operating procedure. "It's not like, Oh, I'm going to hit on her now. It's just kind of like, you come up to a friend, you grab their ass," Alair explains. "It's just, like, our way of saying hello." These teenagers don't feel as though their sexuality has to define them, or that they have to define it, which has led some psychologists and child-development specialists to label them the "post-gay" generation. But kids like Alair and her friends are in the process of work-

*ing up their own language to describe their behavior. Along with gay, straight, and bisexual, they'll drop in new words, some of which they've coined themselves: polysexual, ambisexual, pansexual, pansensual, polyfide, bi-curious, bi-queer, fluid, metroflexible, heteroflexible, heterosexual with lesbian tendencies—or, as Alair puts it, "just sexual." The terms are designed less to achieve specificity than to leave all options open.*²

*It's become a form of exhibitionism, a way to get noticed at an age when getting noticed is what it's all about.*²

Peace. Tolerance. Remove the hang-ups, taboos and arbitrary rules and expectations others lay on you. Keep options open to any possibility. It's your life: you cut your own path. As long as you are respectful of others. This is the code of the secular educational establishment. Stuyvesant students are learning well.

Predatory Teachers

But teachers are not to be left out. However, their position of authority and their age and the generational quirks they imbibed don't make the transition well. They are having a go, nonetheless. And according to WorldNetDaily.com, "a recent, federally funded study concludes the problem of school teachers molesting students dwarfs in magnitude the clergy sex-abuse scandal that rocked the Catholic Church."

"According to a major 2004 study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education – by far the most in-depth investigation to date – millions of children might be victims of sexual misconduct by teachers or other public school employees. In fact, says the study's author, Charol Shakeshaft, professor of educational administration at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y., the figures suggest 'the physical sexual abuse of students in schools is likely more than 100 times the abuse by priests.'"³

"Indeed, more than 4.5 million students are subject to sexual misconduct by an employee of a school sometime between kindergarten and 12th grade, says the report."⁴

Teachers in state schools are grooming and preying upon their students. And female teachers seducing boys seems to be the more common perversion. One article listed brief summaries and photos of 62 female teachers who defiled students in their care.⁵ Special schools investigator (New York City) Richard Condon says his office busted 92 educators alone last year on sex charges — a 33% increase over 2004.⁶

Perverting All Society

This whole nightmare in the government schools has perverted justice as well. For example, Mary Kay Letourneau, after serving time in prison for “child rape,” got a \$200,000 advance on a book deal (titled *Only One Crime, Love*), had a TV movie made about her life, and received a reported \$750,000 from a tabloid TV show for the video footage of her 2004 wedding to the schoolboy she had seduced years earlier.³

When 43-year-old teacher Pamela Diehl-Moore tearfully pleaded guilty to having sex with a 13-year-old male student, New Jersey Superior Court Judge Bruce A. Gaeta sentenced her to probation, saying: “I really don’t see the harm that was done here, and certainly society doesn’t need to be worried. I do not believe she is a sexual predator. It’s just something between two people that clicked beyond the teacher-student relationship. ... And don’t forget, this was mutual consent.”³ U.S. District Judge J. Thomas Marten in Kansas also questioned whether sex with kids was really bad. “Where is the clear, credible evidence that underage sex is always injurious? If you tell me because it is illegal, I reject that,” Marten said, according to the Associated Press.⁴ Judges don’t even see straight anymore. It is easy to predict that we will see a strong push soon for the complete decriminalisation of consensual sex regardless of the ages or positions of those involved. The entire education system that can produce such teachers and judges is sick. Aren’t you so thankful that you home educate your children and keep them out of these whorls of cesspool chaos? But trends like this don’t usually stay put in the USA.

The Australian reports that the prevalence of female paedophiles preying on children in care is much higher than previously thought. A five-year study, the first of its kind in Australia, shows that while female sexual predators are responsible for 6 per cent of all the reported cases of sexual abuse against children, they are less likely than men to be prosecuted. Karen Flanagan, national program manager of Child Wise, Australia’s premier child protection group and commissioner of the study, said it is probably because women have easy and open access to children all the time and are traditionally seen as nurturers and not considered capable of sexually abusing children.⁷

Carol Shakeshaft’s 2004 report for the U.S. Department of Education draws a clear distinction between true pedophiles – that is, adults who target pre-pubescent children – and those who criminally seduce pubescent but underage youngsters. “The abusers of children younger than seventh grade have different patterns than those who abuse older children,” she says, making a disturbing but familiar point about pedophiles’ modus operandi:

*The educators who target elementary school children are often professionally accomplished and even celebrated. Particularly compared to their non-abusing counterparts, they hold a disproportionate number of awards. It is common to find that educators who have been sexually abusing children are also the same educators who display on their walls a community “Excellence in Teaching” award or a “Teacher of the Year” certificate. This popularity confounds district officials and community members and prompts them to ignore allegations on the belief that “outstanding teachers” cannot be abusers. Many abusive educators work at being recognized as good professionals in order to be able to sexually abuse children. For them, being a good educator is the path to children, especially those who abuse elementary and younger middle school students.*⁴

Grooming

Shakeshaft gives a chilling description of the various techniques of “grooming”, a practice common to virtually all child molesters. Grooming, she explains, is a process whereby an abuser selects a student, gives the student attention and rewards, provides the student with support and understanding, all the while slowly increasing the amount of touch or other sexual behavior. The purpose of grooming is to test the child’s ability to maintain secrecy, to desensitize the child through progressive sexual behaviors, to provide the child with experiences that are valuable and that the child won’t want to lose, to learn information that will discredit the child and to gain approval from parents. Grooming allows the abuser to test the student’s silence at each step. It also serves to implicate the student, resulting in children believing that they are responsible for their own abuse because “I never said stop.” Grooming often takes place in the context of providing a child with extras like additional help learning a musical instrument, advisement on a science project or opportunities for camping and outdoor activity. These opportunities not only create a special relationship with students, they are also ones for which parents are usually appreciative.⁴

The report gets worse and worse. To keep quiet, the child victims are often subjected to intimidation, threats, exploiting the teacher’s position of power over the student, manipulation, etc. Far too often, after all this, if the student blows the whistle, the authorities simply do not believe it. Several studies estimate that only about 6 percent of all children report sexual abuse by an adult to someone who can do something about it. Indeed, fear of not being believed is the No. 1 reason kids don’t report their sexual victimization at the hands of adults.⁴

Offending teachers have frequently gotten off virtually scot-free even when their sexual misdeeds are exposed to school administrators. In one study of 225 cases of teacher sex abuse in New York, although all the accused had admitted to sexually abusing a student, not one was reported to the police and only 1

percent lost their license to teach. A 2003 study reports that 159 Washington state coaches were “reprimanded, warned or let go in the past decade because of sexual misconduct”; and yet, “at least 98 of them continued coaching or teaching afterward.”⁴

Government schools are breeding grounds of sick minds and sick morals, not to mention dumbed down academics and infestations of head lice. Breaking the ties with parents, siblings, family traditions and culture has been the most consistent and most damaging aspect of these institutions. Home educators are re-discovering long-lost benefits of unified families all focused on the same vision they can work toward achieving together; of mentoring one’s own children; of the self-improvement accompanying a renewed love of learning; of the self-fulfilment in realising, “I’ve never done anything as important as this in my whole life.”

Notes:

1. *The Press*, 5 April 2006, “Accused text bully faces sex charges, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3627619a10,00.html>
2. *New York Magazine*, 6 February 2006, “The Cuddle Puddle of Stuyvesant High School”, <http://www.nyomag.com/news/features/15589/>
3. WorldNetDaily.com, 1 March 2006, “Predators: What’s really behind today’s epidemic of teacher-student sex?” http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=49049
4. WorldNetDaily.com, 22 March 2006, “What’s behind today’s epidemic of teacher-student sex?” http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=49389
5. WorldNetDaily.com, 25 January 2006, “Sexy substitute teacher has relations with boy”, http://wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=48502
6. *New York Daily News*, 2 April 2006, “ABCs of a sex scandal”, <http://www.nydailynews.com/front/story/405217p-343094c.html>
7. *The Australian*, 7 March 2006, “Female pedophiles going undetected”, <http://www.news.com.au/story/0%2C10117%2C18370929-2%2C00.html>

Violence Also on the Rise

An earlier article quoted the NZ AIDS Foundation as saying how teen pregnancies and STDs have increased. School yard violence is creeping up there too. The term “feral children” comes to mind as I consider that schools too often are used by permissive and negligent parents as a place to dump kids. In fact, it seems the schools’ willingness to have kids dumped on them encourages the practise rather than discourages it.

New Zealand’s Principle Youth Court Judge Andrew Becroft recently commented, “Everyone in the youth justice sector is very concerned about it [increasing violence among youth] and watching it very carefully. Why are our boys – and they are mostly boys – becoming more seriously violent?”¹

The “P” epidemic (a party drug) is currently seen as a contributor to the adult crime rate, but does not seem to be a factor in the youth crime rate. “We shudder to think what would happen if it does,” said Judge Becroft. Sounds like a disaster simply waiting to happen.

Apparently the youth are still content to yield themselves to booze and the weed. Yet the number of youths aged 14 to 16 caught for grievous or serious assaults jumped from 1097 in 2003 to 1235 in 2004. The increase was only in the most serious violent crime. And the judge says girls are also becoming more violent.¹

Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) figures show the number of young people in police cells (as opposed to CYFS’ own “secure” residences – youth prisons – in Manukau, Palmerston North and Christchurch) rose from 573 in 2004 to a record 703 last year. The total nights they spent in the cells jumped from 1464 to 2571. Judge Becroft said the main factor forcing judges to remand young people in police cells was “a failure in CYFS strategic planning”.²

Judge Becroft is eager to communicate the fact that overall, youth

offending rates have remained relatively stable for some years. It is the more serious offending that is showing an increase, not just in frequency, but also in that it is starting earlier and is more severe.³

Preschool teachers are now reporting more violence among littlies, and receiving training on how to cope.

Children as young as two are causing problems in early childhood centres with their aggressive and bullying behaviour reported many of the 100 participants at a bullying workshop held as part of the Early Childhood Council national conference in Rotorua at the end of April. “These children use standover tactics and resort to punching and biting. They also know only too well how to target another child if the teacher is not watching. Using time out is a joke and simply doesn’t work,” Hawera teacher Marie Kenny said. Teacher and life skills expert Howard Small, the author of children’s book *Don’t Bully Me*, said teachers were reporting increased numbers of children arriving at primary school with strongly developed anti-social behaviour.⁴

About 80 teachers from 25 kindergartens in the Manawatu region took part in a two-day “non-violent crisis intervention” programme in January this year. A small part of the programme dealt with crisis situations, such as “how to stop a punch, a kick, choking, biting, hair-pulling, and they also learn restraint techniques.” A website promoting the course says it is designed to target “the special needs of caregivers, particularly with the rising level of violence in society”.

Jill Ellis from Hokowhitu Kindergarten who attended the course said, “I found it very useful. Potentially aggressive behaviour is occurring more often today than in the past. I think there’s a great deal more violence in the media. You only have to look at the six o’clock news.” These influences are translating into more instances of violence in the playground, she said. However, Mrs Ellis, who has been a kindergarten teacher for 15 years, says she’s more likely to feel unsafe around a

(Continued on page 8: **Violence**)

Coming Events

For updates on this information, see www.hef.org.nz and click Coming Events

Fri 16 June 2006

Science & Technology Fair Auckland

Venue: Auckland Central (tbc)

Time: 12:30—4:00pm

Cost: \$3 per entry, and \$2 for visitors, payable on the day.

Contact: Erin Lapish, P.O.Box 13043, Onehunga, Auckland

*Register your interest by
Sunday 7 May 2006*

12.30-1.00pm Entries arrive

1.00-2.00pm Judging

2.00-3.00pm General viewing

3.00pm prizegiving

3.00-4.00pm Afternoon tea/tidy up

Children can enter individually or as a group (family or otherwise).

The judging will be divided into five categories:

- Living World
- Physical World
- Material World
- Planet Earth and Beyond Technology

Wed 28 June 2006

6th Annual Home Schoolers History Fair Morrinsville

Venue: Campbell Hall, Canada St.

Time: 9:00am set up. Viewing from 10:00am.

Cost: \$5 for 1-2 entries. \$10 for 3 or more per family. Gold coin donation for those just coming to look.

Contact: Robyn Smith, (07) 889-7878, adriannrobyn@maxnet.co.nz

There are 3 age groups: Up to 7 years; 8-10 years; 11 and over. Family entries welcome.

Fri 1 Sept 2006

"Spring into History" History Fair Auckland

Venue: Mangere Memorial Hall, Dominion Road, Mangere Bridge

Cost: \$5 for one or two exhibits in family;
\$10 for three or more exhibits in

family;
\$2 entry for those just observing

Contact: Katie Richards, grinders@ihug.co.nz, 220 St Andrews Rd., Epsom

*Please Register by
Friday 4 August 2006*

9:00am doors open to set up

10:00am exhibit - judges will circulate at this time

12:00pm prize giving

12:30 - 2:00pm lunch/chat/cleanup.

Those participating will choose a history topic: a particular time period, the history of a people group/person or the history of a subject (e.g. the history of the English language).

16-21 October 2006

Home Education Awareness Week

(Continued from page 7: Violence)
parent than one of her children.⁵

This sentiment is echoed by the Canterbury Principals' Association, especially after the incident this month where a Christchurch father was charged with assault after he grabbed a boy whom he believed was bullying his 11-year-old daughter at Mairehau Primary School. Association president Lex Telfer said the incident reflected a growing trend of parental intervention in problems traditionally dealt with by schools. "Parents consider it is their right to come into a school," he said. However, some parents had become too demanding.⁶

Parents need to become even more demanding still. But they will find there is no solution until they take the one step that will ensure their children complete safety in the schools: to get out of them.

Notes:

1. NZPA, 27 February 2006, "Judge worried by increase in boys' violent crimes", <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3586412a11,00.html>

html

2. *NZ Herald*, 27 February 2006, "Jump in boys' violent crimes alarms judge", http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c_id=1&ObjectID=10370246
3. Agenda, TVOne, 5 June 2004, Interview with Judge Andrew Becroft, <http://agendatv.itmsconnect.com/Default.aspx?tabid=194>
4. *The Press*, 1 May 2006, "Toddler bullies upset care centres", <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3653332a7694,00.html>
5. *Manawatu Standard*, 2 February 2006, "Kindies brace for violent kids", <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3559792a10,00.html>
6. *The Press*, 5 April 2006, "Schools worry about parents taking law into own hands", <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3627608a11,00.html>

Collapse Predicted

Roy Lowrie, a veteran of the educational scene, predicted in the late 1980s the collapse of the government school system would be about twenty years out...about now, in fact. "The public schools continue to be staffed by tens of thousands of very good people. Many, many of them are devoted, knowledgeable, and sincere Christians—and their influence is profound. Some of them are not so focused that way, but are rooted in a general Judeo-Christian tradition that offers cohesion to their society. But little by little, and soon at an accelerating pace, those good people disappear from the scene. Some of them, just because of the passing of the years, retire. Others, wearied by the battle, step aside. The battles of discipline, of political correctness, of knowing just how far they can go in their Christian witness—those battles take their toll. Such people," Mr. Lowrie concluded, "are like the mortar between the bricks in a big building. They hold it together. But take that mortar away, and first a wall collapses, then the roof, and then the whole building. It hasn't happened yet, but already you can see the cracks and the signs of future crumbling."

[Collecting material for *TEACH*, I see BIG cracks all the time. — Ed.]

(Joe Beltz, 25 March 2006, *World Magazine* Vol. 21, No. 12, "Prophecy Fulfilled", <http://www.worldmag.com/articles/11649>)