

The Interim PLUS + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

Curriculum Supplement For Schools

The *Interim Plus* is a periodical dedicated to educational matters and specifically designed to assist teachers in integrating relevant life issues in their lesson planning.

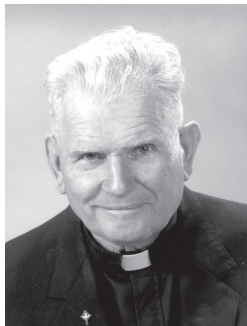
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Another school year is ending. Hopefully, in some small way this resource has been of some use to you in delivering curriculum to your students. In anticipation of September we invite teachers and parents to submit suggestions for topics that could be researched by our summer interns to form the basis for new material in the next academic year. We welcome your ideas. This concluding edition features the **teaching of satire** as a style in literature, an exploration of **social media tools in the classroom** and as a means for communicating about public causes.

2013-2014 Edition of the Father Ted Colleton Scholarship



Please note that the essay topic for the 2013-2014 **Father Ted Colleton Scholarship** has been selected. This advance notice should give interested students a head start and an incentive to use some of their summer vacation period to do research on the topic. The

deadline for the coming academic year will be December 1, 2013. We are grateful to Niagara Region Right to Life and The Interim newspaper for co-sponsoring this scholarship program that engages young people in a meaningful and stimulating exercise in research and creative writing. For further information and details, teachers and students can email the scholarship coordinator dirocco@theinterim.com or go directly to the scholarship link <http://www.theinterim.com/features/web-exclusives/all-students-challenged/>. The essay portion of the scholarship contest calls for a 1200 word essay on the following theme:

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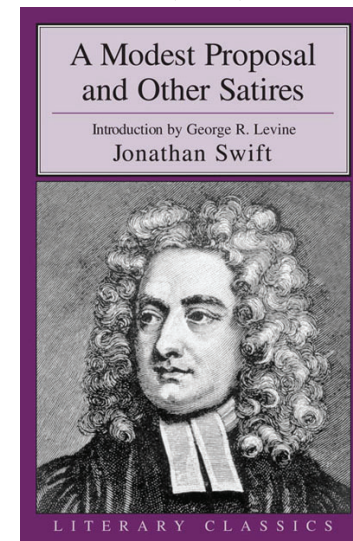
Identify and discuss the most significant factors which have spawned “the culture of death”. Suggest a solution that would foster “the culture of life”.

Part A Satire in Literature

This section is devoted to *Teaching Satire in English literature*. The material was partially adapted from a lesson published by Kate Petty in March of 2012. It can be found at <http://www.thetechclassroom.com/home/project-basedapproachtoteaching satire>.

Objective:

Have students understand the different types of satire and be able to identify them in different



types of media. Students will evaluate the effectiveness of satire in modern media and discuss whether satire was the best method to make a point. Students will understand the use of satire in social criticism, using the example of an article on judicial developments in Canada.

Another related historical example is Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal*. (for summary see the following site <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/modestproposal/summary.html>.)

The ridiculous nature of the proposal lends itself to discussion and debate of both satire and the values being criticized. Are there contemporary examples of “crazy” solutions to social “problems”?

The teacher can do a pre-test or informal assessment prior to the lesson(s) on satire to find out what the students already know or understand about this literary genre. A fuller evaluation of student comprehension should come at the end of the lessons.

Rights and wrongs

Joe Campbell, *The Interim* April 2013

I try to practice human rights. I don't mean that I try to practice what governments and their rights agencies preach. On the contrary, I try to practice what they breach. That is, I try to practice human rights.

I also preach them. Chiefly, I preach, and the others breach, the right to proclaim and act on our religious beliefs and to teach them to our children without state interference or coercion. In other words, I support the separation of church and state, as Christ taught when he said render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's.

Governments and their rights agencies have no difficulty grasping the part about rendering unto Caesar, but they can't seem to get their minds around the part about rendering unto God. Maybe by the time they got to that part of the teaching they had run out of mental room. It's too bad Christ didn't teach the part about rendering unto God first. They might still have run out of mental room, but at least they would know about religious rights.

As it is, governments and their agencies are very good at promoting the separation of church from state, but not the separation of state from

church. On the contrary, they're very good at promoting the intrusion of state into church.

Curiously, this doesn't seem to bother many church people. Maybe they think that the state invites itself in to pay worship, not seize leadership. Or, maybe biblical illiteracy has reached the point where they think Christ told us to surrender unto seizure.

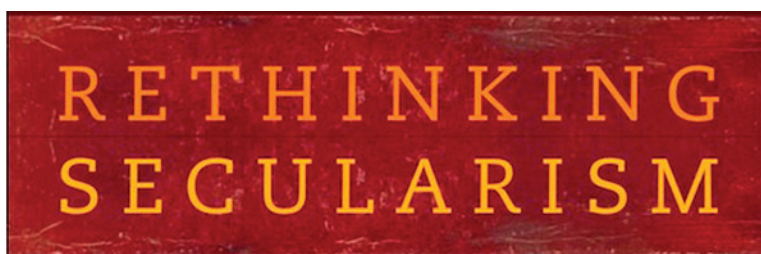
Leadership is what Newfoundland and Quebec seized when they shifted their publicly funded school systems from religious to secular. The state didn't come to pray in any of the religions. It came to prey on their rights. To take control, the provinces engineered constitutional amendments when many of us weren't looking. I guess we thought the constitution was set in stone. We didn't suspect that it might be built on sand. Or if we did, we thought it shifted with the prevailing winds only at the behest of the Supreme Court.

Not content with one coup d'etat, the two provinces staged another. They installed non-confessional programs that require schools to treat diverse faiths and ethical codes as equally acceptable. It could be a wonderful approach if there were no such thing as truth.

When Catholic parents sought to exempt their children from the Quebec program to avoid endangering their religious formation, the Supreme Court came to the rescue. It exempted the Quebec program from the religious rights of the parents. What's remarkable is that the state didn't start

butting into education until the mid-nineteenth century, after religious and charity groups established the first formal schools in what became Canada. Now the state tells religious groups and parents to butt out.

Educational initiatives in Newfoundland and





Quebec promote homosexual activity as normal and even laudable. But to support the gay agenda, provinces don't have to take over confessional schools that oppose it. Like Alberta and Ontario, provinces can order the schools to support it on the governments' behalf. They can also order home schools to teach from gay-friendly curricula that violate parental beliefs.

The media-academia complex considers the recognition and rise of homosexual rights progressive. Having been exposed to ancient history, I can't help noticing that it's regressive. Approval of homosexual activity, among related phenomena, goes back to the late Roman Republic and the empire it became. We know how that turned out.

Nevertheless, Canadian human rights agencies can prosecute us for acting on, or publishing, religious beliefs forbidding homosexual activity. Among others, the agencies have targeted home-based bed and breakfast owners for denying accommodation to gay couples; a Catholic service organization for refusing to rent its hall for a lesbian wedding reception; a Mennonite Church for canceling use of a camp it operated when it learned that a homosexual choir had booked the facility for a weekend retreat; a professional printer for not providing material to a homosexual organization that promoted the gay agenda; mayors of Canadian cities for declining to proclaim gay pride observances; and ministers of the gospel, including a Catholic Bishop, for

teaching that homosexual activity is wrong.

When the religious rights of provincial marriage commissioners conflicted with the civil rights of couples seeking same-sex nuptials, I expected the Saskatchewan government to opt for freedom and inclusiveness. It did. It ruled that religiously observant commissioners are free to either violate their consciences or include themselves among the unemployed. That's how you reconcile conflicting rights Saskatchewan style.

The shtick worked seamlessly when a Saskatchewan woman bested a Catholic hospital that, for religious reasons, denied her a tubal ligation. Not only did she receive financial compensation, thanks to the provincial human rights commission. Shortly afterwards, the hospital ended its religious affiliation and came under secular control.

Religiously observant pro-lifers also have difficulty exercising their rights. Some have gone to jail after gathering outside abortion facilities. I don't deny that what they did there was serious. They prayed. Others have lost university privileges for misbehaving on campus. They joined a pro-life group.

Like publicly accepted homosexual activity, publicly approved contraception and abortion are part of our pagan past. So is publicly condoned euthanasia. Together with secular education, all are alien to our once Christian culture. Before they became rights, or quasi rights, homosexual activity, contraception and abortion were illegal aliens. Now, they and secular education increasingly take precedence when they collide with religious rights.

It doesn't matter that religious liberty tops the Magna Carta, the American Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As alien rights have risen, religious rights have declined. It doesn't even matter that the Charter acknowledges the supremacy of God. The decline continues apace.

With rights like that, who needs wrongs?

Joe Campbell is a consummate Canadian satirist. His columns appear regularly in *The Interim* each month. He has two wonderful books published:



Take me out of the Ballgame and The Great Canadian Comedy. Both can be ordered from amazon.com.

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. Define satire. (Read the [Wikipedia](#) article about satire).
2. Briefly describe the different types of satire.
3. Where is satire in today's world? Why do we use satire today?
4. Define the chief qualities of effective satire. Does it serve to teach, expose, inspire, shock, persuade?
5. Identify specific examples of satire in various media, print, music, visual, cartoons, movies, etc.
6. What sort of topics are often the foci of satire? Are there any topics that should be off-limits?
7. Evaluate and demonstrate how the article by Joe Campbell illustrates the meaning and purpose of satire.
8. Identify the various techniques (paradox, irony, hyperbole, repetition, play on words, juxtaposition, incongruity, reversal, parody, etc.) used by Campbell to satirize the situation in Canada about the confusion of rights and wrongs. Provide an example of each.
9. Does the article by Campbell achieve its purpose? What is the essential point that Campbell makes in his article? What does Campbell lament?

Other Activities for the study of Satire

1. Select 5 cartoons and explain how each in its different way satirizes some aspect of the following:
 - b. the judicial system
 - c. the press
 - d. politics
 - e. economics
 - f. entertainment
 - g. sports
1. Divide the class into groups of 4 students each and assign a TV show to each group, (e.g., *Daily Show*, *Saturday Night Live*, *22 Minutes*, *Mr. D*, *The Simpsons*, and *Royal Canadian Air Farce*.) The groups are responsible for choosing an episode that demonstrates a type of satire and describe/comment on two techniques

used to satirize.

2. Have students explore the use of satire in other languages, citing some famous examples, like Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Voltaire's *Candide*, Cervantes' *Don Quixote*.

Part B Social Media

Today's classrooms are undergoing rapid technological changes. Students and their teachers are running to stay ahead of the changes. What if any role should social media play in students' education?

Throughout history teachers and learners have had to cope with new technology. No doubt the invention of writing was a radical step forward over the tradition of oral learning based on pure memory. Capturing the meaningful sounds of language in the visual representation of writing preserved learning and allowed for easier transmission of certain types of knowledge. The printing press, bound books, typewriters, telephones, radio, film, television, ditto machines, satellites, overhead projectors, computers, social media – different steps in speeding up communication and hence the potential for learning.

Today, social media represent teaching tools with considerable potential. Because these social media are new and largely untried, boards of education are probably developing policies regarding their use in schools by teachers, students and administrators. A cautious approach is necessary because of potential harm.

What is Social Media?

Social media embraces web-based and mobile-based technologies to facilitate interactive communication between organizations, communities and individuals.

This is a good definition inasmuch as it describes the diversity and the multiplicity of interactions possible between and among the users.

Even with a cautious approach some educators are very optimistic and believe that social media

expands the classroom and provides multiple benefits to teachers and learners. The various on-line platforms enable users to:

- create, share, adapt and reuse content
- engage in digital dialogue and collaboration
- create linkages between groups and communities
- permit student-to student contact and social interactions with other users
- create new teaching material
- spread videos across different social networking sites
- permit class or individual blogging
- design websites and upload video presentations
- creating Facebook pages for class projects
- build and maintain an alumni database
- use apps to monitor student late arrivals
- give teachers more space and time with students
- continue discussions from class with other students
- set up subject or class Twitter accounts that students can follow
- set homework via Twitter
- and a host of other applications restricted only by the creativity of the users

One must note the negative side of social media like its very public nature and total accessibility to all at any time of the day or night, in any location or time zone. The user's content could be exposed to an unknown audience beyond their control. As for the teacher's unbridled enthusiasm for the new teaching tools, they need to be wary in their use of the new technology, for as one senior educator put it: "A crappy lesson with an iPad is very similar to a crappy lesson without an iPad."

Definitely one major benefit of social media is that it would allow teachers to reach more students, more quickly, more efficiently and generally more safely. The websites listed below give a good introduction to the potential of social media in education. The references are mostly to USA schools, but our school systems across Can-

ada are similar enough to American institutions for many of the ideas to be applicable to our Canadian experience.

- <http://www.teachersandsocialmedia.co.nz/what-social-media>
- <http://fluency21.com/blog/2013/03/25/the-benefits-of-using-social-media-in-the-classroom/>
- <http://bostinno.streetwise.co/2012/12/29/social-media-in-the-classroom-how-teachers-can-use-it-effectively/>
- [SchoolTube.com](#) can help with curriculum delivery, as can [iTunes U](#)
- <http://www.teachhub.com/social-media-classroom>
- <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/11bd8910-8010-11e2-96ba-00144feabdc0.html#ixzz2ROGLzk3T>
- <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/11bd8910-8010-11e2-96ba-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2ROFkQGSa>
- <http://www.teachthought.com/social-media/using-social-media-in-the-classroom-for-real-world-learning/>
- <http://www.mnn.com/green-tech/research-innovations/stories/how-teachers-use-social-media-in-the-classroom-to-beef-up-in>
- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/teacher-network/2012/jul/26/social-networking-school-safety>
- <http://blog.ixl.com/2013/01/22/what-role-should-social-media-play-in-students-education/>

You may want to proceed cautiously. The following excerpted article from guest blogger Erica Phyll at <http://navigator.compasslearning.com/technology/5-steps-to-implementing-social-media-in-the-classroom/> goes on to give good advice on the topic.

5 Steps to Implementing Social Media in the Classroom

Step 1: Assess the Learning Environment

By examining the classroom, teachers can determine which social media tool will work best for their students. Teachers can begin by asking themselves questions such as:

What age are my students? What level of exposure do my students have with social media outside of school? What cultural barriers might my students have to social media?

Feedback from students can also help in gaining

insight. Many teachers implement surveys that ask students how much time they spend each day using social media and the forms of social media they use and like most. Once teachers have an understanding of their classroom needs, they can begin narrowing down which tools will work best.

Step 2: Research Social Media Platforms

Many options are available, but each one has its own advantages and disadvantages; it is important for teachers to become familiar with these aspects before integrating them into the classroom. More well-known options include Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube. While these platforms can be great for enhancing communication and supporting class projects, there are other options available for teachers that can offer a more controlled environment. One example is [Social Media Classroom](#), which “provides teachers and learners with an integrated set of social media that each course can use for its own purposes — integrated forum, blog, comment, wiki, chat, social bookmarking, RSS, microblogging, widgets, and video commenting.”

Step 3: Create a Social Media Policy

Setting boundaries is important to establishing student safety. Teachers should draft a set of guidelines that will work best with the school, parents and students. Many models are available for reference, including [Tufts University’s social media best practices and guidelines](#). A teacher will want to outline best practices that will maximize learning potential but also protect students as the classroom expands to include broader influences.

Step 4: Educate Students, Parents, and the School Community about Social Media

It is important for parents and faculty to be included and informed on social media integration in order for teachers to gain their support and help. This will also allow for reduce misunderstandings down the road. Furthermore, students should be instructed on the social media platform they will be using by becoming familiar with its settings and the guiding social media policy.

Step 5: Evaluate Progress Regularly

Teachers should reassess whether the social me-

dia they have chosen is meeting their classroom needs. It is also important to review the social media policy. Is it sufficient? Does it protect students effectively? Getting feedback from students and parents in this stage can continue to strengthen communication and help in making the proper adjustments, ensuring that [social media use in the classroom](#) becomes more educational.

As education moves forward, the ability to integrate social media platforms into the curriculum and classroom will become paramount to a teacher’s success. With a few considerations and planning, stale classrooms can be revived with more exciting learning opportunities and prepare students for a technology-driven future.

Questions Regarding Social Media in Schools

1. Are there some of the risks in using social media?
2. What might these risks be?
3. What can be done to reduce the risks?

Social media is used in non-academic settings. Its potential is being exploited by different organizations. Here is an article on how young people in the pro-life movement are taking advantage of its potential.



Using social media to inform and activate

Pauline Kosalka, *The Interim*, April 2013

The pro-life movement has taken advantage of the rising popularity of social media to spread its message and gain supporters. During the U.S. March for Life in January 2013, pro-lifers used these platforms to spread information and report on the event attended by hundreds of thousands of participants, which the mainstream media largely ignored.



“This year, we must make our tremendous presence known in a way that breaks through the media blackout,” wrote Kristan Hawkins, of Students for Life of America, in a blog post written before the March, instructing pro-lifers in how to use the internet to draw attention and post content from the event. “The most important thing you can do is speak and elevate the voices of others through social media for events during March Week.”

Pro-life individuals and organizations do not only use social media for large national marches. Campaign Life Coalition Youth uses platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, and Instagram for recruitment, advertising about events, communicating messages to politicians and media, and for uploading videos. Supporters can receive emails and text messages about updates and new content. Its Facebook page, for instance, advertised the Defund Abortion Rally and provides links to abortion polls, blog posts, and content by other pro-life groups. Users who “like” the page receive its postings in their Facebook news feeds. CLC Youth also held a Pro-Life Global Tweet-A-Thon on International Women’s Day, partly to counter the International Planned Parenthood Federation’s own 24-hour Twitter campaign on the same day.

Alissa Golob, head of CLC Youth, told The Interim



that the organization uses social media because that is “where everybody is,” with many people spending hours each day on the various platforms, “always connected” through mobile devices. CLC Youth aims to continue to build its database to “help people come to the pro-life movement” where they can learn about how they can engage in activism.

The Canadian Centre for Bioethical Reform uses social media to recruit and to educate. “We alert people to our projects, advertise our work for recruitment purposes, and disseminate materials,” stated Jonathon Van Maren of the CCBR to The Interim in an email. “We reach on average 30,000 people a week through Facebook alone.”



CCBR uses Facebook, Twitter, iTunes, and blog posts. Supporters can subscribe to the weekly educational End the Killing podcast. Stephanie Gray’s appearances on Radio Teopoli, a Catholic Toronto radio station, are also

available for download. The group produces pro-life graphics which it posts on Facebook and provides video of its events (such as the New Abortion Caravan campaign) on Youtube.



Student Life Link, operating under the auspices of Toronto Right to Life, primarily uses Facebook to gear its campaigns towards high school students. It hopes “to connect local communities of pro-life teenagers with each other

across the country and enable collective action and activism” while establishing links with the wider pro-life movement, Blaise Alleyne, president of Toronto Right to Life, told The Interim in an email. “We’re in the process of developing some activism campaigns, designed for or tailored to the high school environment.” Alleyne explains, “here, social media will be part of our strategy for spreading the word.”

Student Life Link also provides links to pro-life news stories, videos, activism opportunities, and reports about pro-life high school students. Students can find out about SLL's online platforms through other pro-life organizations, by attending their conference in Toronto, by communicating with other students who attended the conference, or through SLL content shared by friends over Facebook.

Criticisms have been made, however, of the value of social media activism in general. In an article for the New Yorker, Malcolm Gladwell concludes that internet activism does not foster the strong interpersonal relationships and willingness to risk life and social acceptance for a cause like, for example, the American civil rights movement of the 1960s. Rather, social media is based upon easy commitment to low-risk situations, he says. For instance, the 'Help Sameer' campaign which attracted 25,000 supporters only required them to send in a cheek swab to check if their bone marrow was a match for Sameer Bhatia, who needed a transplant.

Gladwell also cites the Facebook page of the Save Darfur Coalition. When he wrote his article in 2011, the 1,282,339 supports the coalition collected online donated an average of 9 cents each. "Facebook activism," Gladwell says, "succeeds not by motivating people to make a real sacrifice but by motivating them to do the things that people do when they are not motivated enough to make a real sacrifice."

On the other hand, a study on the influence of Facebook on voter turnout in the 2010 U.S. mid-term elections published in the journal Nature suggests that social media is effective in influencing people to make small sacrifices that have an impact on public life. Researchers at the University of California San Diego found that over 60 million Facebook users saw a "get out the vote" message at the top of their news feeds on election day, along with profile pictures of Facebook friends who had already voted. The study reported that 600,000 saw no message at all and another 600,000 saw the message, but with no notification about the friends who had voted.

The results of the study showed that users who

saw that their friends had voted were more likely to vote themselves, while those who only got the voting message were as likely to vote as those who had no notification at all. "The main driver of behavior change is not the message – it's the vast social network," said lead author James Fowler professor of political science and of medical genetics at UC San Diego in a press release.

"Whether we want to get out the vote or improve public health, we should not only focus on the direct effect of an intervention, but also on the indirect effect as it spreads from person to person to person."

There are also other advantages. CLC Youth's Golob said much of social media has a "domino effect" – users share pictures or content through Facebook that appears on other people's news feeds or walls, which they in turn could choose to share with their friends. "Facebook makes it possible to reach out in a place where most high school students are gathering, regardless of their physical location," stated Alleyne. The same goes for Twitter.

"Young people are tapped into social media," said CCBP's Van Maren. "If you want them to listen to your message, put your message where they can see it."

Questions and Suggested Study Activity

1. What are "social media" and list the various platforms?
2. List 7 different uses for social media in the Pauline Kosalka article. Assess the relative impact of each.
3. In what important ways do social media level the playing field for communicating an organization's messages?
4. List the four principal organizations using social media to reach youth for the pro-life cause.
5. Are there differences and similarities in their use of social media?
6. What are some criticisms about the actual effectiveness of social media?

7. Is it an effective tool for activism? Is it an effective tool for mobilizing youth?
8. What are the pros and cons of social media as a communications tool?
9. On the world scene, are there any significant changes that can be attributed partially to the use of social media? Analyze one of these important events and describe the role played by social media in the development?

This screen capture of the official Facebook page for the National March for Life 2013, sponsored by Campaign Life Coalition, is an example of social media being used to spread the message.

The screenshot shows the Facebook interface for the 'March for Life Canada' page. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with the Facebook logo, a search bar, and a 'Find Friend' button. The main header features a large banner for 'THE NATIONAL MARCH FOR LIFE TWEET-A-THON' with the hashtag #MarchForLife and the slogan 'TWEET LIKE SOMEONE'S LIFE DEPENDS ON IT'. Below the banner, the page name 'March for Life Canada' is displayed with 2,178 likes and 672 people talking about it. The page is categorized as a 'Political Organization' and includes a description of the 2013 March in Ottawa. A 'Highlights' dropdown menu is visible. The main content area shows a post from 'March for Life Canada' shared 35 minutes ago, featuring a link to an article about the 'Mother's Day Massacre' and a photo of a man. To the right, there are sections for '5 Friends' who liked the page and 'Recent Posts by Others on March for Life Canada', listing posts from Joanna Sanseverino, Anna May McAllister, Open Mind Eyes Heart, and Klaudia Rychlicka.