

Why isn't it acceptable for students, teachers to swear?

We had an interesting discussion about respect in one of my classes a few weeks ago. It actually started as a discussion of swearing. "Why do teachers get so upset about swearing?" one of my students asked. (I'm reporting the following conversation as I remember it. It's not verbatim.)

"Well, I can't speak for all teachers," I said, "but I think of it as a kind of air pollution. This school is my workplace. I need to be able to breathe."

"But why do teachers write people up for swearing?" he persisted.

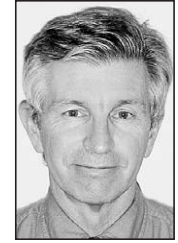
"We don't, or at least, I don't," I said. "If I hear somebody using foul language in the hall, I ask that person to stop. The only time I've ever written anyone up for swearing was when he or she was swearing at me. That's against the rules."

"Why? Why should teachers be different from students?"

"Swearing at a teacher is a different kind of violation," I explained. "It's disrespect."

He pounced. "So teachers deserve respect, but students don't, huh? Is that what you're saying?"

BEGINNING EDUCATOR



Tim Clark

that would be just fine. "What's so great about respect, anyway?" is one statement I remember emerging

from the chaos.

It reminded me not to argue with teenagers. But it was also deeply troubling. A lot of our students don't understand respect, and if you look at our popular culture, that's not surprising. A freshman came into one of my classes last fall wearing a T-shirt that read: "If a fat girl falls in the forest, do the trees laugh?" I ordered him to turn it inside out. "Why?" he protested. "It's just a joke!" Most of his classmates agreed with him, although I noticed that all the girls who took his side were slender.

One of our ConVal student learning expectations is that students will demonstrate respect for themselves and others. It's a fine sentiment and I'm all for it. But how do we measure it? How do we assess it? And are we willing to put teeth in it? For example, are we willing to deny a diploma to a potty-mouthed hooligan who has met all the other requirements for graduation?

I think we all know the answer. In fact, I could name

a few of our recent graduates with outstanding academic records who had all the personal charm of a toxic waste dump. I won't, of course. It wouldn't be respectful.

So what do we do about this situation? In the English Department, we've decided it's now necessary to teach our incoming freshmen respect the same way we try to teach them pronoun-antecedent agreement and "Romeo and Juliet." In fact, my co-teacher, Lisa Cochran, and I are about to try teaching respect through "Romeo and Juliet." It is, after all, a tragedy that begins with an act of ordinary, everyday disrespect — a couple of servants for one family start calling the servants of another family names. One of them makes an obscene gesture. Then the swords come out.

Tim Clark of Dublin is a teacher at ConVal High School.

Concord roll call roundup

House votes down constitutional amendment proposal

In the House

May 14

A) PARENTS SHOULD TELL DISTRICTS BEFORE THEY HOME SCHOOL: HB337 would add requirements for parents who home school their children: to notify school districts each year five business days before they start to home school, instead of up to 30 days afterward, as allowed by current law. The House version deleted a plan in the Senate version to require submission of a one-time educational plan. Supporters said a minority of parents might be using the home schooling law to avoid compulsory education laws. Opponents said most parents who home school their children are doing an excellent job, so why scare them away with requirements that aren't needed? The House PASSED the bill, 188Y-168N, and it went back to the Senate.

B) HOUSE SHOULD HANG TOUGH IN CUTTING STATE RETIREMENT BENEFITS: SB463, as amended by the House, would cut the state retirement system benefits, eliminating cost of living increases and raising the minimum age for retirement for future retiring police and firefighters, slashing health benefits, and taking day-to-day investment decisions out of the hands of representatives of beneficiary groups. Supporters said over-generous spending on behalf of retirees in the past has left a \$2.7 billion shortfall in the system, which unless fixed immediately would create a huge tax burden for municipalities. Opponents said the financial situation is not so dire, and there are other ways to fix it, most notably a version passed recently by the Senate. The House PASSED the retirement package, 269Y-90N, and it went to a committee of conference to work out differences with another bill passed by the Senate. A YES vote FAVORED cutting benefits to rescue the retirement system.

EDUCATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT FAILS: CACR34 is the latest incarnation of a constitutional amendment that would give the state more flexibility in targeting aid to the local school districts.

C) The following key language that was agreed upon by the legislative leadership in both parties in the House, the Senate and the

Governor. "The legislature shall have the authority and responsibility to raise the funds that total the statewide cost of this education and to distribute these funds in a manner that alleviates local disparities in educational opportunity and fiscal capacity, provided that every school district shall receive a meaningful share of these funds." Supporters said that language agrees with the court requirement to provide an adequate education; it just seeks more flexibility about how to fund it. Opponents either said that it went too far, and would allow the state to duck its responsibility to fund education equitably, or it didn't go far enough, and would accept the fiscal straight-jacket that the courts have devised. The language FAILED, 140Y-222N. A YES vote FAVORED the language.

D) After rejecting several other amendments, the House voted on the Senate wording: "In fulfillment of the state's duties set forth in the preceding article, the general court shall have the authority and responsibility to reasonably define the content of an adequate public education and to distribute state funds for public education in the manner that it reasonably determines to alleviate local disparities." That language also FAILED, 97Y-238N. A YES vote OPPOSED the constitutional amendment.

In the Senate

May 15

E) SENATE PASSES GLOBAL WARMING BILL TO HOUSE: HB1434 is New Hampshire's version of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a cap-and-trade program intended to cut emissions that cause global warming. The state would join nine other states in auctioning a limited amount of "allowances" (to emit tons of carbon dioxide) needed to produce power. The money from the auction would be used primarily for alternative energy and conservation programs. Under this Senate version, when credits sell for more than \$6, the excess would go to rebates instead of conservation. The Senate PASSED the bill, 16Y-8N, back to the House.

TAX TEXAS HOLD 'EM, BUT NO TO CASINO GAMBLING: HB1509 would tax charitable gambling, with the state getting 10 per-

cent after the winner is paid off for tournaments like Texas Hold 'Em and 3 percent for straight poker games. Charities would still get about 35 percent. The bill would also raise the size of the largest allowable bet for poker from \$2 to \$5. The bill was expected to raise \$4 million, with about \$300,000 to be used to step up enforcement of the growing industry.

F) The first vote was on the amendment containing the language of the bill. Supporters said the state taxes other forms of gambling, like race track betting, so it should get a take of this. Some opponents either thought that this would take money away from the charities or reduce profits enough that some companies wouldn't have as much an incentive to do it. The Senate PASSED the amendment, 13Y-11N. A YES vote FAVORED taxing charitable gaming.

G) An amendment called for the institution of casino gambling, complete with slot machines, at the race tracks and North Country hotels. Supporters said it would create jobs and raise some \$300 million. Opponents said it wouldn't make that much money, would take jobs away from more family friendly tourist industry and lead to crime, corruption, gambling addiction and other social costs. The amendment FAILED 11Y-13N. A YES vote FAVORED casino gambling.

May 14

H) TAX ON REGISTRY DOCUMENTS SHOULD FUND LCHIP: HB1579, as amended by the House, clarifies the surcharge on documents filed with the registry of deeds to fund the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program. This fee was passed last year, but will go into effect until July. Supporters said this was worked out with the registry of deeds and makes it easier to administer. They said LCHIP improves the quality of life and enhances real estate values; therefore taking money out of real-estate values fees makes sense. Opponents said LCHIP should be funded by the general fund and compete with other important programs, not be funded by taxing real estate transactions in the middle of a housing slump. The Senate PASSED the bill, 15Y-9N, back to the House. A YES vote FAVORED funding LCHIP by adding a surcharge to the filing of real estate transactions.

House member	Cty.	Dist.	Pty.	Home	A	B	C	D
Mitchell, Bonnie G	Ches	07	D	Jaffrey	Y	Y	N	N
Pelkey, Stephen T	Ches	07	R	Jaffrey	N	Y	N	Y
Emerson, Susan	Ches	07	R	Rindge	N	Y	N	Y
Hunt, John B	Ches	07	R	Rindge	N	Y	Y	Y
Essex, David E	Hill	01	D	Antrim	Y	Y	N	N
Mack, Ron J	Hill	01	D	Hancock	N	N	N	N
Shattuck, Gilman C	Hill	01	D	Hillsborough	Y	Y	N	N
Beck, Catriona D	Hill	02	D	Bennington	N	Y	N	N
Chase, Claudia A	Hill	02	D	Francesstown	Y	N	Y	N
Spratt, Stephen P	Hill	03	D	Greenville	Y	Y	Y	N
Hammond, Jill Shaffer	Hill	03	D	Peterborough	Y	Y	N	N
Irwin, Anne-Marie	Hill	03	D	Peterborough	Y	Y	Y	N
Peterson, Andy	Hill	03	R	Peterborough	Y	N	N	N
Kaelin, Michael A	Hill	04	D	Lyndeborough	Y	N	N	N
Foster, Linda T	Hill	04	D	Mont Vernon	Y	Y	X	X
Coughlin, Pamela D	Hill	04	R	Mont Vernon	N	Y	N	N
Daler, Jennifer	Hill	04	D	Temple	N	Y	N	N
Hall, Betty B	Hill	05	D	Brookline	N	Y	N	N
Levesque, Melanie A	Hill	05	D	Brookline	Y	Y	Y	N
Drisko, Richard B	Hill	05	R	Hollis	X	X	X	X
Gargas, Carolyn M	Hill	05	R	Hollis	N	Y	N	N

Senator	Dist.	Pty.	Home	E	F	G	H
Janeway, Harold W	07	D	Webster	Y	Y	N	Y
Roberge, Sheila	09	R	Bedford	N	N	N	N
Kelly, Molly M	10	D	Keene	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bragdon, Peter E	11	R	Milford	Y	N	N	N
Gottesman, David M	12	D	Nashua	Y	Y	Y	Y

A man born for commerce

Francesstown resident prominent in Boston business

FRANCESTOWN — Some men are born for commerce. Albert Gay seems to have been one of them. A native of Francesstown, Gay was a prominent businessman in Boston — but he never forgot his roots. He was still alive when the 1895 town history was published (he contributed \$100 to the endeavor, as a matter of fact), and died in 1902 in Brookline, Mass. Here's what the town history has to say about him:

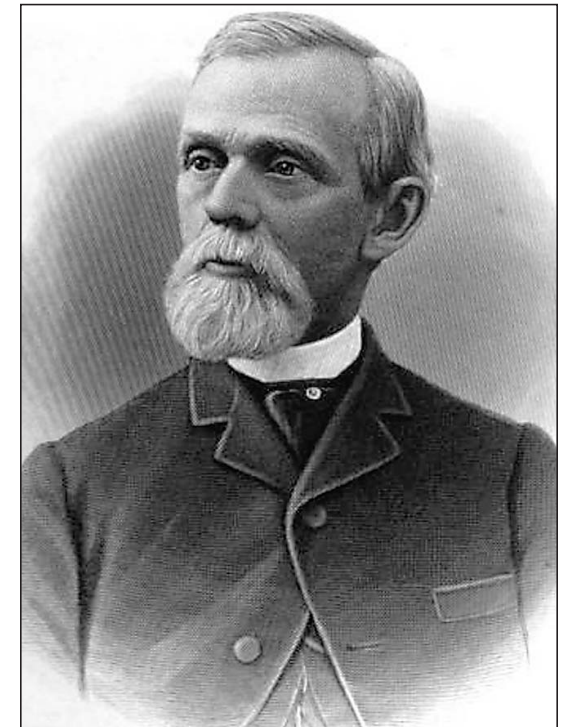
"Dea. Albert Gay, (b. Aug. 5, 1822; went through the usual course at the district school and Academy in Francesstown, and attended the Kimball Union Academy, Meriden in 1840, with the intention of taking a collegiate course. His plan was interrupted after one term by his father's desire for his assistance in the mercantile business in Nashua, to which town he moved in 1841. He was at first bookkeeper, and in 1847 became partner in business with his father under the firm of Timothy Gay & Son. In 1849 he removed to Boston, where the same firm established the flour business. One year later George F. Guild formerly of Francesstown was associated with them under the firm of Timothy Gay & Co., Wholesale Grocers. This firm has continued business at 18 India St. to this time (1894), Albert Gay having been for the last fourteen years senior partner. He married, Nov. 26, 1863, Ellen M. Spalding, daughter of Capt. Ira Spalding of Merrimack, N.H. Their children are: — Charles Albert, b. April 30, 1865; Alice Marion, b. March 12, 1867; Helen Spalding, b. Jan. 8, 1871.

"Mr. Gay was a member of the Boston City Council in 1869 and 1870. He has always been an advocate for liberal improvements and as such he voted for the extension of Washington Street from Cornhill to Haymarket Square, also for the laying out of Scollay Square by removing a block of buildings in the centre of it. He has also labored many years to bring about the improvements lately inaugurated in the city of Newton, in streets, parks and sewerage. His personal efforts rescued and planned Montgomery Park, near his residence in Boston.

A LOOK BACK



Jane Eklund



Businessman and philanthropist Albert Gay put up \$100 to help pay for the production of a town history for Francesstown. The text, published in 1895, contains this photograph of him.

"To philanthropic works, he has devoted much labor. He has been associated a long time with the Boston City Missionary Society as one of its directors, and also is director of the Boston Industrial Home. As treasurer and deacon of Union Church, he has dispensed its charities and otherwise helped those in need. His study, as an amateur artist, in the spare hours of his busy life, enabled him to produce, among other works, a portrait of his former pastor, Rev. Dr. Nehemiah Adams, which hangs in the chapel of Union Church, Boston. His interest in the history of Francesstown has been from its inception, and toward it he has given liberally of time and labor and money. The Map of Society Land, and several engravings and views are a gift from him."

Thank You Notes

Hancock volunteers reach out unselfishly for orchard cleanup

To the editor:

An open letter to all of the Norway Hill Orchard clean-up volunteers:

My first thank you must go to Kurt Grasset for being so thoughtful and to share his time to organize the cleanup in the orchard.

Once again it is difficult to find words that can adequately express my appreciation and gratitude to all of you who helped to clean up the prunings and brush in the orchard. You had a challenge to come out on a raw, misty, rainy day and accomplish all that you did. As wet as you were, it didn't dampen your spirits.

On the following Saturday, there were 4-H girls and parents and friends who finished cleaning up the block behind the house. I hope in some way that you will know how much this truly means to me. Thank each one of you ever so much for your thoughtfulness and kindness expressed by sacrificing

your time to share it with me. You reached out so unselfishly.

Peg McLeod
Hancock

Organizations help foundation support ConVal scholarships

To the editor:

On June 14 the ConVal Scholarship Foundation expects to give \$5,800 scholarship grants to three challenged graduating ConVal seniors who a year ago had limited hope of postsecondary education. We thank these local businesses and other organizations that helped us make this possible.

Ames Financial Planning Associates, Ava Marie Handmade Chocolates, Brady's Restaurant, CIM Industries, Cross Road Shop and Garden, Edward Despres, CLU, Fletcher & Wilder Communications, Gilbert Verney Foundation, Jellison Funeral Home, Judith Vance Fine Art Appraisals, Juniper Peterborough, LLC, Kaufhold Memorials and Stoneworks, Masiello Insurance, Peterborough, Microbends

Inc., Monadnock Community Hospital, Monadnock OBGYN, Monadnock Rotary Club, N.H. Ball Bearings, New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (Great Kids Fund), Ocean National Bank, Peterborough Lions Club, Roy's Market, Sequoya Technologies Group, Sim's Press, The Toadstool Bookshops.

Founders and directors
ConVal Community
Scholarship Foundation

Thanks, Stop & Shop, for support, kindness

To the editor:

Peterborough Human Services Fund food pantry volunteers and board members would like to publicly express our heartfelt thanks to the employees of Stop & Shop for all their support and kindness over the years. The location of your store, convenient hours, product selection, ease of shopping, friendliness made our work easier. You will truly be missed.

Julie Conroy, board member
Peterborough Human Services Fund

Letters to the Editor

► **LETTERS**(from page 9) series, but I'm already trying to make fewer trips downtown and I feel I'm buying my groceries a little more responsibly these days. Investing the money, although it's a good idea, doesn't address the short-term problem.

After thinking about it, I started feeling a little guilty accepting this money. After all, I didn't earn it and I don't agree with the government's policies in the first place. It's sort of like taking a bribe or hush money.

So I've decided to give my Economic Stimulus Check to my church where I feel it can do the most good. I'm not doing this to

draw attention to myself or for some selfish, self-serving reason; I'm doing this because my heart tells me it's the right thing to do. I don't expect everyone to feel the same as I do, and that's OK. All I ask is that you consider this an alternative to spending the money on something you really can do without.

Bob Dunn
Jaffrey

Above the law

To the editor:

Superior Court Judge Patricia Coffey has resigned under pressure from Governor John Lynch. I

find that amazing since a panel of her peers, the Judicial Conduct Committee, only recommended a three-month suspension and the N.H. Supreme Court imposed a three-year suspension.

Since Judge Coffey participated in fraud by helping her disbarred husband by hiding personal assets, why wasn't she disbarred and fired? She and her husband cost N.H. taxpayers thousands of dollars when she helped hide \$10,000 from stock sales and hid \$76,000 from the sale of an office condo. This money was supposed to be used to reimburse the N.H. court system for investigative costs.

Oh well! I suppose the suspen-

sion is better than disbarment and allows her to collect a pension and still earn a living as a lawyer.

General John Stark did not mean that trusted government officials should live on the state when he said; "Live Free or Die."

Richard Olson
Jaffrey

A bit of property tax relief awaits qualified homeowners

To the editor:

I would like to call your readers' attention to the New Hampshire

Low Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief Program. Last year, almost 20,000 New Hampshire residents were recipients of relief through this program, whose application period runs from May 1 to June 30 of each year.

The program offers relief from the statewide property tax on the first \$90,000 to \$100,000 of a home's value (the actual base amount varies from town to town). With the statewide property tax hovering around \$2 these days, qualified applicants would likely receive relief checks of around \$200. (In prior years the property tax rate has been much higher — as high as \$6.60 — resulting in larger relief checks.)

To be eligible, a homeowner must have total household income of \$20,000 or less if a single person, or \$40,000 or less if married or a head of household. The application form (Form DP-8) can be obtained at town offices or can be downloaded from the Department of Revenue Administration Web site, www.revenue.nh.gov. Completed applications, including copies of income tax returns and property tax bills, must be postmarked no later than June 30.

Anyone with further questions on this program can call the DRA at 271-2191, or me at 673-7135.

Sen. Peter Bragdon
N.H. State Senate, district 11