

WHY ARE CHILDREN KILLING THEMSELVES?

A Look Into Teenage Suicide

By Samuel L. Blumenfeld

The suicides of four teenagers in Bergenfield, New Jersey, in March 1987 shocked Americans into an awareness that something is desperately wrong with a large number of American youth whose behavior has become so bizarre, so anti-life, that the American dream seems to be falling apart before our very eyes.

The four teenagers -- Thomas Rizzo, 19; Thomas Olton, 18; Cheryl Burress, 17, and her sister, Lisa, 16 -- were found dead at about 6:30 A.M., seated in Olton's rust-colored Camaro with its engine running in a closed garage. On the front seat was a lengthy suicide note written in pen on a brown paper bag and signed by all four. The suicides were clearly the result of a pact.

The four had been last seen about 4 hours earlier when they bought \$3 worth of gas at a Bergenfield service station. They had asked the attendant for a 10-foot-long vacuum hose, but were turned down. Apparently they had tried to slash their wrists prior to dying of carbon monoxide poisoning. Olton had marks on both his wrists. Rizzo had similar marks on his left wrist. A razor blade was found near his body.

The garage was located behind a blue-collar garden apartment complex where teenagers often gathered at night to socialize and drink. The town, a middle-class suburban community, six miles west of New York City across the Hudson River, had experienced a series of tragedies involving its young people. On June 13, 1986, Christopher Curley, 21,

was run over by a train. To mourn his death, a group of about 20 friends met in the backyard of Steven Kesling's house. One of the crowd, Paul Brummer, drowned two months later in Cooper's Pond -- an apparent suicide. The following month, Steve Kesling jumped in front of a train and was instantly killed. Then, a few days later, the crowd was shocked by the accidental death of its popular leader, Joe Major, 18.

Along with five friends, Major had been drinking on top of the tall Palisades overlooking the Hudson River. Friends say he was posing for a picture when he slipped and fell more than 200 feet to his death. Thomas Rizzo had watched him fall, and Lisa Burress had been Major's girlfriend. Both died in the suicide pact.

That all of these youngsters were involved with alcohol and drugs goes without saying. Alcohol and drugs are the currencies of socialization among most American high schoolers. Music is the cementing bond among them. At Bergenfield High, the group to which the four belonged were into heavy metal: Led Zeppelin, Metallica, Grateful Dead. Both Rizzo and Olton had gotten deeply involved in drugs and had undergone rehabilitation at Fair Oaks Hospital in Summit, N.J. They had dropped out of Bergenfield High School. Lisa Burress, a sophomore, was suspended in February.

Many students and parents were angry at the school officials for their belated and meager response to the alcohol and drug problem which they considered to be rampant among the students. But everyone was "baffled" by the suicides. One student told a reporter, "What I don't understand is what can be so bad at 16 or 17 that can't be solved?"

A 15-year-old sophomore spoke of the Burress sisters. "They sometimes said, 'Oh, I wish I were dead,' but everybody says things like that. You don't really believe it."

Charles Pierrepont, a junior, told a reporter that he had written a letter to President Reagan last August asking "for any kind of help, legal advice, grants, whatever," for starting a group that would stop teenagers from killing themselves. Students Against Teen Suicides -- S.A.T.S. -- was the name he had thought up. "I was just sick of losing so many friends," he said.

Of course, the events in Bergenfield are only the visible tip of a very large iceberg. Most of the 5,000 to 6,000 teenage suicides that now occur each year across America get little or no publicity. For example, the several suicides that occurred in Carlisle, Iowa, a suburb of Des Moines, were quietly hushed up so as not to glamorize suicide among impressionable youngsters. Somehow, the authorities see teenage suicide as some kind of contagious disease that is spread by publicity. Otherwise, school officials, counselors, and psychologists express bafflement at the phenomenon.

But common sense tells us that there must be a cause for such drastic, abnormal behavior, behavior that was unheard of twenty or thirty years ago. The only cause the psychologists have come up with is "low self-esteem." Low self-esteem may indeed be an ingredient in teenage depression, but many of the teenagers who have killed themselves were hardly the victims of low self-esteem. At Carlisle, Tony Rodman, the 17-year-old who killed himself in 1985, was the high school's best athlete and an excellent scholar. Similarly, in Springtown, Pennsylvania, Shawn Stackhouse, 18, the third student at Palisades High School to commit suicide in 14 months, was co-captain of the football team and

quite popular with his peers. In neither case was drugs mentioned as a contributing cause.

So why are these young people killing themselves in such unprecedented numbers, and why is it happening all over America, in large cities, suburbs, and small towns? What all suicides have in common is the belief that death is preferable to life. In other words, all suicides are brought to the point where life becomes unbearable and hateful and death becomes the acceptable, benign alternative.

It is easy enough to understand why an individual with an incurable, painful disease might prefer death to life. But the will to live is so strong that people will often endure the worst suffering in order to survive. But why would physically healthy youngsters, living in the freest and richest nation in the world, prefer death to life? Why would they hate life and love death?

Not surprisingly, many of the teenagers who kill themselves come from affluent, middle-class families. They live in comfortable homes, are well fed and clothed. They have cars, videos, stereos, designer jeans. They travel on holiday vacations, visit Disneyworld, devour hamburgers, pizzas and milkshakes. They live in a society with boundless opportunities. Yet, none of this is enough to satisfy them. Apparently, material affluence cannot make up for spiritual impoverishment. And hidden behind those who have committed suicide are thousands of others who have attempted to do so or given it serious thought.

Since so many of these suicides either take place in schools or involve schools, we ought to at least ask if there is something going on in the schools that may be contributing to teenage suicide. It's not an unreasonable question, is it. One thing is certain, there was no teenage suicide when I was attending public schools in the 1930's

and 40's. Yet, there was a depression, a world war, the holocaust, and an atomic bomb. Even so, teenagers, as I recall, had an optimistic, bouyant view of life -- even though we saw much more of death in our youths than today's young people are faced with. Some of my classmates were killed in World War II, but I do not recall a single suicide in the twelve years I attended public school. But in the last ten years, 50,000 teenagers have committed suicide!

Fifty thousand! The same number as Americans killed in the Vietnam war. To "stop the killing," thousands of students marched in the streets, took over university buildings, burned draft cards, committed civil disobedience. But no one is demonstrating to stop the teenagers from killing themselves, and there have been no Congressional investigations. All we have is anguish, handwringing, bafflement and calls by educators and counselors for more "death and suicide education."

Most Americans have never heard of death education, or even values clarification, but these are the very subjects being taught in our schools that are creating in many young minds and hearts a hatred of life and a love of death. How is this done?

The object of values clarification is to enable students to shed or get rid of the values and religious beliefs of their families and create new sets of values reflecting their own personal desires and leanings, particularly those regarding sex. Many a youngster with homosexual leanings has been encouraged by values clarification to reject the traditional Judeo-Christian prohibitions against sexual perversion and adopt an open and assertive homosexual lifestyle.

Values clarification, of course, is humanism in action. It rejects the God of the Bible, the absolute moral standards set by the Ten Commandments, the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Here are some of the tenets of humanism as presented in Humanist Manifesto I, published in 1933:

"Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.

"Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as the result of a continuous process. . . . The individual born into a particular culture is largely molded to that culture.

"Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. . . . The way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relation to human needs.

"Religious humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.

"Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world."

Thus, according to the Manifesto, humanists must not be satisfied merely with creating a new nontheistic religion to compete with the existing traditional religions, but must transform, control, direct

and reconstitute all existing associations and institutions to suit humanist goals. As the Manifesto states, this "is the purpose and program of humanism."

Public education is one of the institutions that has already been totally transformed and reconstituted by the humanists, and values clarification is the means by which humanists transform, control and redirect the values of children under their care.

The humanists claim that the purpose of life is not to glorify God but achieve personal self-fulfillment. Thus, children are told that there is no God to glorify, that they are the products of evolution, intrinsically no better and not much different from other "animals," that they have no souls, and that there is no savior, no redeemer, no forgiveness of sins (for there are no sins), no love from God, no life eternal, no absolute morals or values, that their only purpose on earth is self-satisfaction, self-fulfillment, self-realization, although humanists are not too sure what they mean by "self-realization."

According to an article in the Journal of School Health (Feb. 1975), values clarification methodology entails a three-step process:

"This theory defines values as: (1) Chosen freely from alternatives, and after thought. (2) Cherished and affirmed publicly. (3) Acted upon consistently so as to become part of a pattern of life." Public affirmation, therefore, is an important part of the process, and that is why such events as Gay Pride parades in cities across America are little more than public exercises in values clarification.

The school curriculum was transformed in the 1940's and 50's by humanist educators to incorporate and reflect all of the goals of humanism. Many books have been written describing this transformation in great detail -- from Lawrence Cremin's The Transformation of the School (A.A. Knopf, 1961) to R. J. Rushdoony's The Messianic Character of American Education (Craig Press, 1963) to my own NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education (Paradigm, 1984).

For humanists to deny that they now control public education, or pretend that they are not proselytizing students is simply a reflection of their intellectual dishonesty and moral depravity.

The National Education Association goes so far as to deny that it even knows what humanism is. In one of its recent pamphlets it wrote: "The whole notion of secular humanism is, in fact, entirely the invention of Radical Right leaders, writers, and fund-raisers. They've conjured up the concept, defined it, villified it, and then attributed it to teachers." (The Radical Right Attack on the National Education Association, March 1985, p. 4.) Yet, the NEA sponsored the creation of the National Training Laboratory at Bethel, Maine, in 1948, where the very techniques of sensitivity training, group dynamics and values clarification were developed. It described the lab as "an intensive learning experience . . . in which a staff of social scientists help translate research findings into classroom practice."

The values clarification programs now in the schools are the handiwork of the humanists' "social passion," their compelling need to evaluate, transform, control and direct everything.

One of the most insidious of the values clarification exercises is the/"survival game." Richard Mitchell, with his biting wit, describes such an exercise in his book, The Leaning Tower of Babel:

"The game provides a dramatis personae clearly differentiated by 'socially significant' attributes: age, sex, ethos, calling, and other such contingencies by virtue of which a person is also a local and temporal manifestation. This is not one of the contexts in which educationists choose to warble paeans to 'the uniqueness and absolute worth of the individual.' (Inconsistency troubles them not at all; . . . In this case, the verdict must be 'relevant,' conducive to 'the greatest good for the greatest number,' and the exclusive focus on


accepted notions of 'social usefulness' assures that a decision will be made. . . .

"The children who 'play' the game usually decide to dump an old clergyman, a man who is supposed to be prepared for that sort of thing -- being fed to sharks by a committee of children, that is. A busty young country-western singer will be preserved. She has many long years ahead of her in which to maximize her potential and serve the greatest good by entertaining the greatest number. And she is supposed to be prepared for that sort of thing -- being elevated to wealth and power by a very large committee of children."

Obviously, there are many children whose psyches can survive the survival game, but you wonder with what kind of a world view. Others are far more vulnerable. Dr. Harold M. Voth, senior psychiatrist at the Menninger Foundation, writes:

"Many of the exercises of the Values Clarification process are beyond the young person's comprehension. They are forced to contemplate carrying out acts (forced choice decisions) which in themselves violate the values they have been taught. I can see no purpose whatsoever in forcing a child to consider tossing an old woman out of a sinking rowboat or deciding who was more guilty in a grotesque tragedy of some sort.

"Values Clarification exercises, the exploration of attitudes and ethical systems inevitably involve the psychological makeup of the student and the teacher or counselor. The personality and its functioning of the pupil should be off limits to educators. How a child develops psychologically is the sole responsibility of the parents. . . . The human psyche is a complex system and should never be tampered



with by inept individuals under the guise of Values Clarification rhetoric."

My own experience confirms what both Prof. Mitchell and Dr. Voth say. In May 1986, while on a lecture tour of the Northwest, I was handed a values clarification exercise by a parent in Lewiston-Clarkston, on the Washington-Idaho border. The situation was that of 15 people left on earth in a bomb shelter after a nuclear holocaust with supplies enough for only seven to survive until it was safe to resurface. Included was a description of each of the 15 people, their age, race, religion, education, profession and lifestyle. Students were told, "It is your task to decide which seven persons will survive. Be prepared to justify your choices."

I was shocked by the assignment. Children were expected to decide who should live and who should die merely on the basis of social usefulness. Obviously many of the children realized that they were much less socially useful than some of those they were required to condemn to death. And the children were given the impression that this ^{is} ~~was~~ what life ^{is} ~~was~~ all about, that someday they'd have to make such horrendous decisions in actuality.

When I complained at a news conference that this exercise was nothing less than the spiritual and emotional molestation of the students by their "educators," the principal of Clarkston High School defended the assignment as one that teaches students the "process one goes about in making choices." The principal was quoted in the local newspaper as saying that "the experience would not scar students and the exercise is not unrealistic in this age of nuclear threat. To not discuss such issues would be a disservice to students. I stand

behind what's going on in that class wholeheartedly."

Statistically it would have made more sense to teach children what they might do with a million dollars won in a lottery than what they might do if they were one of 15 left alive on earth! In addition, how could that principal be so sure that the experience "would not scar students"? Dr. Voth said that it might, and Dr. Voth knows more about the psyche than ^{does} the principal. In fact, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that children are indeed being scarred by such classroom exercises that spread pessimism, depression, and a hatred of life. Children take these exercises seriously. How can one love life if human sacrifice is taught as a means of solving social problems and the socially useless are singled out as prime candidates for such sacrifice? What an utterly grotesque view of life to inculcate in the minds of young children.

But values clarification is only one half of the lethal equation. The other half is "death education," as hideous a pedagogical perversion as has ever been concocted by supposedly sane educators. Never have children been subjected to a more subtle, insidious and satanic form of psychic seduction and abuse.

Death education began to be taught in American schools in the early 1970's after the 1969 publication of Elizabeth Kubler-Ross's influential book, On Death and Dying. Dr. Kubler-Ross, a Swiss psychiatrist, born in 1927, came to the United States with her family in the early 60's. She worked with terminally ill patients in Chicago and Denver. It was at the hospital in Denver that she gave a lecture on death and dying to medical students that made her famous and changed her life. Hitherto, the topic of death had been taboo. But since

the publication of her book, she has traveled widely, lecturing to health professionals and laymen, visiting dying patients, spreading her credo that "dying can be one of the most beautiful, incredible experiences of life if it is shared with loved ones." Acceptance of death has become the central theme of Dr. Kubler-Ross's work.

In the 1970's Kubler-Ross became involved with a spiritualist cult in Southern California, led by a "spiritual healer" named Jay Barham who believed in "spirit guides" and practiced "out-of-body experiences." With Barham she founded a healing center called Shanti Nilaya, "the final home of peace," which has also become the center of a religious movement. In 1979, a scandal involving Kubler-Ross and Barham made headlines. According to a Playboy interview in 1981:

"In private sessions held at the Barham's ranch, a cult of followers gathered regularly to materialize spirit guides into human form. Barham was ostensibly the 'channel,' or medium, used. When group members began smelling transcendental rats, they defected in large numbers, speaking of odd sexual activities involving the 'spirits' and the guests. The San Diego district attorney's office entered the scene to investigate the story of a ten-year-old child sexually abused by a spirit entity who may or may not have been Barham in disguise."

Eventually, the scandal died down and Kubler-Ross moved Shanti Nilaya to Virginia. Kubler-Ross herself has become the charismatic leader of a New Age death cult. According to Omega, The Journal of Death and Dying (Vol. 16, No. 2 - 1985-86):

"Kubler-Ross' religion is a new form of an old tradition of religious thought and practice, namely, the tradition of the mystery religions, which thrived in pre-Christian antiquity. The

womb and the grave have been equated in mystery religions. . . . This is precisely the significance of Kubler-Ross' choice of death and dying as her primary consideration as a charismatic leader."

How and why Kubler-Ross's teachings were adapted for the classroom instruction of children in America's public schools is something of a mystery. We can only assume that humanistic educators were strongly attracted to Kubler-Ross's philosophy of death and dying and felt compelled to bring this hitherto taboo subject to America's children. The Bible tells us in Proverbs 8:36: "All they that hate me love death." In other words, the love of death is equated with hatred of God.

The strong Biblical admonitions against spiritualism probably account for the death taboo in Western culture. We read in Leviticus 19:31: "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God." And in Leviticus 20:6, we read: "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after ~~w~~izards, to go awhoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people."

Just as all the other Biblical taboos have been removed by the humanists, so the taboo against death has been removed. Death, of course, was the consequence of man's disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Mortality is the result of our sin, and as the Bible tells us, "The wages of sin is death." That is the human condition, which can only be overcome not by acceptance of death but by acceptance of Jesus Christ. Thus, fear of death, or death anxiety, is not only inescapable, but reasonable, rational, and even desirable in that it will motivate

us to avoid behavior that may lead to death. According to Prof. Richard W. Momeyer: "The man who is utterly fearless before death is foolish perhaps to the point of madness, and the one who is sanguine to that which really is terrible is rash." (Omega, Vol. 16 (1), 1985-86.)

Yet, the stated purpose of "death education" is to remove the fear of death among children, to make them accept death as "a part of life," not as the annihilation of life. Kubler-Ross has said: "I have never viewed death as a tragedy, nor have I been afraid to die." But Aristotle has said: "Now death is the most terrible of all things; for it is the end, and nothing is thought to be either good or bad for the dead."

So what should we teach our children? Parents have not been given a choice. The death educators have chosen to teach Kubler-Ross, not the Bible, not Aristotle.

What does death education actually consist of? Death educators vary in what and how they teach, but usually the components include questionnaires delving into the child's view of death and dying; epitaphs, the writing of obituaries, eulogies, /wills; planning funerals; visits to cemeteries and mortuaries; reading stories and books about death; discussing abortion, euthanasia, and suicide. The whys and hows of suicide are discussed and suicide notes are written. In some visits to funeral homes, children try out coffins; in math they measure each other for coffins, and in shop they build model coffins. Children also study the death customs of other cultures and develop a death vocabulary. In one second grade class that I know of, the children used the information in an obituary to work out arithmetic problems. Some death education exercises include fantasizing about dying.

Thus it is easy to see how death education can be integrated into reading, math, shop, social studies, spelling, and art, where children draw pictures of death. There is no end to the possibilities.

But what effect has death education had on the children? Oddly enough we know very little about that. Not even the spectacular ^{has} increase in teenage suicide/stimulated interest or curiosity among educational researchers in the effects of death education on the children. Yet, much can be gleaned by reading between the lines of articles that advocate death education.

For example, in an article published in the January 1980 issue of The Clearing House entitled "Death Education: Help or Hurt?" the author warns educators that they'd better get some death education skills before teaching the subject in the ^{classroom} ~~classroom~~. "Few school teachers," she writes, "have had training in the area and even fewer have been exposed to the problems and dangers associated with teaching about death and dying."

Problems and dangers? What problems and dangers?

"Death arouses emotions," she writes. "Some students may get depressed; others may get angry; many will ask questions or make statements that can cause concern for the instructor. . . .Students may discuss the fact that they are having nightmares or that the course is making them depressed or feeling morbid. . . . Others may have no reactions or feel a great sense of relief that someone finally is talking about the things they often felt they could not say. Others may become frightened. In fact, Bailis and Kennedy report that secondary students increased their fear of death and dying as a result of participating in a death education program."

Depression, fear, anger, relief, nightmares, morbidity. These are the emotions and reactions stirred up in students by death education. However, according to the writer, simply because death education can cause such emotional turmoil is no reason not to teach it. "Since death has been such a taboo topic, open and honest communication is essential. Such communication," she writes, "helps to desensitize students to anxiety-arousing items."

Thus, death education is being used to "desensitize" children to death -- to remove or reduce that reasonable, rational and useful fear of death that keeps us from killing ourselves.

Death educators are quite aware that they are dealing with a taboo subject, yet they are unwilling to ask why the subject has been taboo in Judeo-Christian culture. Just as discarding the taboo against premarital and perverted sex has led to social anarchy, individual misery, the murder of the unborn, and deadly disease, so has discarding the taboo on death led obviously to a dramatic rise in teenage suicide, a revival of pagan death cults, demonic practices, devil worship and satanic murders.

^{All they that}
"~~Those who~~ hate me love death," says the Bible. Death education promotes love of death.

Not unexpectedly, the National Education Association has played an active role in promoting death education. It pioneered in the development of sensitivity training and values clarification by sponsoring the National Training Laboratory, and it has promoted death education by sponsoring the writing and publishing of Death and Dying Education by Prof. Richard O. Ulin of the University of Massachusetts.

The book includes an 18-week syllabus for the death education teacher. An article in the Boston Herald American of July 23, 1978, states: "At the time [Prof. Ulin] began doing reading and research, the National Education Association, the publisher of the book, was looking for someone to write about death education. A friend who had heard about the NEA's quest matched the author with the publisher."

The NEA has also promoted death education in its Journal. An article entitled "Teaching About Death" in the March 1973 issue tells us that "Death by its very nature involves science and medicine, social studies and sociology, psychology, history, art, literature, music, insurance, and law." Thus, death education can easily be integrated into any subject and permits classroom discussion concerning "the moral and ethical issues of abortion and euthanasia, and the spiritual and religious aspects of death and afterlife." The article ends with this justification for teaching death education: "Subject matter for today's education must have universality, must be intrinsically interesting, must be intellectually challenging, must have both personal and social relevance, and must prepare students for life. We believe that teaching about death meets these criteria."

In another article, also entitled "Teaching About Death" (Sept.-Oct. 1976), the author, an English teacher at a Wyoming high school, wrote: "The highlight of the course was our visit to a mortuary and cemetery. . . . Afterwards . . . a boy stated, 'The visit to the graveyard and funeral home really blew my head, and I had to talk and think about death.'" And another student commented: "After discussing it with others, death didn't seem like such a terrible happening."

Death educators, of course, are aware that fear of the subject

among teachers must be overcome. An article in Phi Delta Kappan (March 1974) states:

"It is considerably easier to know something about sex education as an adult than it is to have experience with one's own death. But at least we do possess value-clarification precedents in approaching the subject of death. We have the rich experience now of sensitizing adults to racial and economic discrimination, sex stereotyping, and other human relations problems. It should be possible to apply some of the strategies used in those earlier inservice efforts to the topic of death and dying. No administrator should be surprised to find that his staff is afraid of handling this topic, when he considers that research studies reveal similar fears among medical practitioners and even prospective funeral directors. . . . Surely the topic is too important to be kept in the morgue any longer."

Now that death education has been ~~out of the morgue and~~ in the schools for over ten years, is there a way to measure its impact in terms of teenage suicide? Yes, there is, simply by piecing together the periodic reports on rising teenage suicide.

According to the NEA Journal of November 1964, there were 550 teenage suicides in 1962, seven years before the publication of the Kubler-Ross book. In April 1971 the NEA Journal reported that teenage suicide had increased to where it was "now the fourth leading cause of death among young people, exceeded only by accidents, malignancy, and homicide." The article further revealed that the rate of suicide for 15 to 19 year olds was 4.0 per 100,000; 8.4 per 100,000 among 20 to 24 year olds; and only 0.5 per 100,000 among 10 to 14 year olds.

By September 1977 the NEA Journal reported that suicide had

become "the third most common cause of death (after accidents and homicides)" among 15 to 24 year olds. The ~~report~~^{article} goes on:

"Suicide is reported rarely in youngsters before the age of 14, but at that age, there is a sharp rise in the frequency of both suicide attempts and suicides.

"The apparent large increase in the incidence of depression in teenagers is a relatively recent phenomenon. Until the last decade or two, depression was considered primarily to be a mental disorder of midlife or old age. Beginning in the 1960's, however, an increasing number of reports of depression in college youths appeared in the scientific literature, and some epidemiologic studies during the last few years have shown that depression is a common disorder among the young. This shift toward younger age groups is an ominous sign"

Depression in children can lead to suicide. According to the Journal of School Health (November 1974), "Normally, adolescence is a time of wide mood swings, from very high to very low. . . . The risk of suicide is very high in the 15-25 year age group, particularly for males."

Yet, that high-risk age group is the one particularly targeted by death educators and values clarifiers who are knowingly causing widespread suicidal depression among the young.

Can anything be done about it? At this time all children in public schools and even in some private schools are at risk. Values clarification and death education are so firmly entrenched in the curriculum that only a major rebellion on the part of parents and teachers will be able to change anything. The only immediate solution

for concerned parents is to remove their children from the public schools and teach them at home or put them in reliable Christian or private schools. If they don't, they may face the agony of parents, such as those in Leominster, Massachusetts, who were left notes by two 15-year-old girls who committed suicide in November 1984. One note read:

"I'm happy! I love you all so Please Don't Be Sad or think it's your falt. Its just what I wanted to do so Good Bye for now! . . . I'm HAPPIER THIS way. I (love) you all so much!"

The other note read:

"Life sucks and then you DIE! GoodBye cruel world I'm leaving you now and thiers' nothin you can Say To make me change my mind! YES SA! I Love to Die I'd be happier I know it! So Please Let me Go. No hard feelings. Don't Be Sad ReJoyce Its my new beginning! It Didn't hurt I'm free and happy."

It's almost as if these girls had fallen in love with death! Such abnormal, bizarre behavior among ordinary children does not come out of nowhere. As Dr. R. J. Rushdoony has said: "Humanistic education is the institutionalized love of death." In other words, death seduction is the new satanic danger our children face.

In the fall of 1986 two researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago reported that "the white, male youth suicide rate has apparently stabilized at or near the highest point in recorded history." The suicide rate among white males 15 to 24 years of age had reached a peak in 1977, when, on average, about 22 out of every 100,000 young men killed themselves. Since then, the rate has appeared to stabilize.

The slight decline from the 1977 peak can be attributed to the removal of thousands of children from the public schools in the last ten years.

But what all of this means is that we can expect the teenage suicide rate to remain near its all-time historic high for the indefinite future, meaning that teenage suicide, like teenage drug abuse, promiscuity and pregnancy, violence, and functional illiteracy, has become a permanent problem in America.