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From:  
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To:  
Letter to the Editor  
The Detroit News

The Sep. 9 article, “ ‘Values education’ gets key test in Michigan,” reveals yet another example of how schools are indoctrinating children with pre-selected ideas rather than teaching them to think and draw conclusions for themselves. Consider the startling number of graduates who leave school with poor math and writing skills, but are well versed in all of the popular environmental and multicultural dogma. By digesting conclusions with no knowledge of how they were arrived at, young people have no way of determining their truth of falsehood.

Should we be asking “whose values” and “which values,” or should we be asking “how can we give children the necessary tools to choose their own rational values?” The answer to the latter question implies an act of choice and of self-interest. Perhaps this will offer a look at the motives of today’s educational reformists. Do they believe that people have the right to pursue their own interests and live for their own sake? Or do they believe that people are sacrificial beasts of burden for the rest of society?

We do not need to speculate what the answer to this question is. They have answered it for us. In the list of “Top 10 American Values” posted in all of the West Bloomfield public schools, we will find the following: “I will work together with others to improve my school, community, and world,” and “I will train myself to be useful to others.” These statements would seem innocent if arrived at by an act of choice; however, when memorized like some mantra in a government run institution, it is the first step toward conditioning our children to be slaves for the rest of society. They are taught that the group comes before the individual, that the individual is the means to the ends of others, and that this should be accepted without question. Also found in the list of values is “I will complete projects and courses of study which I have begun.” Why? Certainly not for any benefit to the student if all that he has to look forward to is a life of servitude.

The reformists make a vague attempt at an answer when they include, “...long-run achievement is more important to my happiness than short-run pleasure.” However, their ideas of achievement and who should benefit from it is readily apparent. When service to others is held as the highest virtue—an absolute without question—is it any wonder why students cannot find the incentive necessary to do better in school? Ayn Rand’s philosophy of Objectivism teaches people that our lives belong to us and that we are free to live for our own sake. What could be a better incentive than this for students to make the most out of school? Perhaps the educational reformists should consider bringing philosophy back into the curriculum. In particular, the rational, individualist philosophy of Ayn Rand’s Objectivism.

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