

Narconon's Drug Education Program: A Secular Program Within the Boundaries of the First Amendment

"Believing... that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their Legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, ' thus building a wall of separation between Church and State."

Thomas Jefferson to Danbury Baptists, 1802.

I- Introduction

It is a firmly held principle that religious proselytization has no place in public school curriculum nor in presentations made under the auspices of the schools to public school children by outside providers. In this context the question has arisen as to whether or not the Narconon Drug Education Program ("NDEP") comports with this principle.

The question arises primarily out of a concern that much of the material presented in the program was discovered or developed by L. Ron Hubbard, who is also the Founder of the Scientology religion. This fact, alone, clearly does not make the program religious in content nor does the presentation of material authored by Mr. Hubbard inherently entangle religion and the public schools. Rather, to know whether or not the principle of separation of Church and State and the First Amendment proscription against government sanctioned establishment of religion are violated or not by the presentation of the Narconon Drug Education Program in public schools, it is necessary to examine the content of the NDEP and evaluate that content against the principals involved here.

Such an analysis, as presented below, shows beyond question that the program is secular in nature, does not forward a religious creed or viewpoint, does not proselytize and, in sum, is wholly consistent with the secular nature of presentations in public schools.

II- Basic Definitions

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

There is a long train of constitutional cases addressing how this fundamental principal is to be interpreted and applied. Without seeking to present a full legal analysis, an essential measuring tool can be found in -- the Lemon Test. The test derives its name from the 1971 decision *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, in which the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a state program providing aid to religious elementary and secondary schools. The 'test' consists of three criteria established by the U.S. Supreme Court to be used in determining if an organization's practice or policy will be allowed or prohibited by the First Amendment:

- Does the [practice or] policy in question have a secular purpose?
- Will the [practice or] policy in question have a primary effect, which neither advances nor inhibits religion?
- Does the [practice or] policy in question avoid entangling government and religion?

An affirmative response to all three questions is necessary to ensure that a program does not cross the Church-State boundary. It will be shown below that an examination of the Narconon Drug Education Program clearly affirms its compliance to all three criteria and, thus, its secular nature.

In order to view this issue, it is necessary, first, to establish some definitions. As this paper is not an analysis of constitutional law, a simple, straight-forward definition will suffice. The basic definitions of "religion" in the Encarta College Dictionary are:

1. **Beliefs and worship** people's beliefs and opinions concerning the existence, nature, and worship of a deity or deities, and divine involvement in the universe and human life.
2. **Particular system** a particular institutionalized or personal system of beliefs and practices relating to the divine.

The relevant definitions of "secular" in this dictionary are:

1. Not concerned with religion, not controlled by a religious body or concerned with religious or spiritual matters
2. Not religious not religious or spiritual in nature

Additionally, Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition provides the following relevant definitions:

Religion:

1. Belief in a divine or superhuman power or powers to be obeyed and worshipped as the creator(s) and ruler(s) of the universe; b) expression of such a belief in conduct and ritual; from the Latin *religio*, meaning reverence for the gods, holiness.

Religious:

1. Characterized by adherence to religion or a religion, devout; pious; godly.
2. Of, concerned with, appropriate to, or teaching religion

Secular:

1. Of or relating to worldly things as distinguished from things relating to church and religion; not sacred or religious; temporal; worldly; from Middle English *saecularis*, worldly, profane, heathen.

III- Application of the Lemon Test

The first Lemon criterion is: **Does the [practice of] policy in question have a secular purpose?** In practice, this asks whether the program advocates, promotes or advances a religious or a secular purpose. It will be deemed religious if it relates to the divine, to the Deity or deities, to a creed or understanding of the nature of the universe. It will be deemed secular if it relates to non-sacred matters, to “worldly things”, to matters which are not religious in nature and, if it is controlled by a non-religious body.¹

An examination of the facts pertaining to the NDEP establishes that the program is secular in terms of this Lemon criterion:

Narconon literature describes its historical origins in this manner:

Narconon was founded in 1966 by William Benitez, a heroin addict who was incarcerated in the Arizona State Prison for a long series of drug-

¹ Again, there is a long and complex line of constitutional cases which has established that control by a religious organization is not, *ipso facto*, sufficient to determine that an activity is religious. For example, a parking lot owned by a religious organization and used by the general public (i.e., not exclusively for use by church staff and parishioners at worship), would be deemed a secular use.

related crimes. Benitez wanted to resolve his addiction and through his personal research into workable techniques to kick drugs ran into a book called *Fundamentals of Thought*, written by American author and humanitarian L. Ron Hubbard.

“Benitez was able to take principles out these writings by Mr. Hubbard to improve his ability to communicate about, face up to, and resolve basic life problems that had contributed to his drug addiction and held it in place for many years. Impressed with the effectiveness of this information as it related to drug addiction, Benitez formed an alliance with Mr. Hubbard and developed a workable drug and alcohol rehabilitation program that would free people from drug addiction without the use of substitute drugs or medications. Benitez formed the Narconon organization and Mr. Hubbard continued and shared his research and developments in the drug rehab field.”

Thus it can be seen that the Narconon program was created by a non-Scientologist. He used the information developed and written by Mr. Hubbard in a secular application and with a secular orientation. That is, the material was used to aid directly in addressing his addiction problems and to aid other, similarly situated addict to overcome their addiction problems.²

This secular nature of both the rehabilitation and drug prevention program continues today. It has no affiliation with any Church of Scientology, other than that its technology and programs are based on the works of Mr. Hubbard, who also founded the Scientology religion. In fact, personal notes from Mr. Hubbard’s researches into drugs and their effects on the body and mind demonstrate that his interest began many years before he founded Scientology and were clearly secular in nature, denoting an obvious scientific, analytical base of thought at the time.³ Rather, the Narconon Drug Education Program is

² Benitez started using these materials to aid his fellow prison inmates. Upon his release from prison, he continued these efforts, focusing initially on ex-inmates who were seeking to address addiction issues. Due to the success of the program, it spread beyond the convict community to the general public. Today the Narconon program focuses primarily upon providing substance abuse services to the general public, although it still maintains some justice-related programs, often implemented in conjunction with its sister program, Criminon.

³ In personal notes written in New York City in 1946 – almost a decade before the first Church of Scientology was incorporated – Hubbard wrote, “Everything administered to the body in the form of drugs which seems to benefit the body, takes something out of the body as well – burns something up...Or does it leave a poison in the body which upsets the normal balance? If so, what can be given to remove the poison? Alcohol, it is now known, burns up the thiamine chloride in the system. When the thiamine chloride is replaced, much of the harm is undone.” *L. Ron Hubbard – Rehabilitating a Drugged Society*, pg. 20-21, Copyright 1996, L. Ron Hubbard Library.

sponsored, run and overseen by the Narconon organization, ultimately headed by Narconon International which is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service to be a secular, not-for-profit, tax exempt organization.

The Narconon drug education program grew out of a desire by graduates of the Narconon drug rehabilitation program to provide an early warning reality to youth of what drug experimentation can in fact lead to. The drug education live presentations program was a grassroots movement based, typically, upon ex-addicts going into schools, community centers, youth groups, and businesses and adult social betterment organizations to “tell the truth about drugs.” Today the NDEP presentations are administered both by former substance abusers who have undergone the Narconon Drug Rehabilitation Program or by individuals who have observed the effectiveness of the Narconon approach to substance abuse and wish to use the information underlying that approach to prevent children and adults from falling into the trap of substance abuse.

In 1976, L. Ron Hubbard gave written permission to the independent, secular Narconon non-profit California corporation to “use his copyrighted materials, trademarks and names, and patents” that he “designated for use in drug rehabilitation.”⁴ This formally allowed the use of his materials in the non-religious, non-Scientology educational and life skills program delivered by Narconon. Narconon International, the corporate headquarters for the network, is actually licensed to use only Hubbard’s secular drug rehabilitation and prevention works. It should be noted that Narconon is not licensed to disseminate L. Ron Hubbard’s religious writings.

There is substantial evidence documenting that Narconon and other social betterment groups’ materials that are based on the secular research and writings by Mr. Hubbard have been used by government agencies worldwide. This evidence is tacit recognition that these are not fundamentally religious works.

For example, the Narconon program uses in one of its courses *The Way to Happiness*, a secular moral code written by L. Ron Hubbard. Its purpose is to provide Narconon

⁴ Footnote the letter...

students a chance to evaluate from a self-determined, non-religious framework the rights and wrongs of their past and future conduct. The Way to Happiness booklet states,

“This is the first non-religious moral code based wholly on common sense. It was written by L. Ron Hubbard as an individual work and is not part of any religious doctrine. Any reprinting or individual distribution of it does not infer connection with or sponsorship of any religious organization. It is therefore admissible for government departments and employees to distribute it as a nonreligious activity. (Reprinting can be arranged with the copyright owner or his personal representative.)⁵

In fact, this booklet (independent of its use in the Narconon program) has been widely distributed with the imprint of the governments of Venezuela, Nigeria, Honduras, and many others.

Thus it can be seen that the first of the Lemon criteria – Does the [practice of] policy in question have a secular purpose? -- is a clear affirmative. The Narconon program was developed specifically to aid substance abusers to overcome their addiction problems. It dealt and deals with the immediate, secular problem of the individual’s substance abuse. It focuses upon a here-and-now address to these problems and does not seek to inculcate the belief in any interpretation or understanding of the divine nor spiritual matters nor an overarching religious belief. The Narconon Drug Education Program utilizes the secular Narconon materials to alert youth and adults to the dangers of substance abuse. the NDEP contains to call to or promotion of religious values, orientation or belief system

The second Lemon test criterion is: **Will the [practice or] policy in question have a primary effect which neither advances nor inhibits religion?** Again, a systematic review of the Narconon Drug Education Program establishes that the only possible answer is in the affirmative.

To determine this, one needs to look at the materials, themselves, and the nature of their presentation. If the materials are non-religious, if the presentations are non-religious and if no religious view or program is advocated or advanced, then the only possible conclusion is that the program “neither advances nor inhibits religion”.

⁵ Back cover, “The Way to Happiness,” Copyright 1981, 2003 L. Ron Hubbard Library.

The Content of the Narconon Drug Education Program

Narconon presenters use an Information-based approach to impart vital data about drugs, at the same time improving students' abilities to make their own, independent decisions concerning drugs. At this time it is not a full-year curriculum, but rather a series of live presentations supplementary to existing in-school drug curricula. It also includes video materials or recorded live talks and some written pamphlets, etc. It has been delivered in 40 countries, with acknowledgement from authorities, schools, parents, police, etc. for over 30 years.

Paralleling this, throughout the world, has been an extensive community partnership drug *prevention* program of anti-drug public events, celebrity endorsements, a continuing series of drug prevention articles and public service announcements in the media, etc. Many government and other social betterment groups have and are working in collaboration with Narconon drug education presenters, including recently the Drug Enforcement Agency of the United States, the Philippine DEA, the Pakistan Anti Narcotics Force, etc. as well as police departments from many nations, and so on.

The Narconon drug education program is fundamentally an abstinence-based program. It takes that approach, however, that it is not sufficient to simply tell young people not to use drugs or that drugs are harmful. Narconon has never used 'scare tactics,' nor does it glorify drug abuse and stimulate curiosity. Rather it seeks to provide those present with *information* about the effects of drugs which they can then use to make informed decisions to avoid drug use. The Narconon presenters recognize that young people will be exposed to such substances in many forms and in many situations. The presenters seek to give young people information which they will find relevant and useful in understanding such substance use by their peers. It is the view inherent in the NDPL that only with adequate information will young people be able to see beyond the immediate appearance of benefit or enjoyment which their peers or media may express concerning

substance use and understand the very considerable risks to their health and well-being attendant upon such use.

Attendees at live talks are commonly told that the work is based on fundamental principles developed by L. Ron Hubbard. The data is presented, whether relayed in simple terms easy for youth to understand or more complexly for older youth or adults, is scientifically verifiable fact. What is discussed is that drugs are essentially toxic; they store in the body and have long-lasting, harmful effects on the body and the mind.

The program presents information about drugs and dangerous substances which students may use or to the use of which they may be exposed. Much of the fundamental information about drugs is broadly available, such as on the website of NIDA and other government agencies concerned with drug abuse. The presentations also include material about how drugs and alcohol use are portrayed directly in the media, in advertising and “subliminal” promotion such as the placement of such materials in movies. Students are consulted as to their observations and opinions on such matters.

Presentations include as very important material information about drugs which was discovered and codified by Mr. Hubbard. This includes such matters as the long-term storage of many drug residues in the fatty tissues of the body and the implications and consequences of this upon the substance user. This reaches, as well, into the effects of substance abuse on mental acuity, on motivation, on the user’s social interactions and emotional outlook.

It should be noted that virtually all these data developed by Mr. Hubbard as used in these presentations have subsequently been validated through scientific research and published in peer reviewed journals. Much of what Mr. Hubbard found, such as the storage of drug metabolites in fatty tissues of the body, was highly controversial when he first announced his discoveries but have since gained broad acceptance within the scientific community.⁶

⁶ The “scientific community” rarely speaks with a single voice. It is not contended here that all researchers agree with all points which Mr. Hubbard has developed. However a systematic

Thus one can safely maintain that the presentations are based on a “sound scientific footing” although it would be overreaching to assert that there is complete unanimity on all points in the scientific or academic communities.

Additionally, the Narconon Drug Education Program incorporates well understood and accepted pedagogical methods and strategies. These educational principles have been proven effective in public education, worldwide⁷:

1. Use terminology and vocabulary that is age-appropriate. Whenever needed, clearly define terms and clarify their meanings with the students. Discourage rote memorization and instead promote conceptual understanding.
2. Talk at a level with students. Didactic instruction is less effective.
3. Use role-playing and other techniques of demonstration to give life and substance to the information you are conveying.
4. Encourage students to pose questions and offer their own understandings. Encourage them to think for themselves. Your presentation is not one-way; it is a two-way process with continual exchange of communication between you and your students.
5. Give real-life examples, not isolated theory. Stress that you are dealing in information involving real people in real situations. Stress the application of the information.

Further, the NDEP’s presentations align closely with the National Institute on Drug Abuse’s (NIDA) prevention principles. These principles were first presented in 1997 in NIDA’s publication *Preventing Drug Use among Children and Adolescents: A Research-Based Guide* to share prevention research findings with those interested in drug education⁸. These principles include:

1. Prevention programs should enhance protective factors and reverse or reduce risk factors.

review of the relevant literature would find broad and increasing agreement on these points as presented in the NDEPs.

⁷ The five points following are taken from the *Narconon Drug Abuse Prevention Specialist Manual* (adapted in part, from the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] Training Manual) which stresses the importance of understanding the needs and concerns of students, and being comfortable handling class discussions and student questions.

⁸ NIDA focuses on risks for drug abuse and other problem behaviors of childhood. The prevention principles are intended to help those interested in drug education in the planning, selection and delivery of drug abuse prevention programs at the community level.

2. Prevention programs should address all forms of drug abuse, alone or in combination, including the underage use of legal drugs (e.g., tobacco or alcohol); the use of illegal drugs (e.g., marijuana or heroin); and the inappropriate use of legally obtained substances (e.g., inhalants), prescription medications, or over-the-counter drugs.
3. Prevention should address the type of drug abuse problem in the local community ...

The stress is not upon doctrinaire lecturing or *imposing* information and viewpoint on the minds of the attendees. Rather it is on helping the students to consult their own understandings and their own information and then, to assess what they know against the new information being presented. In this way, the students are encouraged to reach their own conclusions as to the risks and wisdoms of substance use. It is the strongly held view of the NDEP approach that the best proof against substance use and abuse is the self-made, personal realization that such activities are harmful to one's own goals and purposes in life and the personal decision based on such realizations to eschew such behavior.

Going back, then, to the second of the Lemon test criteria – **whether the material will “have a primary effect which neither advances nor inhibits religion”** – it can be seen that the answer, again, be in the affirmative. The Narconon Drug Education Program does not address matters which touch upon the realm of religion. The program focuses upon drugs, their effects on the mind and body, how they are advertised and promoted, how they effect the social interactions and life goals of the user and so forth. These are all down-to-earth, secular concerns. The NDEP approach neither advocates nor touches upon any material or concerns in the religious realm.⁹

The third Lemon test criterion is: **“Does the [practice or] policy in question avoid entangling government and religion.”** While on the basis of what has been presented above, one can necessarily give an affirmative answer to this question, it warrants a further address. Just on the theoretical basis that the program does not have a secular

⁹ Illustrative of this is the fact that such presentations are regularly made and well received around the world in a wide variety of religious contexts – such as Islam in Pakistan, Jewish in Israel, Catholic in Central and South America and predominantly Christian in the United States.

purpose and neither advances nor inhibits religion, it is hard to imagine how the program could conceivably violate this criterion.

Yet it can be viewed that this is a practical, experiential standard. Simply put, *does* the NDEP entangle government and religion. Such a question is best answered by consulting neutral observers who have witnessed the program in its application. If there were some religious aspect which escaped observation under the first two Lemon standards, it would be caught by the practical observation of the program by those who are alert to the dangers in a public school conflict of such an unconstitutional entanglement¹⁰.

DEA staff who have sat in on the lectures and viewed the NDEP source materials, have determined that the program is completely appropriate to present to children and adults touring the DEA Museum traveling exhibit. DEA officials in New York City selected Narconon's lecturers and drug education videos because they parallel the DEA concept of drugs and their dangers. The DEA Museum in New York City uses Narconon's drug education content to deliver school lectures to students who visit daily. During "Red Ribbon Week," a time set aside in the United States for all schools and cities to concentrate on drug education messages, the DEA and Narconon International released a mutual press release acknowledging this partnering to help educate children.

Narconon has also delivered formal lectures and training to international partners of the DEA. For example:

- In 2003 Narconon trained Philippine DEA agents how to deliver drug education lectures in schools
- In 2003 and 2004 the Pakistan Anti-Narcotics Force were trained to deliver drug education lectures and adopted the Narconon "Ten Things Your Friends May Not Know About Drugs" educational booklet, distributing it with government imprint

¹⁰ In a paper such as this, citation and quotation of such observers is necessarily and admittedly selective. On that point, it will only be stated that the material presented here is a selection from a very large number of letters and statements. Additional material of this sort is available upon request from Narconon International

on the back cover to over 12,000 youth in schools. They also helped fund Narconon drug educators to lecture in cities across Pakistan, as well as professional seminars and workshops delivered by the president of Narconon International to doctors and professionals in four major cities across the country.

State of Hawaii

In December 2003 the Director of Hawaiian Safe and Drug Free Schools invited Narconon International's senior drug education presenter to deliver a two-hour seminar to 60 health teachers and counselors. Narconon drug education videos are sponsored by public donation for distribution to all the public schools of Hawaii and have been accepted and are already being used in the great majority of the schools. This is with the full knowledge of the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.

Los Angeles and other Police Departments Across the World

A letter from the Los Angeles Police Department (on the letterhead of the Chief of Police William Bratton) was sent on (date) and signed by Captain William Fierro, Captain Commanding Officer of the Hollenbeck Area. He wrote the letter after requesting Narconon's help in delivering a presentation to Loyola High School freshman boys on drug prevention. He commented: *"Your program surpasses all others in the area of drug education and knowledge of the physiological impacts of drugs on the body. However, it is the manner by which Narconon makes its presentation to these difficult audiences that is so outstanding."*

The following are statements regarding NDEP presentations which were provided to Narconon Drug Education presenters in response to requests for feedback on the efficacy of the presentations:

- "The speaker was dynamic, informed, and communicated effectively to an audience of teens, many of whom are substance abusers... We welcome and need community outreach organizations to continue to work with schools to encourage students to break the cycle of substance abuse in their lives.

(Angela Cleveland, Principal, Jack London High School, LA Unified School District)

- “Practical and valuable factual information was presented in a simple and stimulating way that [was] very easy to comprehend and understand. Students got true facts that will allow them to confront tough situations and think about it twice before making a decision.” *(Zulma Suro, Director of Health and Family Programs, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy)*
- “[The presenter] spoke to our student body a few months ago and we scheduled [him] again for our evening presentation because the initial student response was extremely positive.” *(Sherry Kropp, Principal, Laurel HS, Los Alamitos Unified School District)*
- “Our students were provided important information upon which they can make sound decisions for themselves as they grow older and face the peer pressure and societal pressures that contribute to detrimental life choices in the area of drugs... We look forward to future presentations...” *(Mary Richardson, Title I Coordinator, Fair Avenue Elementary School, LA Unified School District)*
- “I am very adamant in my beliefs that the only effective way to prevent our children from becoming victims of drug abuse is to educate them on the consequences of use abuse. Narconon and their representatives do an excellent job of this at an age appropriate level for all our students.” *(Ted Carroll, Principal, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School)*
- “The children said that they really learned a lot and felt they are better prepared to resist peer pressure and help fellow students to resist or stop using drugs. I feel confident that the students will share this experience and information with their family and friends.” *(Brenda Cox, R.N., First Lutheran School, Los Angeles)*
- “The students were extremely interested in what [the presenter] was saying and peppered him with questions and challenges throughout the presentation. I am happy to say that [he] was up to the task. The only negative was that it looked like the teens could have used another ½ hour of question and answer time.” *(John L. White III, CD Services Coordinator, Crittenton Services for Children and Families)*
- “... Our students from grades 3-8 had the opportunity to learn and ask questions about drugs... [The presenters] age-appropriate examples and humor engaged the students in this crucial topic without undermining the seriousness of [the] problem.” *(Vahram Shemmassian, Ph.D, Principal, Charlotte & Elise Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School, Sherman Oaks, California)*

Notably absent in these reviews is any concern with Church-State issues. Logically, the proof of a negative is difficult. But the evidence shows: (a) the program is widely used in the United States in contexts where Church-State entanglement would preclude such

use; (b) the program is widely used in contexts outside the United States where the sensitivity of the local community is high to programs which might infringe on their various, dominant religious beliefs; and, (c) the response to the program by school teachers and principals is validation for the effectiveness of the presentations in achieving their stated goal of educating young people about drugs.

Finally, the Church-State issue was directly addressed by Charles C. Haynes, a senior scholar and director of education programs at the First Amendment Center, an organization which is actively concerned about First Amendment issues in schools and communities throughout the nation. After a careful review of the Narconon Drug Education program he wrote in December 2004:

“There is no First Amendment issue in regards to the Narconon program bringing religion, i.e., Scientology, into the schools.

“Simply put, I see no First Amendment issue here. These materials do not, in my view, promote the religion of Scientology. The fact that the Narconon drug education program is based on the works of L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, should not – in and of itself – prevent public schools from using these materials and presentations. Only if the content were shown to be religious indoctrination would there be a problem under the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. I can find no evidence of religious indoctrination in any of the materials I have reviewed.

“The fact that there may be conceptual similarities across Mr. Hubbard’s writings in a variety of fields does not mean that everything he wrote or researched must be seen as advancing the Scientology religion. It may be difficult, if not impossible, to draw a bright line between Mr. Hubbard’s ideas as found in Scientology and his ideas adopted as the basis for Narconon’s program. But much that is taught in public schools may be consistent with ideas and teachings found in many religious traditions. But these teachings (e.g., abstinence before marriage) are taught in public schools without invoking religious authority and in the context of secular (non-religious) arguments to support what is being presented. In other words, L. Ron Hubbard’s teachings concerning drugs may be consistent with his other teachings, but that does not automatically disqualify those teachings from being presented in a public school.”

Thus the answer to the third Lemon Test criteria -- **“Does the [practice or] policy in question avoid entangling government and religion”** is also in the affirmative. The Narconon Drug Education Program presentations are seen to be religiously neutral. In

practice they are used by teachers, principles and a wide variety of governmental bodies because they are effective in the accomplishment of their educational purpose. Problems of the entanglement of church and state simply do not arise, in practice.

IV- Conclusion

The Narconon Drug Education Program has been examined against the criteria established in *Lemon v. Kurtzman* to determine if it improperly crosses the Church-State boundary. A close look at each of the criteria set out in that U.S. Supreme Court decision shows clearly that the NDEP is *not* a religious program and does not cross over into religious matters. Rather it is a recognized and effective tool for the education of young people and adults about the effects and dangers of substance abuse.

-- Bernard Percy
January __, 2005

v- **About the Author**

Bernard Percy **Educator/Author**

A noted educator and communicator, Bernard Percy has over 35 years of educational experience in both the public and private sectors.

He was a teacher in the New York City Public School System from 1965 to 1976, and worked in the Los Angeles Unified School District from 1976 to 1978.

From 1998 to 2003 he was editor in chief of *Converge Magazine*, an award winning education and technology magazine. He has served as a jury coordinator and member of the jury evaluating educational technology projects and programs for international competitions: Stockholm Challenge (Sweden) – Global Junior Challenge (Italy)

He has served in university and adult education areas, including work with the Desegregation Training Institute at California State University at Northridge.

Percy has lectured, presented at, facilitated and helped develop conferences, workshops and seminars on a variety of educational topics, both stateside and internationally at such distinguished institutions as City University of New York, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Waseda University in Tokyo, and Moscow University. He has helped develop conferences for such organizations as the Los Angeles and New York City school systems, for both K12 and higher education audiences.

Percy has served as a creative consultant for KCET, the Los Angeles PBS station, and has appeared on numerous radio and TV shows.

Percy is the author of several books on parenting and education including **“How to Grow a Child ... A Child’s Advice to Parents”**, **“Help Your Child in School”**, **“The Power of Creative Writing”**, Co-author of **Recapturing Technology for Education: Keeping Tomorrow in Today’s Classrooms** (to be released in January, 2005)

He has served on a number of advisory boards and panels, including:

- Advisory panel created by Governor Geringer of Wyoming to create the Education Commission of the States publication “In Pursuit of Quality Teaching.”
- Advisory board, Higher Education Knowledge and Technology Exchange (HEKATE)

Among his numerous speaking engagements, facilitating and keynote addresses include:

- Keynote, Utah K-12 Technology Educators conference
- Keynote, New York State Association for Computers and Technologies in Education (NYSCATE)
- Presenter at City College of New York City Professional Development day (for technology)

- Presenter on Leadership issues, annual KPMG customer conference
- PeopleSoft facilitating session on leadership for their customer conference
- eCollege conference panel member discussing the media and education technology
- Facilitator for the Digital Education Leadership Council conferences
- Presenter at the Global Junior Challenge conference in Rome, Italy

Percy holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Brooklyn College and Master's degree from Columbia University, Teacher's College.