

Cedrick



*The Best Stuff
ever written
about
Rotten Kids*

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**Wise words from the mouths of
fools do oft themselves belie ...**

The Best Stuff Ever Written about Rotten Kids

By Cedrick of Toxteth, S.F.A., CYC (Pending)

**(With the reluctant collaboration of
Gerry Fewster, Ph.D.)**

CYC-Net Press

The Best Stuff ever written about Rotten Kids

Cedrick of Toxteth (with Gerry Fewster)

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The Author



Among those who have actually met Master Cedrick of Toxteth, many regard him to be a lay-about, a wastrel, a ne'er-do-well, a philanderer and a fool. Rather than be perturbed by such labels, he has come to value them as valid descriptions of his beloved sense of self and chosen way of life. From this solid foundation he has spent the last ten years systematically acquiring, practicing and exhibiting all the symptoms currently listed in the DSM V in order to show how the real pathology lies in the minds of the classifiers rather than the behavior of the classified.

The bi-product of a back stage quickie between an Italian Tenor and a Scottish Illusionist, he was raised by a brotherhood of Frisbetarian Monks at the Toxteth Home for Undesirable Children in Liverpool, U.K. Under the devoted tutelage of Father Divine, he learned to read, write, sing, dance, and share the odd laugh with the Almighty. Within the company of his fellow undesirables he became a star performer.

For the past twenty years Cedrick has been meddling around in the only 'profession' that has ever made any sense to him – Child & Youth Care. Unfortunately the authorities of this discipline haven't always made sense of him, although he did receive an honorary certificate from the Black Creek CYC Association for his offensive

incursions behind enemy lines. As a man of letters, he has written piles of nonsense and was a regular columnist with Relational Child & Youth Care Practice. He is currently President of the Thorngumbald Malt Whiskey Society.

*If you wish to contact Cedrick, for whatever reason, he can be reached through his long-suffering editor at:
fewster@shaw.ca or info@cyc-net.org*

Foreword

The early issues of the journal *Relational Child & Youth Care Practice* (and, more recently, *CYC-Online*) have included a refreshing, irreverent, tell-it-like-it-is series by one “Cedrick” who had regaled readers for some years with his outpourings, some topical and critical, others laugh-out-loud funny, clearly modelled on his thinking and experiences in child and youth care.

Working in this field, all of us can dredge up stories, experiences, opinions, illustrations, from our past or present, which bear repeating. Few are as entertaining – and provocative – as this too-short collection from Cedrick.

Pity. We live and work in this profession which brings us into daily contact with remarkable human events which stir our thoughts, our hearts, or our funny bones. Some of these encourage us to brush up our awareness, our knowledge and skills, and all areas of our practice. Others just remind us of our humanness and of the privileges we enjoy in simply sharing in the the lives of young people and their families and neighbourhoods – the puzzles, hurts, contradictions, struggles, challenges, successes ... and the laughs.

Often enough, child and youth care workers are troubled by the egg on their faces. This small book will probably not remove the egg, but it will add some healthy laughs and smiles. Enjoy it.

Brian Gannon

Acknowledgments

According to my venereal editor, books written by nice people about doing good things should contain at least one page of ‘acknowledgments. This means that the author thinks the work is so bloody brilliant that a touch of humility can be insinuated by referring to the influence or support of insignificant others. It’s also an opportunity for the self-indulgent scribe to seek future considerations from potential benefactors. So, in accordance with his lordship’s wishes, I offer the following codswallop for your enlightenment. If you don’t give a monkey’s toss about all this, please feel free to flick the page and immerse yourself in the brilliance without the preliminary bullshit.

First and foremost, I’ll acknowledge ‘uncle’ George who set me off on my illustrious career by calling me a “filthy little freak” for peeing in his lunch box. Later he took to calling me “the devil boy” after I nabbed the pictures he hid in the coal shed and handed them over to Father O’Malley for the price of three Hail Marys. After a rare old snot- fight in the alehouse, my mother gave him the boot and brought in uncle Bob who I choose not to acknowledge because he wanted me to do naughty things. He was followed by many other unmentionables.

My grade-one teacher Miss Partridge, on the other hand, is very mentionable. Having been bottle-fed, followed by endless bowls of pre-digested Pablum, I developed this obsessive fascination with the mysterious little mounds she kept in her blouse. The first time she leaned over my desk, I discovered a sense of purpose that

remains to this very day. The objects of my obsession where nothing less than vanilla cream puffs topped with tantalizing sand coloured soothers. From that point on, I became a very attentive learner and conjured up many ways to attract her dedicated attention. In my mother's words, I was intent on becoming "a manipulative little sod."

I hereby acknowledge Mr. Charlie Farfort, a psychiatric social worker trained at the infamous Tavistock Clinic. His suggestion that my "trickery and disobedience probably arose from an unresolved Oedipal Complex due to my father's decision to beat it back to Italy and mother's subsequent disdain for anybody wearing testicles.

This theory was a fertile source of endless amusement to my old chum Little Richard (a.k.a. 'Big Dick') Weatherspoon whose testicles were the envy of our institutional community. But I prefer to acknowledge him for his obdurate belief that there's nothing in our insane illusions of life that can't be laughed at. It's true that much of his humor was lavatorial, for which he invented the disciplines of "Pissology" and "Shitography" but his genius also took him to the highest levels of divine absurdity. In all the years we guffawed together, 'Willy' Weatherspoon never told a single joke – and if that's not worthy of acknowledgement, give me another punch line.

Last, and by all means least, I hereby acknowledge my parents Gloria and (we think) Giovanni. Without them this book would certainly not have been written. May the good Lord have mercy on their souls.



Some Nasty Thoughts About Kids

EDITOR'S NOTE

In this first section, the 'author' uses broad brushstrokes to present a totally incoherent picture of what's happening for kids in today's world. If you have never read this 'writer's' stuff before you may be offended by his total disregard for the accepted standards of decency and literacy. Do with it what you will, but please do not hold the editor responsible. If you had seen the original scrawl, you would have only the highest regard for his ingenuity and perseverance. If you manage to struggle through this section, you may wish to seek help from a qualified psychotherapist. If you enjoy it, you are beyond help.

Gerry Fewster





PART ONE

Chapter 1

Everything You Never Wanted to Know about Being Stupid

Just because you're a kid doesn't mean you're stupid. If your parents or teachers think you are, they're probably pissed-off because you're not following their program. Now, in my book, that might make you courageous, stubborn, brilliant, misinformed or misunderstood, but to them, you're simply stupid. Ignore their demands or tell them to go to hell and there'll be other words, like 'defiant,' 'disruptive' or 'devious', heading your way. They may say they still love you, even throw in a trip to Disneyland for good measure, but stick to your guns and the only trips will be to your room, if you still have one. You may wonder how they can really love you if they don't know what you think and how you feel, but "love" is a word with many meanings, just like "stupid".

But be prepared. If you continue to challenge the

regime the experts will come sniffing around and the bullshit will get even deeper. You'll become a 'client' for people called "counselors" who'll use all kinds of trickery to throw you off course. They may say they're interested in your thoughts and feelings but what they really want is to get you into line with the "good" kids. Learn how to play their game and you might come out unscathed, but tell them to fuck off and you're back in the snake pit. Next come the Shrinks with their handbook of phony disorders and diseases. Before you can learn to say "psycho-pathogenic mega colon," you'll be diagnosed, drugged and duped into becoming a 'patient'. No longer responsible for your stupidity, your critics will back off and those little pink pills will seem to whisk your troubles away like a hit of Ecstasy. Life will become easier. Your teachers will welcome you back into the classroom and your parents will smile at you again. That trip to Disneyland is back on the schedule and when those old troubles begin to bubble up again, as they surely will, there'll always be more pills and the odd injection to keep them at bay. So now you can just go on to become what they wanted you to be in the first place – attentive, compliant, successful, and incurably stupid.

What really pisses *me* off is that so many adults have this idea that kids need to be told everything from the get-go, like the difference between right and wrong. This doesn't mean they'll tell you everything you want to know. Some things you're not supposed to know because they think you're too young to understand. But most of the interesting stuff is still missing because they don't know about it themselves. They'll never admit this because folks who don't know about interesting things are called "ignorant" (an adult word meaning 'stupid'). So the message is clear – pretending to know what you don't

know is a very important part of growing up. You don't have to be smart to look smart – just make sure you don't end up looking ignorant.

Something you probably don't know is that one of the smartest people on the planet, a guy called Dalai Lama, said that all kids are born knowing more than their parents. Most parents don't know he said this, and those that do tend to keep it to themselves because they don't like the idea, or more likely, they haven't two clues what he's talking about. Either way, they wouldn't want *you* to know. You see, Dalai is a rather strange man and most people don't want to be associated with some weirdo in a red robe that likes to sit around thinking about life, rather than just getting a real job like a normal human being. It's true that some strange people can become very rich and famous, but most are either laughed at or locked up. There are all kinds of words for these poor suckers.

Your parents don't want you to be strange. They want you to follow in their footsteps, believe what they believe and make sure you have all the things they always wanted but never had, like being a doctor with a big house in Snobsville. According to the experts, this is what it means to be a 'good parent' and, if you stay with the program and make them proud, everyone will call you a "good kid." Then, if all goes according to plan, you'll end up wearing the smug smile that identifies you as the successful product of a happy family. And, should the smile fade, as it undoubtedly should, you'll still have all the dough you need to rent the best Shrink in town and paint it back on. You may never know who you really are, but you won't be a loser and you'll never let down those wonderful folks back home who sacrificed everything to make you a success.

If you want to test your parents, ask them to tell you

what the Dalai Lama said about kids and then check out his Blog, “Hello, This is the Dalai Lama Speaking”. This won’t only help you to understand your parents better, it will also remind you to always check out information from at least two independent sources. The word ‘independent’ is very important. Kids can be easily conned into believing poppycock just because Mom and Dad, and everybody down the street, is saying the same thing. Millions of flies might agree that doggy-poo is a good thing, but that doesn’t mean it’s good for you, now does it? Don’t be fooled, dog shit is bad for you, even if it’s been dished out by dotting parents and dedicated teachers. You don’t even have to check this out, you just know. I think this is probably what the Dalai Lama was getting at.

Well I’m not like the Dalai Lama. I can’t keep saying really deep things that nobody wants to hear or understand. But I can say things that your parents and teachers might not say, whatever their reasons.

For example, let me tell you the biggest con job of them all. The world you were born into is one unholy mess. Your parents, grandparents and all who went before have fucked things up so badly that there’s hardly anything worth hanging on to. If they tell you otherwise, just smile and listen carefully. It’s never too early to suss



out the smell of bullshit. Just don't make any commitments. This is your time for exploring options, not for collecting obligations. If you buy into the claptrap, you'll be slotted into a world in which everybody is competing with everybody else for everything imaginable – power, status, sex, money, trophies, oil, real estate, trees, school grades and, of course, sneakers. I could go on, but you get the point. If your devoted advisors have their way, you'll even be led to believe that you must compete for your freedom because there's only so much to be had. Well you don't need Uncle Dalai to tell you what a pile of doggy-poo that is.

The good news is that no matter how much they grind you down, you can still be free on the inside. So *just do it*, even if you don't have the right sneakers. Give your imagination a chance to roam and you can dream up a much better world than the one they want you to enlist in. Just don't tell them about it. If you do, they'll call you "childish" and end up tagging you as an idiot. You must understand that any threat to their ambitions and beliefs scares the crap out of them – even if it comes from kids. When it comes from competing adults, they would rather slaughter each other than face the possibility that what they've always believed is a crock.

As long as you're a kid the odds are against you, so stay cool. Play as much as possible, it will help you to experiment with your ideas. If they want to show you how to play, go along for the ride, but keep having fun in your own way whether they like it or not (you can still become a ballet dancer or play pro-football if that's what you really, really want). Read the books you like, even if you have to hide them in your secret place. And when you're imprisoned in school, listen to what they have to say – you'll find some good stuff in among the garbage.

Remember, it's not about what they want you to know, but what you're interested in knowing, so create your own program and stay with it. If you get trapped in the mindless competition for grades, medals and scholarships, all is lost. Oh, and one more thing – watch out for the guilt trips. You are not a 'bad' person bound for Hell because you're not able to please Mommy, Daddy, Pastor Joseph or Mr. Codswallop at Pewk Bay Elementary. On the inside, your goodness is beyond question.

Maybe you think I'm just dissing your parents, teachers and all those helpful experts, so let me say a couple of things on their behalf. They don't mean to be against you. In fact most of them are convinced they're acting in your best interests. The trouble is they're stuck with what was shoveled out to them and will probably cling onto to it even as the world crumbles around them. If you blame them, ignore them, or hit back in anger you'll be just as stuck in your own bullshit as they are in theirs. But if you're respectful, kind and thoughtful, you could break the deadlock. Who knows, you might even help them to get along with each other. Learn to say your real yes's and no's, even if they don't give a tinker's-toss – it's great practice for when your time comes around, as it certainly will. Then, when it's your turn to call the shots, you'll have everything you need to have fun and create a better world along the way.

You may decide to toss-out everything I've said and that's just fine, as long as it's your opinion and not someone else's. I may be a Fool, but I'm certainly not stupid.

Chapter 20

Letter of Resignation from *Relational Child & Youth Care Practice*

To: The Editorial Board,
Relational Child & Youth Care Practice

March 2nd, 2005

Dear Members of the Board,

I hereby resign from my tenuous post as a columnist with your publication. Given my life-long dedication to doing as little as possible, I now find myself overwhelmed by my obligations to my deceased dog-fish, Ralph, and the rash that has suddenly flared up along my perineum. Please don't ask to see the evidence.

I won't patronize you with all the usual sentimental clap-trap about how much I've enjoyed our association and how I'm going to miss you all. The truth is, that since you never paid me a single penny, never said thank-you, never remembered my birthday and never offered me any of that special malt scotch we all know Garfat keeps under his desk, there's not a hell of a lot to feel sentimental about, is there? I'm not saying you're not good God-fearing people; you're just not very relational.

When I first signed on with you lot, you told me your readers would really like my stuff. Well do they? Did

they? In two years all I got back was an indecent proposal from a weirdo in Flin Flon and an email from a woman who wanted to know if I was related to Michael Jackson. Playing to an unresponsive or hostile audience is one thing, but getting any kind of response from your mysterious readers is like asking Osama bin Laden for his mailing address. Have you ever checked your subscription list to make sure there are real live people “out there”? I know for a fact that Mildred Parkinson of 27 Butterfield Road, Halifax, N. S. passed away in 1927.

I haven't discussed this with your other columnists but my heart goes out to them. No wonder Goodwin is frozen to his chair, Gomph lives alone in a Caboose, Matthews hides herself away on some uncharted (undiscovered?) island, Stuart spends her life looking for leaders and Phelan sticks to reviewing other people's stuff (sensible fellow). Well these people deserve better. Might I humbly suggest that your esteemed editors, Fewster, Garfat and Rose-Sladde be given a shot of intensive sensitivity training? I realize that they don't get a penny either but even volunteers should be held accountable.

It's all about relationships, isn't it?

Deliciously yours,

Cedrick.

p.s. Please tell Fewster to find another stooge.

What the experts have to say about this book

This is a real page-turner. It took me only seven minutes to turn all the pages. — *Ed Turner, Author and Nobel Prize Candidate in Accountancy, New Jersey.*

I haven't actually read this book but I did read another book once and quite liked it. — *Michael Klopper, Ph.D. , Professor of Contemporary Literature, University of East Grimstead.*

Absolute Rubbish — *His Holiness John Goodweather, Bishop of Wet Wang, East Yorkshire, UK*

Every idiot should read this book, at least once backwards — *Trilby Lunge, Saddlemaker's Bottom Knocker, Knotty Ash, Liverpool.*

A royal achievement of profound epistemological relevance — *Jimmy Swazzle, who once shook hands with H.R.H. Prince Charles*

A very nice little book ... very nice indeed. — *Alim Masih, Public Relations Officer, Al Qaeda Children's Services*

If I'd read this book first, I never would have married Elmer. — *June Dossage, author of "How to Raise Moral Kids" Houston, Texas*

This Asshole Cedrick is a Plonker — *Dr. N. D. Blinker, Professor of Psychiatric Diagnostics, Flin Flon, Sask.*



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