The Blumenfeld Education Letter

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." HOSEA 4:6

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce these risks. "Without vision, the people perish."

Benjamin Bloom: OBE's Godfather His Writings Tell All

As everyone knows, American public education has been in crisis for at least the last three decades. In fact, it was the famous *A Nation at Risk* report, issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in April 1983, that called for drastic measures to be taken if the public schools were to be saved from further deterioration. And the calls for educational reform came fast and furious.

Basically, there were two types of reforms called for. Conservatives called for getting back to basics, for teaching reading by intensive phonics, for strengthening all of the academic subjects, for greater discipline, more homework, etc. The liberal education establishment had other ideas. Besides calling for more money, higher teacher salaries, all of which they got, their view of reform included whole language, invented spelling, no memorization in arithmetic but lots of calculators, a breakdown of traditional subject matter into relevant topics, and above all, a greater emphasis on the affective domain, that is, more emphasis on feelings, beliefs, values, attitudes, socialization, sexuality, group learning, group therapy, peer counseling, death education, drug education, etc.

Obviously, these two views of education are not only mutually exclusive but produce totally different outcomes. The conservative approach represents a traditional Judeo-Christian world view that sees education as a development of intellect and spirit. It sees the school as serving the parents who entrust their children to the educators who are to teach the youngsters the basic academic skills that will serve them in any future field of work or career they may choose. In other words, the function of a free public school is to provide a basic, no-nonsense education.

Vice Admiral Hyman Rickover summed up the non-sectarian traditional view when he said the following to a Congressional committee in 1962:

> [A] school must accomplish three difficult tasks; first, it must transmit to the pupil a substantial body of knowledge; second, it must develop in him the necessary intellectual skill to apply this knowledge to the problems he will encounter in adult life; and third, it must inculcate in him the habit of judging issues on the basis of verified fact and logical reasoning.... [The school's] principal task . . . is to develop the mind.

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... Far too many of our teachers do not possess the intellectual and educational qualifications that would permit them to offer such a course of studies. There is an easy way out, and many of our schools are using it. They teach simpler things that are easy to teach, easy to learn, and more fun besides—how to be lovable, likable, and datable, how to be a good consumer. These aren't subjects you can grade, the way you can grade mathematics or sciences or languages, but they are good for hiding the ignorance of both teacher and pupil.

All of that was said in 1962, long before it was ever dreamed that one day the schools would be handing out condoms. Apparently, the educators didn't listen to Admiral Rickover then, and they have no intention of listening to his counterparts today.

Why? Because the liberal education establishment approaches education with an entirely different world view, a humanist world view based on the notion that there is no God; that man is an animal, the product of evolution, and that the purpose of education is not to create competent individuals who can stand on their own two feet and think for themselves, but to change society. Humanist education is basically messianic in its outlook. It not only wants to change society, but also erase from human consciousness any dependence on a higher authority, that is, God. Humanist education is at war with the God of the Bible. It wages spiritual warfare in the full sense of the word. And that is why Admiral Rickover's common sense fell on deaf ears.

Enter OBE

Outcome-Based Education, or OBE, is a total reform, or restructuring, of American education designed explicitly to further humanist goals. First and foremost, it does away with every last vestige of traditional education, its methods, its curriculum, its objective means of assessment, its time frame, its goals. In fact, it represents a complete takeover of American public education by the humanist sect, with the sole aim of producing young humanists who will forward the humanist agenda. In other words, OBE intends to do for humanists what Catholic schools did for Catholics.

But Outcome-Based Education did not suddenly arise out of nowhere. It has been worked on and planned for by humanist psychologists, sociologists, and behavioral scientists for years despite parental clamor for back to basics. These educational theorists and planners feel that they have a mission, that they are in every sense of the word true revolutionaries engaged in a true cultural revolution in which traditional values are to be overthrown and replaced with the pagan-socialist values of the New World Order. That is why humanists have never had any intention of getting back to basics, and that is why parents have experienced nothing but frustration in trying to return public education to its earlier, traditional forms and functions

Messianism in Action

Of course, the whole departure from the traditional academic curriculum started at the turn of the century when John Dewey and his humanist colleagues decided to use our public school system as the means of changing America from a capitalist, individualistic, believing nation into a socialist, collectivist, atheist society. The humanists, better known as the progressives, spent the next thirty years revising the curriculum and writing new textbooks so that by 1930 they were ready to impose the new socialist-oriented curriculum on the public schools of America. One might call that period the first phase of the humanist reform movement. It was dominated by behaviorist, stimulus-response, animal-tested psychology.

The second phase began in the early

1960s with the emergence of Third Force psychology developed by humanist psychologists Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Sidney Simon and others who tried to inject an emotional and spiritual component in the behaviorist mix. Since the goal of education was now defined as "self-actualization," the emphasis was now on the development of the affective domain through such programs as values clarification, sensitivity training, situational ethics, multiculturalism, pluralism, etc. Reflecting the human-potential movement, the goal was to "liberate" human behavior from biblical constraints in order to create a humanist society.

The New Vocabulary

Third Force psychology also gave educators a whole new vocabulary to describe the expanded realm of the educator with such terms as change agents, facilitators, critical thinking, self-esteem, cognitive dissonance, experiential learning, congruence, relationship inventory, operant behavior, taxonomy, morphological creativity, behavioral objectives, group dynamics, etc.

All of this has been engineered mainly by psychologists who now own American public education lock, stock and barrel. From 1900 to about 1940 you had G. Stanley Hall, John Dewey, Charles Judd, James McKeen Cattell, Edward L. Thorndike, and their protégés Arthur Gates, William Scott Gray, William Kilpatrick, Harold Rugg, George Counts and others, all psychologists, or educators trained by psychologists, who transformed American education in the progressive mold. In 1933 there appeared the Humanist Manifesto which set the spiritual foundation for the progressive moment. In the 1940s and '50s you had the strong influence of communist social psychology through the work of Kurt Lewin at MIT and in the founding of the National Training Laboratory in Bethel, Maine, under the sponsorship of the National Education Association. That's where sensitivity training was born.

During the 1920s, Lewin had worked in Berlin on experiments on how to artificially create behavioral disorganization. He was so good at it, that A. R. Luria, the Soviet psychologist, wrote the following about Lewin in his book, *The Nature of Human Conflicts: A study of the experimental disorganization and control of human behavior*, published in 1932:

> K. Lewin, in our opinion, has been one of the most prominent psychologists to elucidate this question of the artificial production of affect and of the experimental disorgansation of behaviour. The method of his procedure—the introduction of an emotional setting into the experience of a human, the interest of the subject in the experiment—helped him to obtain an artificial disruption of the affect of considerable strength. . . .
>
> Here the fundamental conception of Lewin is very close to ours. Every elaborated excitation manifests a tendency to a direct discharge . . .; obviously precisely the inhibition of this tendency, connected with a certain conflict, can produce an acute disruption of the affect and a series of new phenomena not hitherto observed. The closer the action is to realisation, the greater the affective disruption that can be provoked by its inhibition. (pp. 207-8)

Obviously, Lewin had mastered the art of artificially inducing behavioral disorganization, and we can only conjecture how these techniques have been used by American psycho-educators to create the kind of behavioral disorganization that afflicts so many American public school students.

Humanist Manifesto II

In 1973 there appeared Humanist Manifesto II, which basically outlined the school curriculum of the future. It called for "the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational fed-

eral government." It further stated:

> The world community must engage in cooperative planning concerning the use of rapidly depleting resources. The planet earth must be considered a single ecosystem. Ecological damage, resource depletion, and excessive population growth must be checked by international concord. The cultivation and conservation of nature is a moral value; we should perceive ourselves as integral to the sources of our being in nature. We must free our world from needless pollution and waste, responsibly guarding and creating wealth, both natural and human. Exploitation of natural resources, uncurbed by social conscience, must end.

Should it surprise anyone, therefore, that American students are being brainwashed to believe that concern for the environment is more important than concern for the unborn? Recently, I was told by a proud father that his little daughter in the second grade had already embarked on a crusade to save the world from environmental destruction. It didn't occur to him that his young daughter was being so well indoctrinated in the religion of environmentalism that she might very well become an eco-fanatic. It's all in the Humanist Manifesto which, incidentally, was signed by Alan F. Guttmacher, president of Planned Parenthood, B. F. Skinner, Betty Friedan, and 200 other humanists.

Outcome-Based Education is really, for all intents and purposes, Humanist Parochial Education. And its proponents make no bones about it. Actually, the beginnings of OBE can be traced back to 1948 when a group of behavioral scientists, meeting in Boston at the American Psychological Association Convention, decided to embark on a project of classifying the goals or outcomes of the educational process since, as they said, "educational objectives provide the basis for building curricula and tests and represents the starting point for much of our educational research."

In other words, you cannot build a curriculum until you know what the outcomes of that education should be. For example, if you want your student to become a humanist, you must teach the child about evolution, environmentalism, feminism, reproductive rights (abortion), sexual freedom (how to have safe sex), alternative values systems, alternative lifestyles, etc. And you must provide tests and assessments along the way to make sure that the outcomes are being achieved.

Likewise, the curriculum of a Christian school is determined by the end goal, or desired outcome, of the educative process: a well-educated Christian steeped in the knowledge of God and His law.

Bloom's Taxonomy

The result of the scientists' deliberations has become known as Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, a humanist-behaviorist classification of outcomes that does away with traditional outcomes, subject matter and teaching methods. The central figure behind all of this is behavioral scientist Benjamin S. Bloom of the University of Chicago. Bloom is one of those obscure professors who work in their graduate schools with their students trying to find ways to change human behavior and thereby change the world. They are imbued by the same messianic mission that motivated Horace Mann, John Dewey, and a hundred other "educators" to bring about their version of utopia. (R.J. Rushdoony's 1963 book, *The Messianic Character of American Education* provides a fascinating in-depth study of these American educators.)

Bloom's taxonomy, which is little more than a humanist-behaviorist straitjacket for public education, is contained in two handbooks, one for the cognitive domain (published in 1956) and one for the affective domain (published in 1964). Bloom writes:

Curriculum builders should find the taxonomy helps them to specify objectives so that it becomes easier to plan learning experiences and prepare evaluation devices. . . . In short, teachers and curriculum makers should find this a relatively concise model for the analysis of educational outcomes in the cognitive area of remembering, thinking, and problem solving. (p. 2)

A second part of the taxonomy is the affective domain. It includes objectives which describe changes in interest, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciations and adequate adjustment. . . . It is difficult to describe the behaviors appropriate to these objectives since the internal or covert feelings and emotions are as significant for this domain as are the overt behavioral manifestations. . . . Our testing procedures for the affective domain are still in the most primitive stages. (p. 7)

That was written in 1956. But by now their testing instruments have been quite perfected to do their job of monitoring affective change. In devising these highly intrusive tests, Bloom had the help of Ralph W. Tyler of the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. In fact, Bloom dedicated the taxonomy to Tyler "whose ideas on evaluation have been a constant source of stimulation to his colleagues in examining, and whose energy and patience have never failed us." Bloom continues:

This taxonomy is designed to be a classification of the student behaviors which represent the intended outcomes of the educational process. (p. 10) . . . What we are classifying is the intended behavior of students—the ways in which individuals are to act, think, or feel as the result of participating in some unit of instruction. (p. 12)

The taxonomy is not completely neutral. This stems from the already-noted fact that it is a classification of intended behaviors. (p. 15)

By educational objectives, we mean explicit formulations of the ways in which students are expected to be changed by the educative process. That is, the ways in which they will change in their thinking, their feelings, and their actions. . . . It is important that the major objectives of the school or unit of instruction be clearly identified if time and effort are not to be wasted on less important things and if the work of the school is to be guided by some plan. (p. 26)

The philosophy of education of the school serves as one guide, since the objectives to be finally included should be related to the school's view of the "good life for the individual in the good society." What are important values? What is the proper relation between man and society? What are the proper relations between man and man? (p. 27)

Note that the relationship between man and God is not included in the taxonomy. Also, note that the Humanist Manifesto of 1933 states that "the good life is still the central task for mankind." Obviously, Bloom drew his inspiration from that philosophy.

Cognitive Domain

Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain contains six major classes: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Concerning knowledge, Bloom writes:

Knowledge as defined here includes those behaviors and test situations which emphasize the remembering, either by recognition or recall, of ideas, material, or phenomena. (p. 62)

A sample of the knowledge expected to be learned is given as follows:

To develop a basic knowledge of the evolutionary development of man. . . . A knowledge of the forces, past and present, which have made for the increasing interdependence of people all over the world. . . . Knowledge of a relatively complete formulation of the theory of evolution. (p. 71)

These are just samples of the kind of politically correct knowledge the student will be expected to demonstrate as learned behavior. William Spady, top OBE guru, describes what is involved in such a demonstration:

First, an outcome is a demonstration of learning that occurs at the end of a learning experience. It is a

result of learning and an actual visible, observable demonstration of three things: knowledge, combined with competence, combined with something my colleagues and I call "orientations"—the attitudinal, affective, motivational, and relational elements that also make up a performance. Further, this demonstration happens in a real live setting, and is, therefore, influenced and defined by the elements and factors that make up that setting, situation, or context.

As for the taxonomy in the affective domain, Bloom writes:

Affective objectives vary from simple attention to selected phenomena to complex but internally consistent qualities of character and conscience. We found a large number of such objectives in the literature expressed as interests, attitudes, appreciations, values, and emotional sets and biases. (p. 7)

[T]he process of socialization, with its development of behavioral controls, is a topic with which the affective domain is much involved. (p. 38)

Bloom then points out that it is often difficult to separate the cognitive from the affective. He writes:

Many of the objectives which are classified in the cognitive domain have an implicit but unspecified affective component that could be concurrently classified in the affective domain. (p. 48)

Which means that you can easily slip in some affective outcomes with your cognitive objectives, thus making it easier to obtain the desired behavioral changes. And, according to Bloom's research, this is better done at an early age. He writes:

The evidence points out convincingly to the fact that age is a factor operating against attempts to effect a complete or thorough-going reorganization of attitudes and values. (p. 85)

The evidence collected thus far suggests that a single hour of classroom activity under certain conditions may bring about a major reorganization in cognitive as well as affective behaviors. We are of the opinion that this will prove to be a most fruitful area of research in connection with the affective domain. (p. 88)

If you learn nothing else from reading this article than the fact that the psychoeducators know how to cause a major reorganization of values in the mind of a child in one single hour of classroom activity, then you've learned why it is so dangerous to put a child in a public school. I know of an 8-year-old second-grader in Michigan who hanged himself because of a film he was shown in the classroom. It took only one hour in the classroom to change that child's life for good. The taxonomy continues:

[Psychologist Gordon] Allport (1954) emphasizes the basic reorganization that must take place in the individual if really new values and character traits are to be formed. (p. 89)

It is not enough merely to desire a new objective or to wish others to be molded in the image that we find desirable or satisfactory. We must find ways of understanding and determining what objectives are central and significant if we are to summon the appropriate effort to achieve these more complex objectives. (p. 90)

Everything in Outcome-Based Education can be found in Bloom's writings. For example, in his book *Human Characteristics and School Learning*, published in 1976, Bloom expounds on his theory of Mastery Learning, which is at the heart of the methodology in OBE. The basic idea is that most students can learn what the schools have to teach "if the problem is approached sensitively and systematically." What makes mastery learning work, says Bloom, is the feedback-corrective procedure. He writes:

The feedback procedures typically consist of brief formative tests, at the end of each learning task, which indicate what the student has learned and what he still needs to attain mastery of the task. Mastery is frequently defined as something approximating 80 to 85 percent of the items on a criterion-referenced test. (p. 125)

In mastery learning the pupil is required

to take as much time as necessary in order to achieve mastery of whatever it is the teacher wants him or her to learn. In fact, the pupil cannot advance to the next task or learning module until the previous task or learning module has been mastered. This means that the pupil may not graduate far beyond the age of 18 until he or she can demonstrate that politically correct learning has taken place.

A key premise of OBE is that, under mastery learning, all students can learn and succeed and that the school can control the conditions of success. In other words, time constraints will no longer decide how long a student remains in school. As the OBE policymakers in Minnesota said when Bill Spady told them that not every student would be in school for the same length of time or take the same courses, "If they can't demonstrate the outcomes of significance, then we shouldn't be letting them out of school."

NEA Resolution

This may mean changing the compulsory attendance laws to accommodate this feature of OBE. They may also be changed to force parents to put their preschoolers in the hands of the public educators. The National Education Association passed a resolution on early childhood education at their convention in July 1993. It reads:

> The [NEA] supports early childhood education programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight. The Association believes that such programs should be held in facilities that are appropriate to the developmental needs of these children. The Association further believes that early childhood education programs should include a full continuum of services for parents and children, including child care, child development, appropriate developmental and diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices. The Association believes that federal legislation should be enacted to assist in organizing the implementation of fully funded early childhood education programs offered through the public schools. These programs should be available to all children on an equal basis and should include mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance.

Why this interest in early childhood education? The answer can be found in Bloom's 1964 book, *Stability and Change in Human Characteristics*. He wrote:

> We can learn very little about human growth, development, or even about specific human characteristics unless we make full use of the time dimension. Efforts to control or change human behavior by therapy, by education, or by other means will be inadequate and poorly understood until we can follow behavior over a longer period. (p. 5)
>
> The absolute scale of vocabulary development and the longitudinal studies of educational achievement indicate that approximately 50% of general achievement at grade 12 (age 18) has been reached by the end of grade 3 (age 9). This suggests the great importance of the first few years of school as well as the preschool period in the development of learning patterns and general achievement. . . . The implications for more powerful and effective school environments in the primary school grades are obvious. (p. 127)
>
> We believe that the early environment is of crucial importance for three reasons. The first is based on the very rapid growth of selected characteristics in the early years and conceives of the variations in the early environment as so important because they shape these characteristics in their most rapid periods of formation.
>
> Secondly, each characteristic is built on a base of that same characteristic at an earlier time or on the base of other characteristics which precede it in development. . . .
>
> A third reason. . .stems from learning theory. It is much easier to learn something new than it is to stamp out one set of learned behaviors and replace them by a new set. (p. 215)

And that is why the OBE people want to get at the children as early as possible, to indoctrinate them before anybody else can get to them. And that is why the NEA is pushing for early childhood education from *birth* to age eight. It is also important to note that the men in the forefront of the OBE movement were either graduate students of

Bloom or closely associated with him. Today, Bloom is Professor Emeritus and in his 80s. No doubt he is pleased with the work of his disciples who have managed to get virtually every state legislature in America to mandate OBE in their public schools. This by far is the most complete cultural revolution ever to hit America, and most Americans are not even aware that it is taking place.

Mary Foley's Curriculum

The following is an excerpt from a longer statement which Mary Foley, a mother of four children, presented to a court on Cape Cod in Massachusetts when she was denied the right to homeschool her 9-year-old son, Christian, by the local school superintendent because of a lack of an acceptable curriculum. She argued:

> I do not have a curriculum. I have never used one.... The state does not have the power to standardize children. My education philosophy precludes the use of a curriculum. My method has been successful enough to produce a daughter who is a member of the National Honor Society and twin sons who, after one year of school (4th grade), tested in the top one percent on a national placement test for two consecutive years.
>
> The priorities of our curriculum are daydreaming, natural and social sciences, self discipline, respect of self and others, and making mistakes.... Our curriculum was best expressed by Blake:
>
> To see a world in a grain of sand,
> And Heaven in a wild flower
> To hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And Eternity in an hour.
>
> If we are not free to educate our children, our liberty is an illusion.

Believe it or not, Mary Foley won her case!

Math Problems Stump Students

Few students in the U.S. can solve math problems that require more than an educated guess, according to Department of Education statistics. Only 16 percent of 4th-graders, 8 percent of 8th-graders, and 9 percent of high school seniors tested could answer math questions requiring problem-solving skills.

Nearly 250,000 students attending 10,000 schools in every state took the test in 1992. Fourth graders were asked to use words and pictures to show that a boy named Jose who ate half a pizza could have eaten more pizza than a friend, Ella, who ate half of another pizza. The answer is Jose could have eaten half of a larger pizza. But only 23 percent of the students gave a satisfactory or better answer. Nearly half, 49 percent, gave an incorrect answer. Seven percent did not respond.

The tests were an extension of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams, administered last year. Those results showed that students were getting better at math although nearly 40 percent failed to reach basic proficiency levels. But the new tests did not give students a choice of answers. Instead, they were required to draw pictures and diagrams and write explanations of their answers.

Tests requiring such detailed answers are considered more effective in revealing what a student learned. But they are also much more expensive to administer because they must be graded by humans rather than computers. (*Boston Globe*, 9/2/93)

Comment:

Is it possible that many of the students had more of a reading problem than a math problem? If they couldn't read the problem well enough to understand it, they certainly would not have been able to solve it.