

# “SCIENCE FALSELY SO CALLED”

By Stephen Rea

In 1998 I won a landmark education case, *State ex rel. Stephen Rea v. Ohio Department of Education* (Case No. 96–1997, in *Mandamus*). Relying on the *U.S. Freedom of Information Act* and the *State of Ohio Availability of Public Records Law*, I requested copies of assessment testing materials used on my daughter at West Branch High School, Beloit, Ohio. I specifically wanted copies of my daughter’s OPT -- Ohio Proficiency Test -- which is a “high stakes” test based on the outrageous outcomes of OBE. I think it is highly interesting that my court case victory, which establishes precedent for parents in Ohio and all across the United States, has been the best kept secret of the Conservative Right. My story has not been published, except in local Ohio newspapers and in Charlotte Iserbyt’s book, *the deliberate dumbing down of america*.

Why is this? It is my belief that Conservatives and Christians have compromised and found common ground on this key area. The compromise and common ground between education, educational testing and psychology is not anything new. From the very beginning psychology was wedded to education, and neither holds to a Christian view of man. William Wundt established the world’s first psychological laboratory in Leipzig, Germany, in 1875. Wundt first proposed the concept that education could be a **process** of exposing students to experiences that would produce certain reactions – in other words, stimulus-response.

A number of Wundt’s disciples migrated over to America and began to introduce his concepts. Cattell, Wundt’s first assistant, was the first to propose that students do not see letters but "word pictures." "Cattell was exposed to the ideas of Galton and “quickly absorbed Galton’s approach to eugenics, selective breeding, and the measurement of intelligence.” Based on these ideas, Cattell began psychological testing. Edward Thorndike was trained directly by Wundt’s disciples. He was the first to apply research on animal behavior to human children, laying much of the groundwork for the later work of [behavioral psychologist] B.F. Skinner at Harvard University. In the 1930s the early social-psychologists began experimentation on test questions that could determine the attitudes, values and beliefs of a child.

The history of modern education reform has been one of deception upon deception. Modern education is built upon a pillar of humanistic psychology and steeped in the doctrines of socialism and globalism.

Most parents today have no problem with using standardized educational or psychological testing instruments. When the databanking of student test scores from these psychological attitudinal tests is mixed with psychological methods of manipulation, using rewards and penalties, it is popularly called “high stakes” testing. What it means is that your child will be assessed on his feelings, opinions, beliefs, values and attitudes and that the results of his test score will be held in a databank. This information will be used to determine your child’s future, his teacher’s future and the future of his local school district.

What I find most amazing is that there has been virtually **no** opposition to “high stakes” testing from the Christian community or secular conservatives. Let me explain why databanking student assessment scores is so dangerous. Databanking allows for school “choice”. It allows for vouchers, private academies, and other magnet or charter schools. Because of databanking the federal government will easily be able to keep tabs on how well compliance to the new standards is coming along. I predict that the private schools families will receive government monies based on the successes of their child. They may be eventually denied monies if their child, or their school, does NOT comply with the new standards (outcomes).

This brings me to my final point. I do not believe that Christians should be participating in psychology, or psychological testing instruments. From the ancient Greeks, the word *psyche* has to do with one’s soul. The word *logia* or *logos* means science, doctrine or theory of. In other words, psychology is the theory of the soul.

We know that mankind has always attempted to define itself apart from God, the Creator. We know that modern psychology attempts to cloak itself in the garb of “academic” and “scientific”. The shortcomings of modern psychology are evident to the Christian: it does not account for repentance, salvation, regeneration, sanctification, justification and the Holy Spirit working within us. The Scriptures make it clear that we are to examine ourselves and that some day we will give an account to God for our behavior (Rom. 14:12, for example). Psychology, through the use of testing, claims to examine and predict human behavior. Psychology, through the use of behavioral conditioning methods, claims to be able to manipulate, shape and mold human behavior. This is a false science, however. We know from the great stories of biblical history that human beings have defied the odds, have overcome great obstacles, and have accomplished great things – all by the power of God in their lives. There is no tool, no assessment, no method that cannot be overcome by the “power of God at work in us.” (Eph. 3:20).