

June 28, 2001

Mr. Michael Milkin
The Milkin Institute Review
1250 Fourth Street
Second Floor
Santa Monica, CA 90401-1353

Dear Mr. Milkin:

I have just read the latest issue of the Milkin Institute Review and felt the need to write to you. First, I want to congratulate you on your Global Conference with the Nobel Prize winners, which I found quite enlightening. Second, as a fellow sufferer of prostate cancer, which in my case was successfully treated, I thought you might be interested in my experience with the disease. And third, your thoughts on education, particularly touching on demographics, are vitally interesting to me.

Concerning my prostate cancer, I was cured by a combination of radiation and hormone treatments planned and administered by Dr. Anthony D'Amico and his wonderful staff at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. Dr. D'Amico is one of the nation's foremost experts on prostate cancer and is continually seeking better and more effective means of treatment. He is on the cutting edge of prostate research, and I hope that your foundation will consider him worthy of its support.

The remarks you made at your Global Conference touched on areas I have been working on for the last thirty years. You said, "It sounds to me like there is a consensus here that one of the major assets in the United States is our higher education system. And quite possibly, it has more than offset the deficiencies in our K-12 system."

The question is, that with all the money being spent on our K-12 system, why should there be any deficiencies at all? Yet, we know that those deficiencies are real and that they threaten the future of our country by turning out students who can't even read their own diplomas. The situation is particularly acute in California where the teaching of reading by the whole language method has produced a literacy disaster in your state as well as in other states. This has particularly impacted on minority children living in the large cities. White middle-class parents will find tutors for their kids, or take them to Sylvan Centers, or even enroll them in special schools for children with reading problems. We have such a school here in nearby Lincoln, Massachusetts, the Carroll School.

Michael Milkin

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Samuel L. Blumenfeld

By the way, I write a column for World Net Daily, the Internet newspaper with the world's largest Internet readership, and I would like very much to interview you. Perhaps a book might come out of such an interview. Please let me know if this interests you.

Meanwhile, I am enclosing several columns and back issues of my newsletter relevant to the subject matter of this letter. The booklet, "The Victims of Dick and Jane," was originally published as an article in Reason magazine.

Looking forward to hearing from you, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Samuel L. Blumenfeld". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Samuel L. Blumenfeld" in the header.

SAMUEL L. BLUMENFELD

73 Bishops Forest Drive Waltham, MA 02452 781-899-6468 slblu@netway.com

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production of testosterone that feeds prostate cancer cells, and the radiation would destroy the cancerous cells in the prostate and reduce the gland to the size of a peanut.

In preparation for all of this, I had a chest x-ray, two MRIs, a bone scan, and many blood tests. The radiation treatments, 36 of them, took about a month and a half to complete. All of this was done at the Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. The radiation therapists and nursing staff were wonderful in every respect. Apart from the time spent driving to and from the hospital and the 15 minutes for the treatments, I was able to keep working at my usual pace with no loss of energy. At the end of the treatment, the therapists gave me a diploma.

One of the side effects of the radiation is the need to urinate quite often, particularly at night. I didn't suffer from any other side effect, so I can't speak of what other patients might experience.

As for the hormonal pills, I will be taking them until the middle of June. Their only annoying side effect are hot flashes, the kind that women suffer during menopause. It's a learning experience for any man.

I was told by my doctor, one of the world's experts on prostate cancer, that I could expect to live the next five years without a prostate problem. He also told me that it was his expectation that radiation plus hormonal pills would probably replace surgery as the preferred treatment for all prostate cancer patients, regardless of age.

The reason why I've written all of this is because the public should know that prostate cancer, diagnosed early enough, can be treated without disrupting an individual's work life. Of course, it all depends on the individual, one's ability to tolerate radiation and pills. But I see no reason why Rudy Giuliani can't pursue a vigorous campaign for the Senate even though he will have to take time out for his treatment. His love life is another matter altogether.

One other consideration. Prostate cancer does not improve one's sex life. In fact, it has a rather dampening effect on sexual interest. But that's a small price to pay for many more years of life with its so many other pleasures. Of course, for those who can't do without an active sex life, there is always Viagra.

Now that we know that all men are susceptible to prostate cancer, it is important to know as much about the subject as possible. Research is advancing at a breathtaking pace, and one should keep abreast of the latest developments. Maintaining a healthy prostate is easy enough these days with all of the dietary supplements and herbal pills now available. Periodic blood tests are the best means of catching the disease in its earliest stages. And that's the key to successful treatment.



This was the method that created the high literacy of our founding fathers, the men who wrote the Declaration of Independence. Back in those days, biblical literacy was considered imperative, and therefore everyone was taught to read either at home or at a dame's school. Those little alphabetic-phonics primers did the job extremely well.

If you want something similar to those old primers, get my book, "How to Tutor." Or get my Alpha-Phonics kit, which has audio tapes for parents who never had phonics but want to teach their children to read phonetically.

The sorry truth is that today's public schools cannot be trusted when it comes to the teaching of reading. To avoid reading problems, dyslexia, cognitive dysfunction, etc., you will have to do the job at home. Fortunately, good teaching materials for parents are now available.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld is the author of several books and programs enabling parents to teach their children to read at home: "How to Tutor" and "Blumenfeld's Alpha-Phonics." To get "How to Tutor," call 208-322-4440. For "Alpha-Phonics," call 888-922-3000.

preschool level where children are taught to memorize sight words so that they will develop a holistic reflex, the precursor to dyslexia.

An article on Preschool Learners reveals, "[T]eachers know, and research confirms, that by the end of the year, kindergartners often can read some common sight words. By the end of 1st grade, children can be expected to possess a reading vocabulary of 300 to 500 words." What parents are not told is that learning that many words by sight will guarantee that the child will become dyslexic. For a holistic reflex prevents children from automatically seeing the phonetic structure of a word. It is that blockage that causes the condition we call dyslexia.

The only redeeming article in the entire magazine is an interview with Dr. Sally Shaywitz of the Yale Center for the Study of Learning and Attention. She has studied the brain mechanisms involved in reading. About learning to read, she says,

The most comprehensive reading program explicitly teaches about the sounds of language. It teaches children that words can be broken up into these smaller units of language, that the letters represent these units of language -- phonics. ... All children can benefit from being taught directly how to break up spoken words into smaller units and how letters represent sounds.

But on page 41 of this same magazine, we are told by whole-language experts to "avoid, whenever possible, a focus on isolated skills, isolated letters, and isolated sounds."

There seems to be a serious educational disconnect between neuroscientists like Dr. Shaywitz and idiots wearing black T-shirts proclaiming they are being blacklisted for believing in whole language. Such is the confused state of reading instruction among our educational leadership.

Samuel L. Blumenfeld is the author of eight books on education, including his reading programs, "How to Tutor" and "Alpha-Phonics." The Alpha-Phonics reading kit is available by calling 888-922-3000. "How to Tutor" as well as "The Whole-Language/OBE Fraud" can be obtained from the Paradigm Company, 208-322-4440 or via Amazon.com.

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