

Kissing Games For Grade Schoolers' Parties Betrays Parents' Shallowness

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My son in seventh grade is being invited to parties at which the children play kissing games. I feel this should be discouraged but other parents laugh at me and accuse me of being prudish. They not only encourage but plan kissing games at their children's parties. Should I refuse to permit my son to attend these parties or is this a passing phase that they will soon outgrow?

Why should they "outgrow" a pleasurable indoor sport their middle-aged mothers have taught them to engage in just as they are about to enter the stage of puberty?

Rather universally in former times, as among all sensible families today, boy-girl relationships were kept at a minimum during this stage of development so that growing boys and girls could establish their independence and identity as masculine and feminine personalities as they gradually progressed from childhood through puberty.

This was considered the in-between, awkward age, when boys were supposed to be put in, though too old for teddy bears, were too young for walrus.

Owing to mothers like the ones you mention, this necessary developmental stage is gradually being eliminated with no thought of the possible consequences. Boys and girls in grade school are eagerly encouraged to ape the practices of adults. Zealous mothers send them to dancing schools, play opportunities for dates, and hover over their social development like trainers reading their colts for the Derby.

What has this to do with encouraging kissing games at parties? I believe all these attitudes and practices stem from the same source.

Let me explain.



graders are only children, how can anything they do in such games possible have sexual or emotional significance?

Now, in order not to be misunderstood, I wish to make it very clear that I do not feel that kissing games at this age are necessarily unprofitable. What I am protesting against are their obvious significance and unanticipated consequences.

Isn't it indicative of shallowness and shallowness on the part of mothers if they can plan no better entertainment for the parties of their grade school children than kissing games?

Why this type of game? Must the relationship between males and females always be geared to this level of physical contact? Can parents be surprised if their young people grow up knowing no other form of entertainment when boy meets girl?

It should be obvious to any one capable of thinking that the grade school children have as their major justification the aim to teach young people through wholesome experience how to develop responsible attitudes towards each other as persons. Otherwise it would be more sensible to have all-girl or all-boy parties.

Isn't it possible for youngsters to enjoy themselves at a party without imitating the morally questionable practices of grown-ups?

No doubt mothers who encourage and plan such games will feel that I am evil-minded in seeing danger where none exists. I suggest they examine their own attitudes concerning normal relationships between the sexes. Don't their actions imply that men and women, as well as boys and girls, can enjoy each other's company only if there is physical contact?

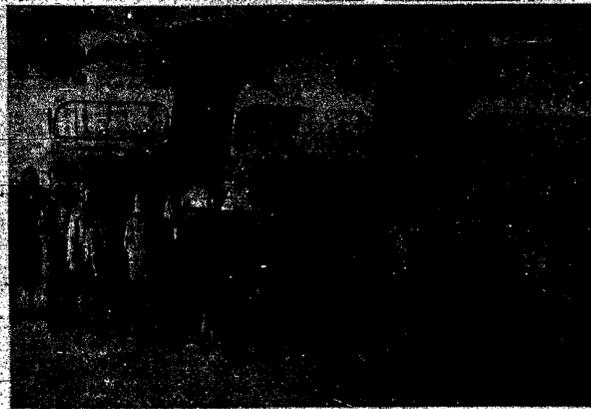
In our contemporary family system particularly among middle class families, mothers tend to take over the entire task of defining, directing, and managing the various practices associated with rearing and "launching" children. As in all societies, they are highly interested in social life and are anxious that their sons and daughters be socially acceptable and accepted.

Since they have now assumed the principal role in the child-rearing and launching process, they vigorously promote the social life of their children as one of their major preoccupations. Besides deriving considerable satisfaction from the popularity of their youngsters, they are well aware that the game is highly competitive, so they tend to encourage their young hopefuls

into the contest at even earlier ages.

Unfortunately, another feminine trait is associated with this quite understandable maternal anxiety to guarantee the popularity of their children. Women in our culture, apparently ignore the biological and psychological consequences of sexual development in their youngsters—perhaps even in themselves. As a result, they tend to promote early, frequent, and relatively intimate, boy-girl relationships while ignoring the necessarily emotional and sexual overtones of such youthful associations.

As you have discovered, anyone who questions their promotional activities is considered a prude. Why, then, little seventh- and eighth-



Trading Stamps Buy Buses

Provo, Utah—(RNS)—Obtained not with money, but with trading stamps, these three new buses carry children to and from the St. Francis Catholic School in Provo, Utah. The marathon stamp trade-in was engineered by Father Colman Collopy, O.F.M., principal of the school (far right), after an incident in which a front wheel fell off one of the school's old buses. Following a nationwide appeal for the stamps, the school received 7,708,860 of them, and got the buses as a result.

New Almanac, Fact Filled

Peterboro—(NC)—The 1960 edition of the National Catholic Almanac has been published and is now available at bookstores throughout the country.

Publication is made by St. Anthony's Guild here and Doubleday and Company, Inc. of Garden City, N.Y.

Almanac features include articles on "World Population and World Food Supply" by Father William J. Gibbons, S.J., sociologist and demographer; "Ethics of the Advertising Business" by Father Francis J. Connell, O.S.B., professor emeritus of moral theology at the Catholic University of America.

Other matters covered in the 696-page volume are the forthcoming Second Vatican Council, the position and problems facing the Church in Africa, and basic questions that could be

asked in the candidacy of a Catholic for President.

Comprehensive and up-to-date coverage is given to all phases of the Church in the United States, from the time of the earliest missionaries to the present.

Material revised and brought up-to-date from previous editions includes articles on censorship, social and literature, zoning legislation, desegregation of schools, birth control, and artificial insemination, plus biographies of cardinals, archbishops and bishops and outstanding Catholics of history.

The subject of separation of Church and State is covered in a feature on the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution by George E. Reed, associate director of the Legal Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference. The article includes portions of three documents, used by the framers of the amendment, which have been reproduced with the permission of the National Archives.

Observing that the Church currently "is attaching great importance to missionary work in Africa," the broadest advice is to give up hope of "capturing" that continent into its fold.

Vienna—(RNS)—Budget Radio, commenting on Pope John XXIII's recent encyclical "Præcis Pastorum" dealing with Catholic missions in Asia and Africa, charged that Christian missionaries "throughout history have always aided with imperialist colonizers against the natives, and still do so."

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Baptize Unborn

Johnsburg, N.Y.—(NC)—The Apostolate to the Unborn is a work carried on singlehanded by a woman whose loving message has placed a new light on the misfortune of miscarriage.

Mrs. Julius Seewald's campaign to inform mothers, doctors, nurses, and the public in general of the need for baptizing an aborted fetus is spreading widely.

She herself went through the sad experience of losing, through ignorance, to baptize the first unborn she lost before learning that the practice of baptizing is fitting and effective.

Mrs. Seewald sends out voluminous reading matter culled from every reliable source she can find. She herself has written a leaflet that accompanies the reprint and letters she mails to bishops, priests, theologians, and newspaper and magazine editors.

HER SOURCES are authentic, beginning with canon law and continuing through reputable moral theology writers.

"Care should be taken," she quotes canon law, "that every fetus born prematurely, at no matter what stage of pregnancy, be baptized absolutely if life is certain, conditionally if life is doubtful."

Theologians cited by Mrs. Seewald caution against guilt feelings on the part of mothers who through ignorance or confusion fail to baptize an aborted fetus, pointing out that it is the common consensus that the souls of unbaptized infants enjoy eternal happiness in Limbo.

They urge, however, that mothers or medical personnel perform baptism in case of a miscarriage, so that the infant's soul may possibly achieve the joy of Heaven.

Federation To Meet

Rome—(MCO)—The World Federation of Young Catholic Women will hold its quadrennial convention in Rome this year April 14 to 19.

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