



The Good Teacher

Tutorial: Please view the [Overview](#) to Ethics in Education by Dr. Troy Hutchings

Teachers usually pursue their careers because they have the opportunity to impact student growth on so many levels. They receive very little training in their teacher preparatory programs or on the job about proper relationships with students. This lack of training is unfortunate because the teacher/student relationship is a continual emotional and intellectual interchange. From the beginning, few teachers are prepared for the immersion into the complex world of teacher/student relationships. At a minimum a solid professional, ethical framework is necessary to guide teachers' words, acts, and decisions.



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Moving Forward

1. Why do teachers generally pursue their careers?

- a. they like summers off
- b. they enjoy students' enthusiasm from their lectures
- c. the opportunity to impact student growth on many levels
- d. the salary

2. To avoid very troubling scenarios a solid professional, ethical framework is necessary to guide teachers'

- a. words, finances, and decisions
- b. words, acts, and decisions
- c. words, finances, and acts
- d. all of the above

Moving Forward (cont.)

3. In reality, few teachers are prepared for the immersion in the complex world of teacher/student relationships
 - a. true
 - b. false

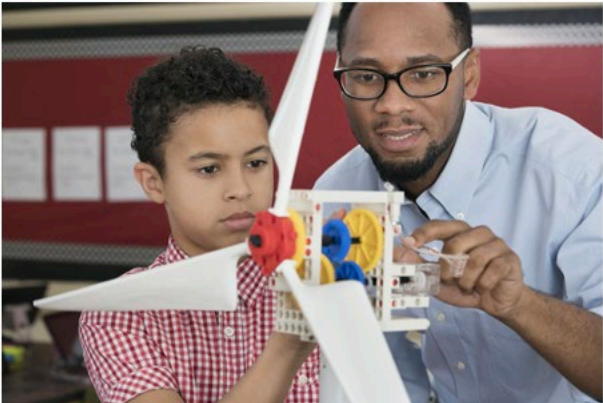
4. To avoid very troubling scenarios a solid professional, ethical framework is necessary to guide teachers'
 - a. should always be formal
 - b. is never emotional
 - c. a continual emotional and intellectual interchange
 - d. needs to be completely sterile

The Slippery Slope

Amazingly, teacher misconduct with students is a subject not discussed and rarely included in teacher preparatory programs. As a result, an entire workforce is interacting with children without an understanding of boundaries. In many cases of sexual misconduct decisions are made that go from verbal and written communication all the way to physical contact. Most people believe that the top priority for schools and their teachers is to educate children. It is, however, the safety and welfare of the children. They are the largest population of people who are “held captive” and the responsibility for their safety is huge. Teachers and administrators are fiduciaries who are entrusted to take care of the children. Statistics indicate we are not doing such a good job of this though because according to Shakeshaft 9.6% of all students in grades 8 – 11 report contact and/or non-contact educator sexual misconduct that was unwanted

Fiduciaries:

Five groups of people are fiduciaries - teachers, attorneys, doctors, counselors/therapists, and the clergy. Of the five only one group does not receive formal ethics training – teachers. All the others receive that training starting in pre-service and throughout their careers. Yet teachers are the only group that works primarily with a captive audience.



Most people think that those who become involved in sexual misconduct are monsters, but in reality they are often very good teachers.

Questions:

5. Teacher misconduct with students is a subject:

- a. not discussed and rarely included in teacher prep programs
- b. with no solutions so rarely included in teacher prep programs
- c. always about predators so rarely included in teacher prep programs
- d. all the above

6. We have an entire workforce interacting with children that does not understand:

- a. boundaries
- b. time limits
- c. financial implications
- d. all of the above

Questions (cont):

7. In many cases of sexual misconduct there is myriad of decisions made that go from verbal and written communication all the way to physical contact :

- a. true
- b. false

8. The topic of teacher misconduct could be called:

- a. a slippery slope
- b. are you ready for some controversy?
- c. duh, shouldn't teachers just know?
- d. all of the above

Questions (cont):

9. According to case law, what is the top priority for all schools and their teachers?

- a. education of the children who are the future of the country
- b. safety and welfare for the children who are held captive
- c. none of the above
- d. all of the above

10. Fiduciary refers to a power imbalance where a group is trusted to take care of another

- a. true
- b. false

Questions (cont):

11. According to Shakeshaft ___% of all students in grades 8– 11 report contact and/or non-contact educator sexual misconduct that was unwanted

- a. 11
- b. 1.2
- c. 3
- d. 9

12. Fiduciary refers to a power imbalance where a group is trusted to take care of another

- a. true
- b. false

Questions (cont):

13. Of the five groups of people who are fiduciaries - teachers, attorneys, doctors, counselors/therapists, and the clergy, the only group that does not receive formal ethics training starting at pre-service and throughout their careers is:

- a. attorneys
- b. teachers
- c. doctors
- d. counselors

14. Most people think that those who become involved in sexual misconduct are monsters, but in reality, they are often:

- a. just kidding
- b. poor teachers
- c. very good teachers
- d. none of the above

Questions (cont):

15. Boundaries blur when teachers

- a. stay after school
- b. attend sporting events
- c. become overly involved with students
- d. none of the above

16. When students find a caring teacher they often _____ their need to belong, to be accepted, to be cared for, and to be loved.

- a. complete
- b. transfer
- c. forget
- d. all of the above

17. Teachers often receive two different messages – keep your distance and become more personally involved.

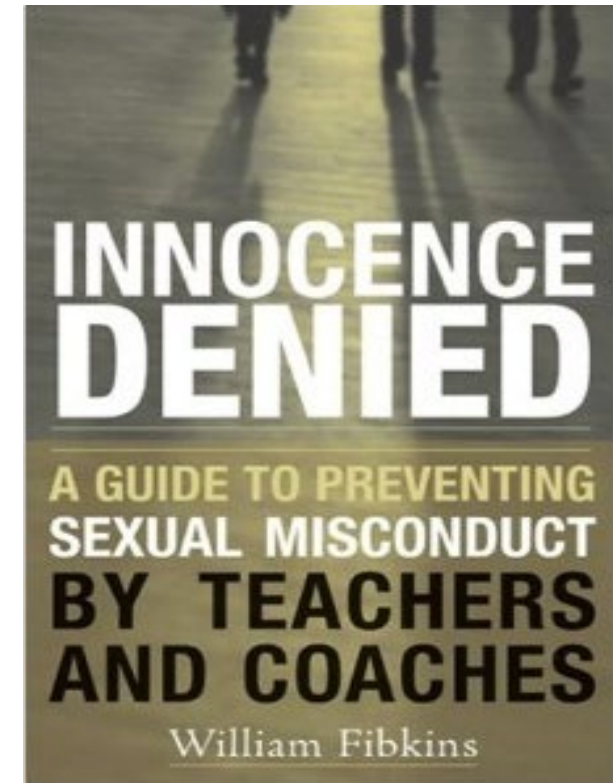
- a. true
- b. False

William Fibkins

“The boundary between helping and becoming a friend, confidant, surrogate parent, even a lover is hard to see when the teacher becomes overly involved with her students.”

“Sexual issues and needs dominate teenage life as do the needs to belong, to be accepted, to be cared for, and to be loved.”

“When teenage students find a caring teacher, they transfer those feelings to that person. Teachers have similar needs for friendship, to be cared for, to be accepted, and being human teachers can and will develop a problematic personal relationships at various stages during their careers and seek out comfort, caring, and support. Many teachers will experience issues related to divorce, death, and so on” we call that the famine of the soul.”



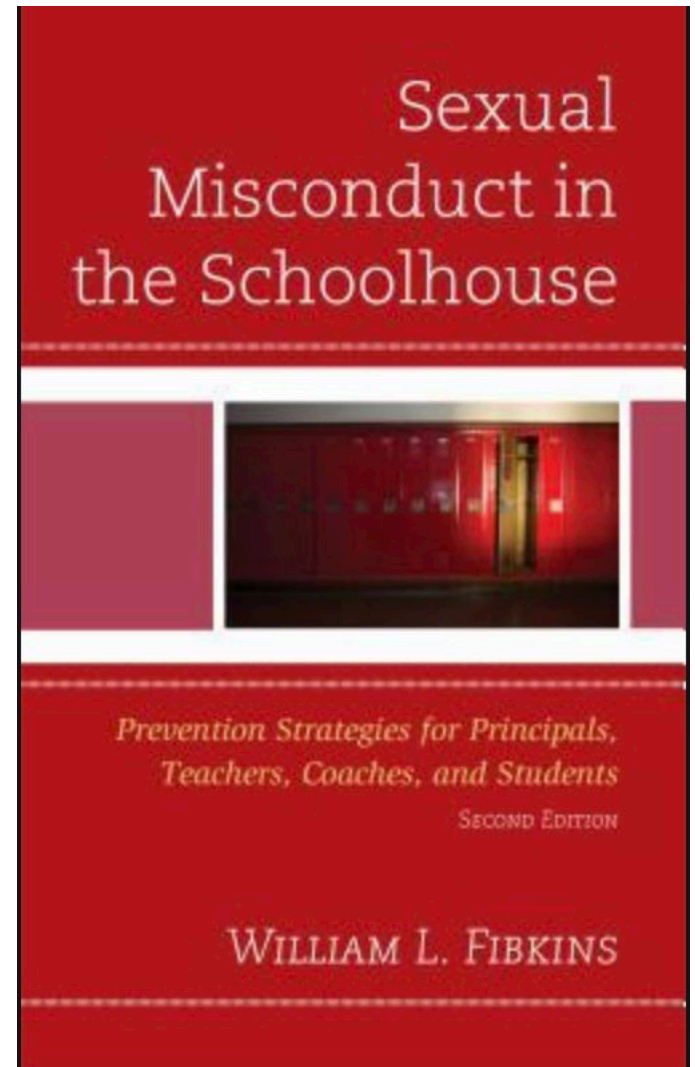
William Fibkins Innocence Denied (cont).

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“Sexual issues and needs dominate teenage life as do the needs to belong, to be accepted, to be cared for, and to be loved.”

This is where our schools are struggling and you might be getting two different messages and you need to be strong: On one hand, the dismissal of teachers in the school for sexual misconduct is met with a call for more vigilance, scrutiny, background checks, yet at the same time, teachers are expected to serve as advisors and quasi counselors for students. Here are two different approaches – one says, watch closely all teachers’ involvement with students as it can lead to sexual misconduct, the other says we have to have teachers become more personally involved with their students.

Where are you on this issue?



Questions (cont): The slippery slope:

18. Poor teachers are going to have intellectual and emotional intercourse with their students every day.

- a. true
- b. false

19. Sexual offenders often had _____ issues during adolescence.

- a. self-esteem
- b. discipline
- c. academic
- d. none of the above

20. Teachers who become involved in sexual misconduct often have a _____ in their lives.

- a. desire to achieve
- b. secret ambition
- c. sense of failure
- d. void

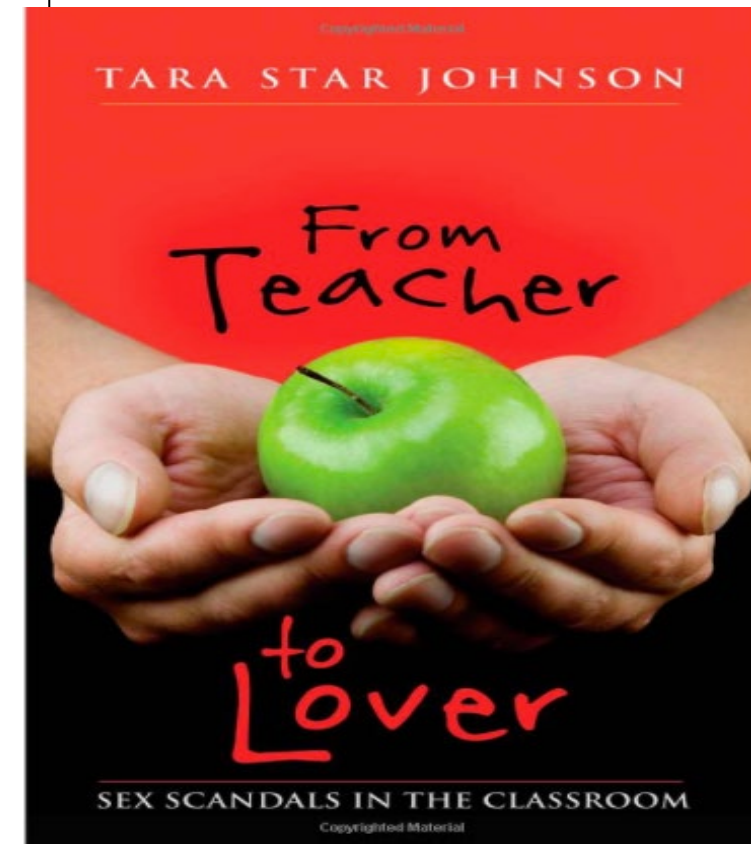
Tara Star Johnston: Teacher to Lover, Sex Scandals in Classrooms

“Good teachers are going to have emotional and intellectual intercourse every day with their students.”

The danger is that special relationship can go to an emotional relationship to a physical relationship.

Offender characteristics:

1. Often troubled family history or self-esteem issues during adolescence, resulting in a feeling of a lost adolescence that may be reclaimed later.
2. Arrested development resulting in a juvenile behavior
3. Feeling the void from an unhappy relationship or recent breakup
4. Teaching persona – often (a) a very highly respected educator, (b) holistic teaching – teaches the whole child – reaches out to marginalized students – teacher as savior role lays the foundation for sexual misconduct – the desire to save students from academic failure or from an unhealthy home environment is a noble one that can go awry when a teacher focuses on a few needy students – holistic teachers know their students better than those primarily focused on delivering content, but the more time, energy, and love a teacher invests in one student, the more consuming a relationship becomes



The Slippery Slope

1. The teacher holistically reaches out to an individual student
1. Teacher crosses emotional and subject lines in conversation (written – emails, social media, texting – or verbal). (Be sure to follow school policy on that and if your school does not have a policy on it consider developing an internal policy on it). Law officials say this type of accessibility is the single most common gateway to sexual misconduct.
3. Student perceives this as needed emotional attention and reciprocates attention to an emotionally needy teacher. All counselors know this – when a needy client comes in he transfers his feelings to the caregiver. And then there is something called the counter-transference of feelings. The caregiver also has a need and transfers back onto the student. Counselors are trained on this, but don't teachers have far more interactions?
4. The teacher sets up scenarios where further emotional boundaries may be transgressed.
5. Students are allowed to establish the boundaries and are now the ones in control.
6. Boundaries now are arbitrary
7. The teacher has constructed a new reality

The Slippery Slope (cont.)

8. The teacher feels: valued and affirmed and perhaps even loved, empowered, and liberated from the past.
9. A relationship can provide relief and liberation from an unhappy adult relationship and the teacher is most always confident that code of silence will be maintained.
10. As the relationship develops the teacher experiences a loss of reality and his or her professional role. The student becomes a peer and the behavior seems justified.
11. At some point the teacher realizes that boundaries have been crossed, but the relationship becomes impossible to stop
12. The offender often confers to a sympathetic adult confidant who validates the behavior (often the confidant is not aware of all of the behavior)
13. The offender struggles with the tension of resisting or succumbing
14. The relationship is acted out in a manner where obvious cues lead to suspicion (why don't people pick up on the clues? We could say the same thing about suicide).
15. Confrontation leads to initial denial and then finally relief

Questions (cont):

21. The slippery slope often occurs when a teacher reaches out to :

- a. a certain group of students
- b. an individual student
- c. another teacher
- d. none of the above

22. Law officials say the most common gateway to sexual misconduct is:

- a. written communication
- b. social networking
- c. oral communication
- d. all of the above

23. Teachers, unlike counselors, are not trained on

- a. counter transference of feelings
- b. differentiated feelings
- c. classroom culture
- d. all of the above.

Questions (cont):

24. The student sets up scenarios where further emotional boundaries may be transgressed

- a. true
- b. false

25. The teacher then allows students to establish the boundaries and the students

- a. are now at fault
- b. are now the ones in control
- c. begin to feel threatened
- d. try to quit school

26. Once the boundaries become _____ the teacher has constructed a new reality

- a. rigid
- b. arbitrary
- c. stable
- d. none of the above

Questions (cont):

27. The teacher and the student become _____ and the behavior seems _____.

- a. defiant/wrong
- b. inseparable/strange
- c. peers/justified
- d. none of the above

28. The offender struggles with the tension of resisting or succumbing

- a. true
- b. false

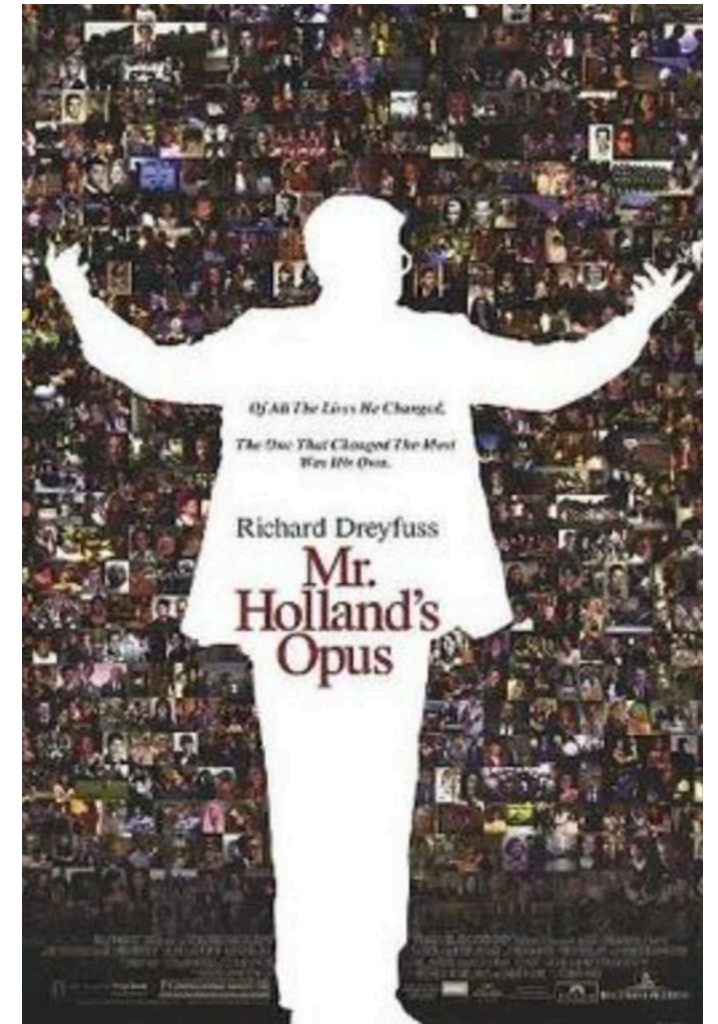
29. The offender leaves cues similar to those contemplating

- a. a robbery
- b. murder
- c. suicide
- d. none of the aboved.

The story of Mr. Holland's Opus depicted eros – the transformative quality of education. “Eros...a Greek word for love.... that creative power which propels the knowledge quest and gives resonance to the search for meaning.” For great teachers, eros is a part of what you do - it is not erotica.

The Greeks identified this notion as “Eros” and believe it to be the radical underpinning of transformative learning and a key ingredient in education. Eros is not sex. It is passionate, it is life changing, it is glorious, and it is addictive, and it is dangerous.

“Plato’s Eros inspires us through out sense of beauty...but Eros is a trickster and must be treated critically.” (Murdock)



Questions (cont):

30. Mr. Holland was feeling

- a. erotic
- b. confident
- c. incomplete
- d. none of the above

31. For great teachers _____ is a part of what you do – it is the _____ quality of education.

- a. eros/transformative
- b. lecture/highest
- c. erotica/best
- d. none of the above

32. Plato's Eros inspires us through our sense of beauty...but Eros is _____ and must be treated critically.

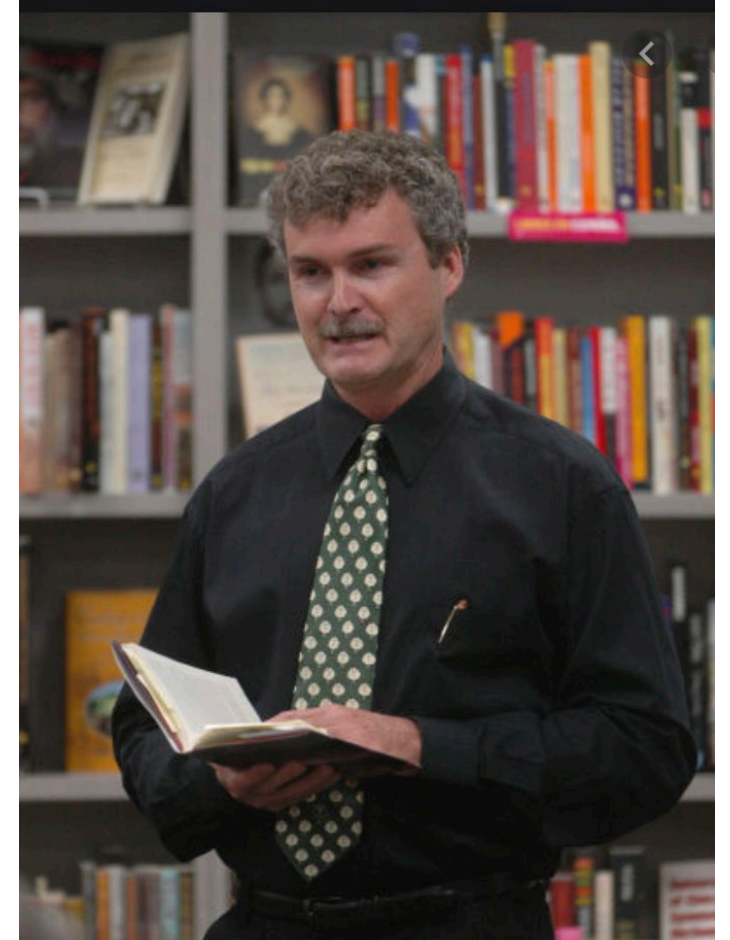
- a. evil
- b. a trickster
- c. blind
- d. a lie

Ken Lamberton 1985 Mesa Unified School District Teacher-of-the-Year
Spent 12 years in prison for a sexual relationship with a 14-year-old student, transporting her across state lines

Middle School Science teacher, father of three children 28 years old.
Active in church

His interview after spending 12 years in prison:

You stop thinking – you let your emotions ride – I became obsessed with wanting to spend time with her, to get to know her better, I felt alive. She became a distraction. Intellectually I knew it was wrong, but emotionally, it was very powerful and I did not know what to do with those emotions...God must be allowing this to happen because of the way I feel...It is ridiculous to think that now. If I stopped to think about it I wouldn't do it – the problem was I was just moving through all this raw emotion and I began to compartmentalize everything. My wife and family – who I wanted to keep, and this relationship which I also desperately wanted. My emotions were lying to me. I was at a place where I wanted just anybody to tell me what to do and she was willing to do that. I was riddled with guilt – acting younger than the victim.



Excerpts from Dr. Troy Hutchings:

“Effective teaching is the seduction of learning. It’s not just approaching content with passion, or rather engaging in a passionate interchange, creating a shared space that resonates on the intellectual level, the emotional level, the transformational level. This reciprocity – back and forth – of passionate teaching and learning turns routine poetry into words of profundity and epiphany – a school musical becomes a merging of different voices into a collective understanding, the difficult daily training of a cross-country team becomes a realized metaphor for the

challenges of life. A passionate teacher and a passionate coach enter into a place with their student that no one outside of that experience can understand or articulate. A powerful place of connectivity and transformation – it is what separates schooling from education, it is what separates passive note-taking, answer giving, from homework checking, test taking, and the forgetting that so quickly follows from the fiery engagement of mind and spirit.

Passionate teachers are the ones who make a difference in our lives. By the intensity of their beliefs and actions they connect us with a sense of value that is within and beyond ourselves – it is that teacher who opens up a world of the mind to some students who had no one else to make them feel they were capable of doing great things.” (Hutchings)





Excerpts from Dr. Troy Hutchings (cont.):

“In our fight to promote professional practices, within the teaching profession we need to recognize a very important truth within contemporary American society and that is the contextualization of the schooling relationship within an increasingly sexualized society. There is this tension that seems to exist between the roles of children and adults, which is blurring the lines of propriety without any premeditation, teachers often

reject the responsibility that has traditionally been associated with entrance in the teaching profession. As societal emphasis is placed on them to be young, to be beautiful—the concept of adolescent behavior and arrested development were mentioned numerous times in my research as a common characteristic of teacher offenders, but in contrast with that, what’s happening to the students? Adult themes are being projected onto the students. So while we are trying and striving to be young, and a part of that culture that we are immersed in, they have adult themes projected onto them every single day resulting in a skewed reality that presupposes their emotional readiness for adulthood. When adolescents act out the roles—the adult roles they are given, and when adults intentionally seek youthfulness through their engagement with popular youth culture, boundary violations are certain to occur. If adults and children share the same cultural space, boundaries will become permeable, the fiduciary role will be fractured, and quite possibly student victimization may result. Education must be the profession, your classroom, your school, must be the profession texts and sanctifies the role of the child at the same time to honor and nurture children within the ethical boundaries of moral and responsible teaching practice. It is thus imperative that prevention strategies are implemented not just systemically but within ourselves to eliminate the blurring of lines between teachers and students and the slippery slope to exist in American society and culture.”

Grading Key

1. Why do teachers generally pursue their careers?
 - c. the opportunity to impact student growth on many levels
2. To avoid very troubling scenarios a solid professional, ethical framework is necessary to guide teachers'
 - b. words, acts, and decisions
3. In reality few teachers are prepared for the immersion in the complex world of teacher/student relationships.
 - a. true
4. The teacher/student relationship is
 - c. a continual emotional and intellectual interchange
5. Teacher misconduct with students is a subject
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8. The topic of teacher misconduct could be called:
 - d. all of the above
9. According to case law, what is the top priority for all schools and their teachers?
 - education of the children who are the future of the country
 - b. safety and welfare for the children who are held captive
 - none of the above
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 - a. true
11. Of the five groups of people who are fiduciaries - teachers, attorneys, doctors, counselors/therapists, and the clergy, the only group that does not receive formal ethics training starting at pre-service and throughout their careers is:
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 - c. very good teachers

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14. When students find a caring teacher they often _____
their need to belong, to be accepted, to be cared for, and to be loved.
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17. Teachers often receive two different messages – keep your distance and become more
personally involved.
a. true
18. Poor teachers are going to have intellectual and emotional intercourse with their students
every day.
b. false
19. Sexual offenders often had _____ issues during adolescence.
a. self-esteem
20. Teachers who become involved in sexual misconduct often have a _____ in their
lives.
d. void
21. The slippery slope often occurs when a teacher
b. an individual student
22. Law officials say the most common gateway to sexual misconduct is
d. all of the above
23. Teachers, unlike counselors, are not trained on
a. counter transference of feelings
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b. arbitrary

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c. peers/justified

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a. true

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