

What's This About?

The *Kairos Youth Culture Newsletter* has been published since December 2007. In that time the purpose of the newsletter has been refined. Our purposes are three:

(1) To keep parents and youth workers up to date on some of the main people affecting youth today. Unfortunately, that usually isn't good news!

(2) Sharing good news.

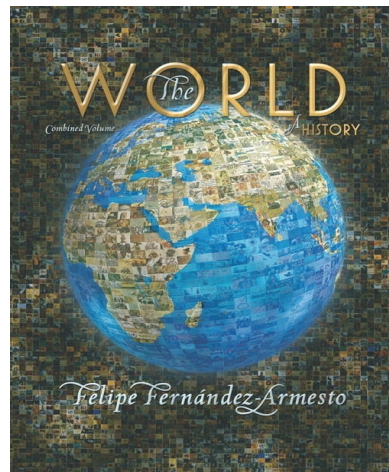
There are many ideas and tools that can be very helpful to parents and youth workers. The *Kairos Youth Culture Newsletter* reports and promotes them to assist parents and youth workers care well for teenagers.

(3) Educating our readers about youth and youth culture: its past history, its current trends, and sometimes even predicting the future.

Every year in September, significant numbers of new readers are introduced to the newsletter because they have children "coming of age." In April there is a similar increase in readership because parents send their children to our annual YES retreat. Welcome to our 70 new readers!

Who decides what's in your kids' textbooks?

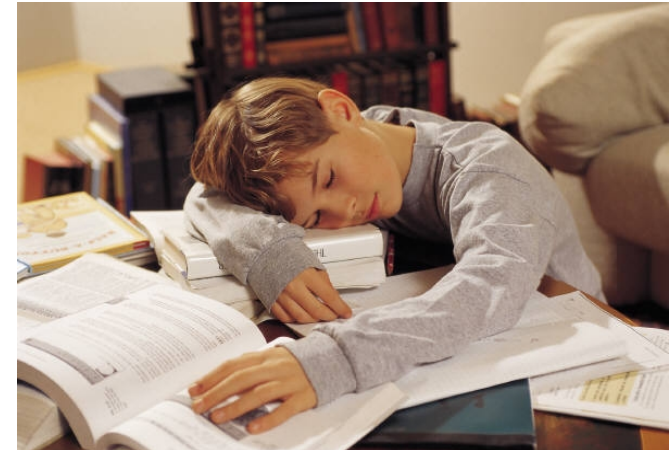
In March the 15-member State Board of Education of Texas considers school curriculum modifications. In May, they make their final decisions. These 15 board members will impact millions of students across America. Why?



In Texas, the state buys the textbooks for every school. In most other states the local school district decides what to buy, based on an approved list from the state board of education. By being the sole purchaser for the entire state, the State Board of Education has the ear of the publishers. What Texas wants, writers write, and publishers print.

Until recently the state of California was also a major purchaser, but its fiscal crisis has led its legislature to decide not to make cash-strapped school districts buy new books until 2013. That makes California much less important to publishers concerning textbook content.

THE TEXAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SPENDS OVER \$600,000,000 PER YEAR IN THE PURCHASE OF TEXTBOOKS.



Suddenly, the Texas board is the only major gunslinger still standing. The books they want will get printed and then offered everywhere else by the big publishers.

Fifteen years ago there were more than a dozen major publishers of textbooks, thus providing some selection to local districts. Now only three remain: McGraw-Hill, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and Pearson Education. Eighty percent of all school textbooks are printed by these three companies.

It is worth praying for wisdom for the fifteen members of the Texas State Board of Education. They will probably be the ones determining what makes it into your child's classroom.

“ELECTED SCHOOL BOARD OFFICIALS ARE OFTEN HIGHLY IMPACTED BY THE NOISIEST POLITICAL ACTIVISTS – REGARDLESS OF THEIR OWN IDEOLOGY.”

~ Gilbert T. Sewall

Director of the American Textbook Council

WHAT MAKES HER TIK?



If you are an *American Idol* fan you probably saw Ke\$ha perform last week. Kesha Rose Sebert burst onto the music scene in August, 2009 with the song *Tik Tok*. The song became the longest running, number-one, debut single by a female in the USA since 1977. It made number one in 11 countries. Her debut album, *Animal*, was released in early 2010. It topped the charts in its first month. Ke\$ha is in stiff competition with Lady Gaga to be the hottest new pop singer.

Blah, Blah, Blah, the song Ke\$ha performed on *American Idol*, is on its way up. It more clearly defines her image as a rebellious, carelessly-about-sex, trash-dressing, Jack-Daniels-drinking, bar-hopping, party-girl.

What you didn't hear on TV are the lyrics that were masked. They aren't masked if you buy the song

from iTunes. The lyrics include the vulgar words for feces, prostitute, and the male sexual organ.

If you are alarmed that network television would promote a song with those lyrics, hang on for what's to come!

One of her songs soon to be released is *Take It Off*. The song doesn't have

any x-rated words but it does tell Ke\$ha's listeners what she wants them to do.

The tune is from a familiar childhood ditty: *There's a place in France...*

There's a place downtown, where the freaks all come around. It's a hole in the wall. It's a dirty free-for-all when the dark of the night comes around. That's the time that the animal comes alive, looking for something wild. And now we lookin' like pimps in my gold Trans-Am. Got a water bottle full of whiskey in my handbag. Got my drunk-text on. I'll regret it in the morning, but tonight I don't give a... I don't give a... I don't give a...

There's a place downtown, where the freaks all come around. It's a hole in the wall. It's a dirty free-for-all. And they turn me on when they take it off, when they take it off. Everybody take it off.

There's a place I know, if you're looking for a show. Where they go

hardcore and there's glitter on the floor. And they turn me on when they take it off, when they take it off. Everybody take it off.

Lose your mind. Lose it now. Lose your clothes in the crowd. We're

delirious. Tear it down 'til the sun comes back around. Now we're getting so smashed. Knocking over trash cans. Everybody breakin' bottles. It's a filthy hot mess. Gonna get faded. I'm not the designated driver so I don't give a... I don't give a... I don't give a...

Oh, oh, oh! Everybody take it off! Oh, oh, oh! Everybody take it off! Right now! Take it off! Right now! Take it off! Oooh. Right now! Take it off! Right now! TAKE IT OFF!

This girl's gone wild and is getting wilder. It's not hard to guess the havoc she hopes to create in bars and at parties this August when she releases *Take It Off*.

Ke\$ha is urging critics not to take her lyrics so seriously – insisting she can't understand why her songs are causing offense.

Past newsletters are available at: kairos-na.org/newsletterarchives.htm
Write to us at: kairos-editor@gmail.com



CAN'T GET A LIFE? GET AN ADDICTION!



The text below is from an actual promotion for this iPhone app. It's more of the same business formula for the youth world: seduce, addict and destroy. . . oh, and make money!

You've been addicted to Tetris, you've played Sudoku until you could do it in your sleep, but have you tried Drop 7? This new iPhone game is the Tetris killer. It's very, very addictive, and it's simple to learn. Just line up numbered balls (1-7) into a grid that's seven squares by seven squares. It's worth every penny for the hours you will waste dropping seven.

"SUPER-ADDICTIVE,
DERANGEDLY AWESOME!"

- Clive Thompson, *Wired*