How Not to Teach Values: A Critical Look at Character Education (*)
What does the alternative look like? Return once more to those five questions: in each case, an answer different from ... add some new ones, and reconfigure still others that already exist. I have already offered a catalogue of examples

And so we are left scratching our heads. Why would all these people, who know that the "transmission" model fails to ... throats but then participate in a program that essentially tries to shove moral truths down the same throats? In the

Were you to stand somewhere in the continental United States and announce, "I'm going to Hawaii," it would be understood ... you would probably be talking about one specific island in the chain – namely, the big one to your southeast. The word

Character education, or any kind of education, would look very different if we began with other objectives – if, for ... It would look different if our top priority were to help students develop into principled and caring members of a

This class are listening to the story of "Lazy Lion," who orders each of the other animals to build him a house, only to ... always say … what?" (Please.) The reason for using these words, she points out, is that by doing so we are more likely to

Let's put politics aside, though. If a program proceeds by trying to "fix the kids" — as do almost all brands of ... Virtually all the landmark studies in this discipline have been variations on this theme. Set up children in an

exhibit in such an environment. Instead of announcing, "This man is a hero; do what he did," such teachers may involve the students in

The character education movement's emphasis on habit, then, is consistent with its view of children. Likewise, its ... are things like obedience and loyalty and respect for authority. But this approach overlooks an important distinction

Let me get straight to the point. What goes by the name of character education nowadays is, for the most part, a ... the preferred method of instruction is tantamount to indoctrination. The point is to drill students in specific behaviors

And that raises the inevitable question: Which values, or whose, should we teach? It has already become a cliche to reply ... children ought to have. Therefore, schools can vigorously and unapologetically set about teaching all of those values.

unpleasant incident that was "correctly" resolved by finding an adult. The teacher never asks the children how they felt ... by telling the children, "What we need to do all the time is clarify – make it clear – to the adult what you did."

Thus the likely result of making students beat out their peers for the distinction of being the most virtuous is not only ... and, ironically, of the experience of community that is so vital to the development of children's character.

exact, do they do their best? Surely it is not just a matter of blind effort. And

To advocate this sort of enterprise, he adds, is to "caricature the moral life." See Alan L. Lockwood, "Keeping Them in the Courtyard: A Response to Wynne," in Nucci, p. 16.

41. To advocate this sort of enterprise, he adds, is to "caricature the moral life." See Alan L. Lockwood, "Keeping Them in the Courtyard: A Response to Wynne," in Nucci, p. 16.


contains such assertions as: "Most behavior problems are the result of sheer 'willfulness' on the part of children."[8]

rather than try to remake the students themselves — precisely the opposite of the character education approach.
