

*[in satirical style]*

Imagine if you will... a homeschool.

An irregular arrangement for the education of children without the benefit of professionally trained experts. Homeschooling – a concept as ill-conceived as bicycle makers trying to invent an airplane, as bound for peril as an Italian sailing under the Portuguese flag to the brittle edge of the ocean's surface, as likely to succeed as sticking a human being in a small garbage can, stuffing it in a rocket and aiming it at the moon. Homeschooling – a frightening sign of our times.

Homeschool – the principal is always absent, the teacher's highest degree was achieved with last winter's flu virus, and the students have no more respect for their educators than they do their own parents. The school itself usually consists of a peanut butter and jelly smeared kitchen table, old books – begged, borrowed, or stolen (or at least grossly overdue at the public library) and an odd assortment of "life experiences" such as guinea pigs, ubiquitous "field trips", with prayer and Bible studies thinly veiled as a "culture and history" curriculum.

The motivation to homeschool is most peculiar. Perhaps an attempt to deny minimum wage to field laborers and domestics workers. Perhaps a subtle plan to indoctrinate young minds with old – very old – facts and values. Perhaps just another passing fad of the generation that gave us Woodstock, Pet Rocks, "Have a Nice Day", and "I'd like to teach the world to sing."

But what about the children? Socially isolated, academically impoverished, doomed to live out a life in society's back alleys and dark corners. Aside from a handful of presidents, Nobel Prize laureates, congressmen, athletes, doctors, lawyers, chief executives, pioneers, inventors, creators, and committed mother and fathers, there is little to recommend this hazard in education.