

Does Bad Culture Equal Bad Teacher?

by Marc Epstein



These days teacher-student sexual liaisons have become *de rigueur*. Just Google “teacher–student sex” and you’ll get about ten million hits.

Last week the *New York Post* reported that a former middle school teacher, a 37 year-old married mother of four, sent sexually explicit Snapchat videos to two students and had sex with one of them who was 16 years old.

The incident occurred in West Fargo, North Dakota, and was clearly [a teacher like that?](#) But in real life these occurrences don’t resemble the plot of a Hollywood [claimed he](#)

[was set-up by the mother](#) of the victim after he broke off an affair with her. The court didn't buy it, and he was sentenced to 14 years for rape.

Or how about the 8th grade teacher at Stovall Middle School in Houston, Texas, [speeding up the firing process](#) for miscreants, but you won't find anyone in authority attempting to define what used to be called "moral fiber" when it comes to hiring teachers.

Why is that you might ask?

I would suggest that it is because the idea of what we once referred to as [Marriage, Parenthood, and Public Policy](#)," Ron Haskins provides an insightful exposition on just how radically the American family has evolved over the past few decades

Here are some of his findings. Since the 1970 census when 83% of women between the ages of 30 to 34 were married, the number has fallen to 57%.

As you might expect, the out of wedlock births across the demographic spectrum has gone from 11% to 41%.

These changes have profound consequences. Children coming out of these single parent homes exhibit higher delinquency and incarceration rates. Everything from graduation rates in high school to acceptance to higher education suffers too. They become sexually active at an earlier age.

All of the new social arrangements are on display in our schools among the staff and student body. Today, It's not just a case of students coming from dysfunctional households that we have to contend with. The same issues are mirrored in the teaching demographic as well.

So there you have it. An education system that reflects the society it operates within is failing at its primary function

with significant numbers of [hiring pond remains stocked](#) with the sorts of people you just terminated

What we are witnessing is the rotten fruit that accompanies the breakdown of our meritocracy that used to set standards for hiring, evaluating performance, and defining civil society.

Perhaps, an as yet unseen Great Awakening can mend the torn social fabric, because government has proved incapable of setting the ship right.

Marc Epstein was a dean of students at Jamaica High Schools. His articles have appeared in the Washington Post, New York Post, Education Next, New York Sun, and the Huffington Post.