

Opinion

Kids need information on 'moral' issues

As a society we believe in education — until it involves an issue that is even slightly controversial. Many wonder why children are taking drugs and getting pregnant. Our reluctance to educate our children about drugs, sex and alcohol are to blame for the delinquency of many youth.



D.A. Jensen

It's not enough to tell the kids that they are too young for sex "just because." It's not adequate to tell them that drugs are illegal "just because." It's like telling them they can't do something because adults say so for no good reason. It just makes experimentation more likely. It increases the appeal of the very things they aren't supposed to do.

The path to controlling teen-age experimentation with sex, drugs, and alcohol is information. Information means education.

I'm talking about the kind of education that is not provided on a regular ba-

sis in the home by the nuclear family. I'm talking about current state-of-the-art information presented in a non-judgmental fashion. I wish that type of information was available to every child, but it's not.

There aren't many parents in this country who will sit down with their children and tell them the facts about drugs and sex. These are subjects many parents don't feel comfortable discussing. While these parents wallow in their discomfort, their children learn about drugs and sex on the street, where the information they receive is usually wrong and sometimes life-threatening.

Education is the answer, but it isn't a very popular idea because many parents, politicians and clergy are afraid that educating the kids about the "Naughty Three" will promote promiscuous behavior and premature use. They claim that information about such controversial "moral" issues should be left in the home, where they can control the climate in which the information is presented. And I agree, in a way.

It's very important for children to know where their parents stand on per-

tinent issues, like drugs and sex. It is through this knowledge that the morals and values of youth are formed. So I say keep home education and discussion open and lively, but don't rely on it as the sole source of information available to this country's youth.

Let's open communication channels for sex and drug education in the public school system. Let's educate the children about issues they must face, because there is no way to protect them from life. Life in today's society means exposure to drugs and sex — and misinformation about both.

Children have a natural curiosity about everything at a very young age, so start education early. Maybe they won't

understand everything they are told, but at least they will have the foundation for a complete education.

It's possible to tailor an education program to the age level of the students. It's done every day in reading and math. It can be done for sex and drug education as well.

I wonder if parents realize that some children (not theirs, of course) are experimenting with sex and drugs as early as elementary school. It's imperative that education begin before experimentation.

I think it's encouraging that the advent of AIDS has finally forced the issue of sex education on the public. It finally became possibly fatal to be uninformed or misinformed, where before there was

only the risk of VD or pregnancy. Protection, in the form of information, is finally available on a grassroots level.

I'd like to see that information extended to the people who really need the youth. I believe giving kids information will enable them to make informed decisions about drugs and sex. It is a decision they will make with or without knowledge. I'd rather have them make their decision with it. I give them enough credit to believe they are capable of assessing the information they receive. I know they cannot assess information they do not have.

I think we should have children make life.

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WHICH DOPE WAS MORE TO BLAME FOR THE GINSBURG FIASCO?



A.



B.

BEN SARGENT
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Original News Service

Pot use no reason for nomination to go up in smoke

There are those who say it is unfair that Judge Douglas Ginsburg, President Reagan's latest failure as a Supreme Court nominee, had to take a fall because he'd smoked dope some years ago. And they're right.



Donald Kaul

A large percentage of the best and the brightest of the Baby Boom generation has experimented with drugs at one time or another in their lives. Like it or not, those are the facts. It borders on the idiotic to treat that experimentation as a mark of Cain, one that disqualifies them for positions of authority for life. Personally, I would have disqualified Ginsburg for other sleazy episodes of his shady past.

In another, larger sense, however, justice was served in the Ginsburg case as it was played out. The Reagan administration got precisely what it deserved. The president's men have been famous for being the tough kids on the block when it came to drugs. Hit the users as well as peddlers, give jail sentences, show no mercy. According to an administration official, this is the Reagan policy on employment in the Justice Department.

"... Occasional marijuana use in college is frowned upon, but not an absolute bar to employment. The use of marijuana in law school is a lot more problematic, but any drug use after becoming a member of the bar is an absolute bar."

Ginsburg admitted smoking grass while a law professor at Harvard. Thus, by the president's own standards, Ginsburg doesn't belong on the Supreme Court.

So what does the president do? When Ginsburg was forced to reveal his drug use, Mr. Reagan said, in effect: "Boys will be boys. Let's forgive and forget."

Fine, then let's expunge the police records of all the people who have been arrested on minor drug charges in the past 25 years. That's not a bad idea, actually, but until the flat earthers in the Reagan administration are ready to do it, forget high appointments to the high court.

Beyond that, you have to wonder what is going on in the White House. How could the president's advisers have let him publicly defend Ginsburg? There was no chance — I mean zero chance — that the nomination would fly at that point.

Ginsburg's problem wasn't Bork's, that he had too many enemies, it was that his friends didn't like him. When Ronald Reagan puts up a person for the Supreme Court whom Joe Biden defends and Chuck Grassley dumps on, you know, to use the words of a future world leader, that he has stepped in the deep doo-doo.

I don't blame Mr. Reagan. I sincerely believe he doesn't know what's going on — not in the economy, not in the world, not in his basement. He needs help and he's not getting it.

You have to begin to suspect that Attorney General Edwin Meese is a Democratic mole in the Reagan Cabinet. It was he who talked the president into putting up Ginsburg's name after Mr. Reagan had all but settled on a more moderate choice, Judge Anthony Kennedy of California.

One of the side effects of the fiasco is that politicians have started to confess that they too used marijuana in the dear, dead long ago, on the theory that it's better to admit it now than have it come out later.

I too have a confession.

I have never used marijuana. Not once, not ever.

I don't brag that around much, for fear of being accused of being a member of the Moral Majority. My relative innocence is not a matter of high moral standards; it's cowardice. You see, I have enough trouble controlling my use of drugs that come with ice cubes in them. If I ever enjoyed a drug that didn't give me a headache and make me want to throw up the next day, I'm afraid I'd be lost.

So if President Reagan is looking to change his luck with Supreme Court nominees, he just might look in my direction. I'm going to be keeping close to the phone for the next couple of days, just in case.

On with the comedy.

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Mail Call

Do it right or don't do it

EDITOR:

I was pleased to see that someone at *The Battalion* has a sense of humor. The switching of the photographs accompanying the article about my lecture on infant nutrition and a study of roaches was a masterful piece of tomfoolery. Luckily for *The Battalion*, I also have a sense of humor.

I was not amused, however, by the distortions of my lecture about the determinants of infant nutrition was primarily concerned with a peri-urban community in Mali; it was not about "Africa" as the headline implies. In case Mr. Schexnaider doesn't know, Africa is an entire continent, with 55 countries. Therefore, my lecture was not about infant nutrition in "Africa." Second, I did not say that infant nutrition was not affected by economic constraints. I said that economic problems did not explain all of the malnutrition in Mali, nor did population problems alone, or lack of education alone. I said that some children were growing well in spite of all these problems, and that their nutritional status could be explained, in part, by certain maternal behaviors. The conclusion to be drawn from this data is that infant malnutrition may have a cultural solution. At no point did I say or imply that cultural beliefs were a "problem" which caused infant malnutrition to the exclusion of economic constraints.

If your reporters cannot be more accurate, I would prefer that they did not cover such events. They do more harm by misrepresenting what was said than they do good by reporting the event. Mr. Schexnaider gets an "A" for attendance, but a "D" for comprehension.

Katherine A. Dettwyler

Editor's Note: The photographs in Friday's *Battalion* were accidentally marked with the wrong page numbers, and were therefore inadvertently switched and run on opposite pages. A correction published in Monday's

Battalion explained the error. No sense of humor or masterful tomfoolery was involved.

The headline accompanying Lee Schexnaider's story indeed was inaccurate. Schexnaider, however writes stories, not headlines, and should not be held responsible for the mistake.

Wake up!

EDITOR:

The Corps of Cadets is the oldest and most respected organization on the Texas A&M campus. However, there is a problem in today's Corps of Cadets that has to be addressed: the problem freshmen in the Corps have in maintaining passing grades.

Every morning, I see the results of the Corps tradition of making life miserable for its freshmen. Evidence of early morning Corps runs or late night crap-outs are seen in the classroom through the nodding heads and the snores of freshmen. Not only is this detrimental to their grades, but to the Corps of Cadets as well. In general, freshmen test scores are low, their homework is never complete, and they are too afraid of upperclassmen to concentrate on their education.

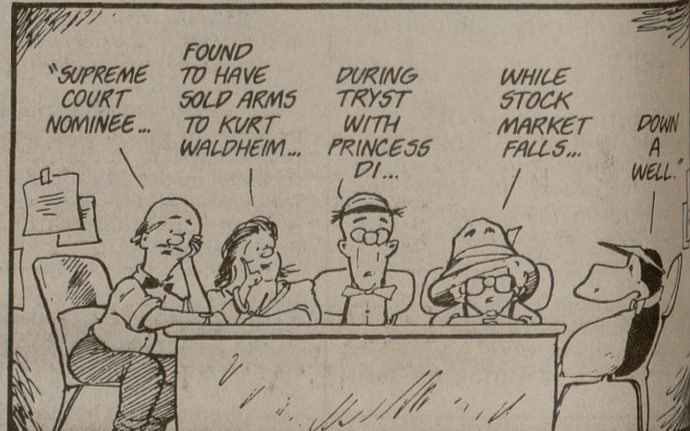
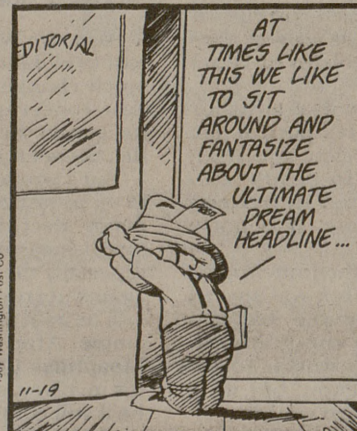
I am a firm supporter of the traditions of Texas A&M, but the time for change has come. Upperclassmen in the Corps should allow their freshmen more time for study than the two or three hours they receive during their call to quarters. Not only would this help to raise the Corps' GPR, but it would also help to polish the Corps' image. I ask only for a few extra study hours of freshmen in the Corps. After all, they are here to get an education.

Derek Murie '91

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed



The Battalion

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