

Court order for bad kid no fix for bad parenting

OUR OPINION: Mothers had other options than going to court over their fighting children

After 3-year-old Jonathan allegedly kicked Antonina Pevnev's 3-year-old daughter Stacy in the head while the two were playing in the Charles River Park playground in Massachusetts, the frustrated mother decided to take the advice of Judge Wopner and *The People's Court*. She didn't take the law into her own hands; she took Jonathan and his mother to court.

Apparently, little Jonathan had beat up on little Stacy before, but the kicking incident was the last straw for Pevnev. She went to the police, who said they couldn't do anything about the assault, but they did tell her she could get a restraining order.

So she did. But we're not sure who the judge should rule in favor of — the little kids or the grown-up kids.

A Superior Court Judge granted Pevnev the restraining order and handed down some guidelines that instructed the mothers to supervise their children and keep them apart from each other while at the playground.

This case is just another sad example of parents who do not know how to raise their children. It also highlights the tendency of many Americans who run to the nearest courtroom any time they trip on some legality and fall-down-go-boom.

The problem is, they usually land on someone else's wallet.

Our courts are packed full of lawsuits and cases that could be solved in other

ways — if only people were more responsible for their actions (or for the actions of their children).

If Jonathan's mommy couldn't (or wouldn't) control him, it could be because he's a strong-willed child, she's an ineffective parent, or both. Regardless, Pevnev should have just taken her daughter to a different part of the playground. If doing that hadn't solved the problem, she could have taken Stacy out of the park and away from the habits of mean little Jonathan.

However, kids will be kids, and there are no guarantees that Stacy won't get mistreated somewhere else as well.

Mean kids can be found on most playgrounds, so Pevnev should probably try to train Stacy to walk away from children who play too rough or get physically abusive.

In her complaint, Pevnev wrote that she believed Jonathan and his mother were violent people and that the mother actually encouraged her son to "fight and kick and to behave in a manner not becoming to a responsible child."

Pevnev even filed an additional assault and battery complaint against Jonathan, just in case there is future trouble.

There is trouble — an insidious parenting crisis brewing in the land. And it can only be solved by parents becoming more responsible.

Jonathan obviously needs some behavior modification, and Stacy needs a safe place to play, but the courtroom isn't the place to make those changes.



LETTERS

Sweet sarcasm

I was delighted to see that your April Fool's Day editorial escaped early and appeared Tuesday (*ODE*, March 12). Absolutely hilarious, and much more in the tradition of the holiday's witty nonsense than the sort of thing you usually come up with.

Refusal to teach creation science as an example of educational tyranny — what a hoot! But no matter. April 1 is still more than two weeks away, so that leaves you plenty of time to do something involving Holocaust denial or the flat-Earth hypothesis.

Better get busy, though; in today's relatively enlightened intellectual climate — and on a university campus, yet! — it takes time to give such foolishness the illusion of legitimacy and believability. With Tuesday's work as an example, though, I'm confident that you'll do a terrific job.

Keep up the good work.
Michael E. Stamm
Graduate Secretary
English Department

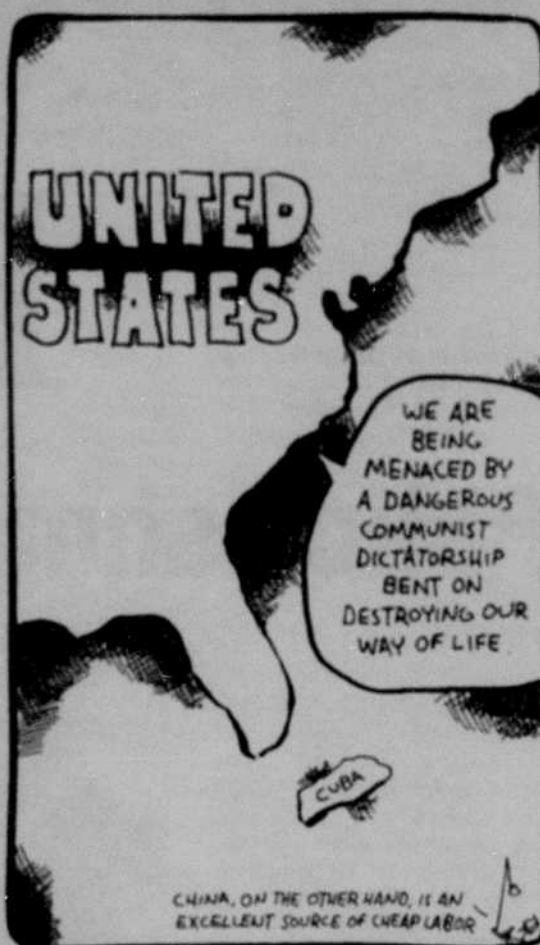
Not science

I was surprised that the *Emerald* editorial staff recommends teaching creationism in parallel with evolution (*ODE*, March 12). The most charitable assumption is that this editorial resulted from profound ignorance about the real motives behind the effort to promote creationism in the public schools.

"Creation science," as inventors want it to be known, is a deliberate attempt to disguise the fundamentalist Christian creation myth as a scientific theory in order to make it more palatable to public school teachers.

All references to the Christian god and the Bible were removed. However, the story is the same. It requires the student to accept that everything was recently created, essentially as it is today, by a Creator.

It denies evolution, in spite of the overwhelming evidence in support of it, and also that near-



CHINA, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS AN EXCELLENT SOURCE OF CHEAP LABOR

ly all scientists, and many devout Christians, accept evolution.

Creationism is not a scientific theory; there is no scientific evidence for it, and to advance it as science is intellectual dishonesty. The courts have consistently ruled that it is religion, and thus may not legally be taught using public funds.

If there are any doubts about the motives of "creation scientists," simply suggest that the Native-American or Hindu creation myths also be taught as theories, and watch them go into orbit!

There is a great deal of intelligent (and some not so) discussion or creationism on the Internet, which can be turned by a search for the keyword "creationism."

Jim Remington
Institute of Molecular Biology

Jesse don't preach

Just a few quick comments regarding Jesse Bohrer-Clancy's column (*ODE*, March 12).

Jesse, before you grab your roommate's handy-dandy copy of the Bible and find anymore "goodies" for us, why don't you actually read it?

If you don't read it, and you don't have your own copy to read, you should educate yourself a little bit before tackling another masterpiece on Bible-thumpers. Unfortunately, you have developed all of your information from your own little world view and haven't done any thinking or studying on your own; we call that being close-minded.

Yes, misinterpretation of the Bible does lead to many mistakes; your article is an excellent example of this. Is Leviticus the only spot in the Bible where homosexuality is mentioned? Was it written to you or to God's chosen people in 1445 B.C.? These are some examples of questions that need to be asked, so you don't embarrass yourself again.

Just because I'm a follower of Jesus Christ doesn't mean that I check my mind at the door.

Christian morality comes as a result of following Jesus Christ, not from a list of dos and don'ts.

The most influential man to ever step foot on the face of the Earth, Jesus Christ, and the book that has been circulated more than any other in the history of man, the Bible, deserve more than a slap in the face by Bohrer-Clancy.

Do us all a favor, Jesse. Read the Bible. And the next time it's your turn to write for the *Emerald* opinion page, leave it alone. I'd rather have the doodle space.

Aaron James
Sociology

Serious and sad

Looking at the Associated Press photo of conservative Republican Pat Buchanan, all smiles while holding a rifle above his head during a campaign in Arizona, I find myself wondering if this guy can actually be serious. I can only say one thing in regards to the support he's obviously received for this type of public display: How sad.

Dougal T. Williams
Economics/Spanish

Tree-free

Deforestation for the continued use of paper products is even more archaic than the slaughter of the buffalo. With nearly half of all the harvested trees in the United States being beaten to a pulp (for paper) one only has to wonder how long our forests will survive.

I urge everyone to minimize their paper consumption and to use tree-free alternatives. Why not save the last remaining stands for our recreational, medicinal and spiritual enjoyment?

Papers made from Kenaf, hemp and agricultural wastes are becoming more available, and although they may cost more "out of pocket," the true cost to our environment makes them the best deal for our forests, our future, our children and ourselves.

Robert Ross
Eugene

Oregon Daily Emerald

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