Jane Addams, who have expressed a concern for the poor are represented. In short, these are stories for the "me generation"—stories that express and perpetuate what Christopher Lasch so aptly describes as the "culture of narcissism"—a culture heavily supported by contemporary social science and educational theory.[1]

4. *A feminist emphasis.* By far the most noticeable ideological position in the readers is a feminist one. This shows in a number of ways. To begin with, certain themes just do not occur in these stories and articles. Hardly a story celebrates motherhood or marriage as a positive goal or as a rich and meaningful way of living. The few with a modest pro-motherhood emphasis are set in the past or involve ethnic mothers. No story clearly supports motherhood for today's woman. No story shows any woman or girl with a positive relationship to a baby or young child; no story deals with a girl's positive relationship with a doll; no picture shows a girl with a baby or a doll. This absence of any positive portrayal of traditional womanhood is clear evidence of bias.

Even romance receives short shrift. Only five stories focused on any form of romantic love—and one involved two dogs (Macmillan:3)! Another is an O. Henry story about a young man and woman who have fallen out over a misunderstanding (Lippincott:6), and a third features a young black girl who daydreams that a popular singer will fall in love with her (Economy:6). A fourth story has a loving prince win the hand of a princess even though she has apparently changed into a cat (Houghton Mifflin:6). A fifth story (also Houghton Mifflin:6) involves a captured Confederate officer. His new wife (dressed as a man) tries to rescue him from prison and almost succeeds. But in the end the officer is killed, and she is caught and hanged. Her ghost is said to haunt the area. The emphasis is more on her daring attempted rescue of her husband (feminist: the wife as hero) than on romance. In retrospect, only the O. Henry story is really a romance. Though great literature, from *Tristan and Isolde* to Shakespeare to Jane Austen to Louisa May Alcott, is filled with romance and the desire to marry, one finds very little of that in these texts.

There are...stories that rewrite or misrepresent history by referring to women judges, merchants and soldiers at times and places where, in fact, there weren't any.

There are, however, role reversal "romances." For example, there is a story of a princess who set out to slay the dragon in her kingdom: she invents the first gun and with it shoots and kills the dragon. The slain dragon turns into a prince who asks the princess to marry him. She rather casually agrees but only if her new kingdom has lots of dragons in it for her to slay and lots of drawbridges for her to fix. She wants to keep busy at such things ("Young Ladies Don't Slay Dragons," Holt, Rinehart & Winston:6). There is not one story of a prince rescuing a princess or slaying a dragon. In these readers, no man saves or even attempts to save a woman.

Stories set in the past and featuring sex role reversal are very common, as are parodies of traditional stories about kings and queens or about young men rescuing maidens. Examples are: "The Queen Who Changed Places with the King" (Scott, Foresman:3); "The Practical Princess" (Holt, Rinehart & Winston:3); "The Queen Who Couldn't Bake Gingerbread" (Ginn:3); "Castle under the Sea" (Ginn:6); "The Last of the Dragons" (Lippincott:6); "The Princess and the Admiral" (Allyn & Bacon:6); "Trouble in Camelot" (Holt, Rinehart & Winston:6). The last three stories are especially hostile toward men and male roles.

The frequent stories of female successes in these books are all in traditional male activities and are told in very masculine vocabulary. For example, there are many stories about women fliers, e.g., Amelia Earhart, Harriet Quimby (Ginn:6; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich:3; Laidlaw:6; Lippincott:6; Macmillan:6). There is only one story on the Wright Brothers—and it is one page long (Macmillan:6); nothing on Charles Lindberg or any other male aviation pioneers. The stories about women pilots use such words as **courage** and **daring**, while stories about men almost never use this vocabulary.

There are also explicitly feminist stories, such as those about leaders in the women's movement, e.g., Elizabeth Blackwell, the first female M.D. (Allyn & Bacon:6), and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (Houghton Mifflin:6). These stories about real feminists are much more factual than the feminist fiction pieces and address an important historical movement. Because they are honest and straightforward in their purpose, they contrast sharply with the manipulative and wish fulfillment quality of the many other feminist stories and articles.

Other examples of strongly feminist stories are the following: a story about a new kid on the block who wins at "King of the Hill" and other boyish activities but who turns out to be a girl (Allyn & Bacon:3); a dog sled race between a girl and a boy where the girl turns back to rescue the boy when he gets in trouble and still manages to beat him to the finish line (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich:3); a story of the star baseball player—a girl—who is in a hitting slump because her favorite Rusty McGraw bat is missing. Her friend, a girl detective, solves the problem by finding that a boy has stolen it so he could make the first team home runs (Heath:3). Stories showing competition, especially physical competition between girls and boys, almost always have the girl winning. In short, stories about "Wonder Woman and the Wimp" are common throughout these books while traditional sex roles are almost entirely excluded. Another example is the story in two readers of the girl trail boss who drives longhorn cattle back from Texas to Illinois (Ginn:6 and Laidlaw:6).

There are other types of feminist bias in these books, such as stories that rewrite or misrepresent history by referring to women judges, merchants, and soldiers at times and places where, in fact, there weren't any. In one astonishing instance, an Encyclopedia Brown mystery is rewritten. (Encyclopedia Brown is a boy detective in a series of stories that are popular with children.) The rewritten story changes Encyclopedia to a girl (Laidlaw:3). Some kind of feminist emphasis characterizes approximately 10% of the stories and articles in the sample, that is, 65 items, and the bias is especially heavy-handed in at least many of them. As already noted there are no equivalent stories representing traditional concepts of womanhood. Likewise, countless parents wanting clear male role models for their sons will not find them in these books.

Conclusions

When one looks at the total sample of 670 pieces in these basal readers, the following findings stand out. Serious Judeo-Christian religious motivation is featured nowhere. References to Christianity or Judaism are rare and generally superficial. Protestantism is almost entirely excluded, at least for whites. In contrast, primitive and pagan religions, as well as magic, get considerable emphasis. Patriotism is close to nonexistent in the sample. Likewise, any appreciation of business success is grossly unrepresented. Traditional roles for both men and women receive virtually no support, but feminist portrayals regularly show women engaged in activities indistinguishable from those of men. Finally, clear attacks on traditional sex roles, especially traditional concepts of manhood, are common.

References

1. Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism* (New York: Norton, 1978).

Reprinted from ***Censorship, Evidence of Bias in Our Children's Textbooks****, copyright 1986 by Paul C. Vitz, published by Servant Publications, Box 8617, Ann Arbor, MI 48107. Used by permission. The book may be ordered from Servant Publications for $6.95 plus 75¢ for postage and handling.*

General Foods, CBS movie highlight adulterous priest, anti-Christian symbolism

CBS's January 28 made-for-television movie BROKEN VOWS involves an adulterous priest who leaves the church and converts to humanism. The movie, based on the novel *Where the Dark Streets Go* by Dorothy S. Davis, makes much use of symbolism.

Three things illustrate the symbolism: 1) A dying man looks strikingly like history's familiar pictures of Jesus Christ (dark complexion, pleasant face, beard, dark shoulder-length hair, etc.). 2) The dead man is then identified by three different names—Emile, Stuart and Rod—strangely reflecting the Holy Trinity. 3) He is always described in reverent, worshipful words of praise.

One early scene sets the stage for Fr. Joseph McMann's ultimate decision to leave the priesthood. Fr. McMann kneels over Emile (dying of stab wounds) and the two engage in this conversation:

Fr. McMann: Do you believe Jesus Christ can be your salvation?

Emile: That's between him and me and nobody else. And I'll know all about that soon enough.

Fr. McMann: You sound as if you already know.

Emile: I know the answer is not here.

Fr. McMann: How do you know that?

Emile: Just get to know yourself, my friend. Just get to know your-self.

Emile then closes his eyes and dies. Later it is revealed that Emile was an artist and the adulterous lover of at least two women. Yet at the same time Emile is revered by all, and his philosophy of life, that is humanism, is presented as far superior to the "chains" of Christianity. Fr. McMann eventually "converts" to Emile's philosophy.

Start to finish, Fr. McMann's remarks reveal his dissatisfaction with Christianity after 12 years in the priesthood. Several times he says that he feels useless. In one scene, after visiting a homosexual in the hospital, he challenges his Monsignor in a heated exchange:

Monsignor: We need to concern ourselves with God's mind. And that never changes.

Fr. McMann: But all around us the church is changing. We can provide leadership in the community. For God's sake, in California an archbishop has publicly acknowledged the gay Catholics. Now, how do you think that made them feel?

The priest's tone (speaking of homosexuality) is clearly one of advocacy. For Fr. McMann, one example of how the church should change and take a leadership role in the community is to condone homosexuality.

While Fr. McMann "gets to know" himself, he meets Nana, one of Emile's recent lovers. A week later, Nana and Fr. McMann go to bed together. The next morning this conversation occurs:

Nana: You're going to go back there (the church) and tell somebody all about this, aren't you!? You're going to confess and repent and beg to be forgiven!

Fr. McMann: Yes. You're going to confess everything to your analyst (psychiatrist), aren't you?

Nana: I'm not going to ask for stupid forgiveness! I'm not ashamed of loving you!

Fr. McMann: I'm not ashamed of loving you, I'm ashamed of betraying Him.

Nana: You mean Christ?

Fr. McMann: Yes.

Nana: **Christ has been dead for almost 2,000 years. Emile died a week ago, I don't feel like I betrayed him! (In this one short speech, Nana puts the dead playboy on the same level with Jesus Christ.)**

Fr. McMann: You never made a solemn vow to him (Emile) did you?

Nana (sarcastically): He never asked me to. Did Christ ask you?

Fr. McMann (with confusion and regret): The church says He did.

One man describes Emile as if knowing him were a spiritual experience: "...he touched me in a way that no man ever did. He was the most available person I ever met. Anybody could go to him—anybody. And if he thought he could possibly help, then he would. He was more use in the world...he touched more people than 50— I'm sorry, but he was more of a Christian than you (Fr. McMann) and your Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury rolled into one, and I don't even know if he believed in Christ."

When Emile's murderer (a lady named

The Networks and Christians:

RELIGIOUS BIAS IN AMERICA

This 55-minute video from NFD helps the viewer see exactly how the networks subtly promote their bias in comedy and dramatic programs.

I intend to use this in Sunday School classes and other places in order to impact the problem we face with the anti-Christian stereotyping in the networks...

—J. T. Phillips, Lay Leader
South Georgia Conference
United Methodist Church

Only $19.95

We have recently made available to the ministers in our denomination, your video **The Networks and Christians.** *The response has been great. Many ministers have asked for the video to show in their churches.*

—Tom G. Grinder
Office of the General Overseer
International Pentecostal
Church of Christ

'Must' viewing for all churches

Networks and Christians Video Order Form

Send ( ) Beta ( ) VHS

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ *State/Zip* _____

Send check with order to: NFD, P. O. Drawer 2440, Tupelo, MS 38803