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## Editorial Comment

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# EDITORIAL COMMENT

Much of the present controversy concerning educational objectives within our pluralistic and democratic society stems from the fact that human beings have diverse value systems upon which they base their decisions regarding ethical or moral issues. Many academicians assume that the theological value systems of the various major religions, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish, will always be pitted against each other in polemics that have no rational solution; that if there is to be any educational consensus, it must be in terms of a neutral, philosophical, secular and humanistic value system. Indeed, many leaders in nonsectarian education posit secular humanism as necessarily the sole value system for such education. They decry any attempts to employ alternative value systems, claiming them to be inimical to a nonsectarian approach.

In view of this controversy, *The Catholic Lawyer* has devoted this issue to a symposium dealing with the topic of *Ethics and Morality in Education*. While Catholics reason ethically and morally in terms of a value system rooted in the teachings of Christ and the Church, their commitment to such teaching cannot exempt them from testing their beliefs against other systems in dialogue undertaken in a truth-seeking spirit. In this connection, the editors have included in this symposium an article by the President of the New York City Board of Education, Robert F. Wagner, Jr., entitled, *The Family Living Including Sex Education Curriculum*. This article attempts to explain and justify the recent nonsectarian sex education curriculum mandated by the New York City Board of Education upon thirty-two New York City Community School Districts and almost one thousand public primary and secondary schools.

The symposium is introduced by an article written by the United States Secretary of Education, William J. Bennett, dealing with *Sex Education of Our Children*. It is Mr. Bennett's position that many sex education curricula display a conscious aversion to making moral distinctions. This aversion results in a value-neutral stance which provides facts, definitions, and a multitude of options concerning sex — but nothing else. Mr. Bennett argues that sex education should be provided to our children, but it should be presented in terms of a value system employing the Judeo-Christian values of today's society.

Other symposium articles deal with legal and sociological problems arising out of the sex education controversy. The concluding article is a scholarly treatise by Dr. Elizabeth D. Gee, dealing primarily with the problems of teaching legal ethics in law schools today. It can be read with much profit by chairmen and curriculum committee members of law schools throughout the country.

  
Editor

