

Clowning in the classroom

by Eric Anderson

As an education student, one of my primary goals is to enhance and stimulate the classroom learning experience for students. Sensitivity, empathy, being organized, and a sense of humor are definite assets for teachers shouldering the challenge of equipping young minds with the skills to exist within an increasingly complex society and global community. Each teacher brings a completely different set of talents and ideas to be integrated to his/her approach in implementing a teaching strategy which must be both constructive and creative.

One particular teaching strategy which I've employed in a classroom setting is clowning. I will dress up in incongruent looking blue, yellow and purple beach bum shorts and a very shocking brown, pink and gold shirt complemented by a cap and a horn which toots, roots and hoots. The outfit makes me look psychedelic and an LSD-induced hallucination parallels a gray plaid suit when compared to my outlandish costume.

I mentioned that I was a part-time clown to my supervising teacher, who encouraged me to develop a show. So, on the day that I had scheduled a "Mr. Bugs" show for Grades 1 and 2, I boarded a bus with a great big Glad garbage bag full of equipment

and a yellow lawn chair. This was a difficult experience as my bus had standing room only that particular morning. A difficulty arose when the bus driver slammed on the brakes because some nitwit decided to change lanes, suddenly, without using his signal light. Because of this brilliant brain-flash, an elderly man almost had a lawnchair planted on his nose and I nearly somersaulted into an overhead ad. I luckily avoided the ad and the rest of the trip was fine.

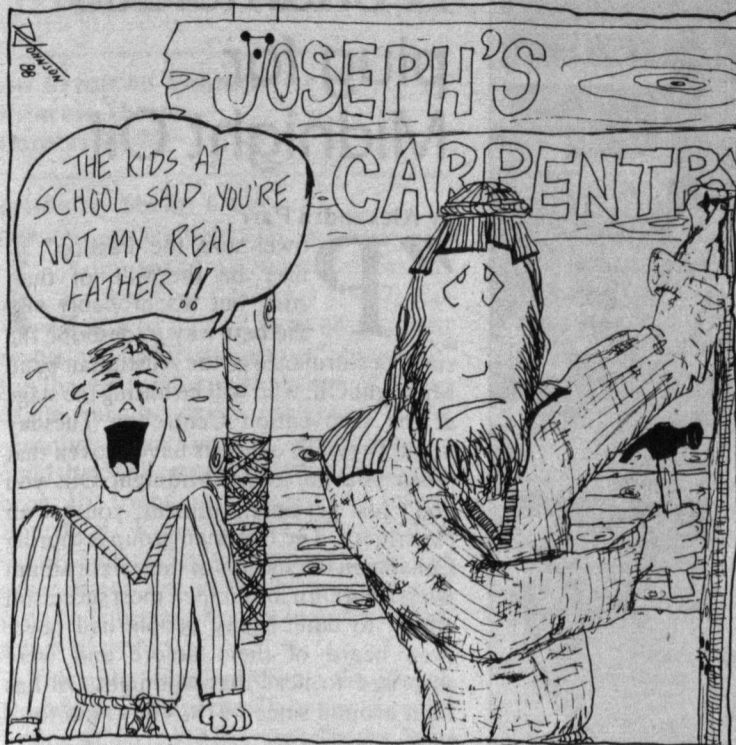
We now switch timeframes to the beginning of "Mr. Bugs' Clownshow." I first attempted to juggle three tomatoes and have them land on a plate which I held somewhat unsteadily between my teeth. The kids laughed at my ineptitude. The tomatoes went flying in all directions and one wound up decorating a chalkboard with tomato juice after a "splat" could be heard all over the classroom. Another tomato chose to land on my supervising teacher's new dress and a large red stain was left as a memento of my klutziness. She had a good sense of humor about this whole event and we had a good guffaw about it, though my face was much redder than a tomato when she told the principal at recess.

I now went into the "Mr. Bugs' Good Morning" routine. I got out of bed and promptly applied shav-

ing cream to my toothbrush which was promptly put into my mouth. Shaving cream has a rather listless taste to it and the kids were uttering such phrases as "ughhh" and "gross" as I finished shaving my teeth. Next, I applied toothpaste to my face and began to shave. The children were absolutely floored by this outrageous display and stared in shock.

The last part of the show was a tribute to James Brown and Terence Trent D'Arby. The first imitation was a cross between Joe Cocker, Big Bird, and a drunken bat. There was so much garbling, flapping and jumping about that I forgot the lines to "I Got You (I Feel Good)". It would not have made a difference because the kids quickly got bored and demanded Tiffany. I got howls of laughter out of singing "I Think I'm A Stone Now". The D'Arby routine was not much better because I said something about a "fishing bell" and the whole class rolled on the floor in absolute hysteria. I tried his moonwalk which elicited a question on whether my shoes had cement in them. 'Nuff said!

The day was over and I was going to go home with a vague notion that I'd been a disaster. The children came up and gave some much needed hugs and said to come back sometime. Ah, that was so nice of them! I suppose I was clown after all.



Christ as a child.

Dragos Ruin

Worship
larches!!



You can't spend much of a day on campus without being enlightened by some zealot pressing religious pamphlets into your hand or seeing posters for "The Campus Crusade for the Holy Redemption Of His Impeccable Highness and Supreme Most Sacred Piety of Jesus, Son of God and Saviour of All Filthy Humanity, Christ the Ultimate Redeemer" or some such rot. I am getting quite tired of this.

I'm so very bored of others who choose to use religion as their social crutch to cope with life attempting to force their ideals upon me. When you start deciding that my life is misguided and I should be shown the Light, the Way, the Gutter, or whatever you happen to believe in, is when you start interfering with my rights.

I mean, I don't go out and try to find all the religious nuts I can and try to get them to recant and start sacrificing babies, do I? So why do they feel they have the right to change my life?

Oh, yeah, those guys are just trying to

save my eternal soul, right? Or perhaps they want to make sure that I use the right crystals to get reincarnated properly? Uh-huh. Yeah well, you see, I happen to be far too busy worrying about my current life to be concerned much about the next one.

Maybe it's just that I listen to too much of that rock music. Yep, that's it. I played "Scraping Foetus Off the Wheel" once too many times at volume fifteen on my Walkman. Sorry guys, it's too late to save me. I'm just one of those drugged up rock-music degenerates that managed to survive the cluster suicides. So leave me alone, okay?

Actually, I've found that the only really effective way to get rid of the religious fanatics is to make them think you are one of them. So when they approach me I pretend I'm a Druid and I start yelling "WORSHIP TREES!! THE LARCHES SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH!!" at the top of my voice. They never seem to bother me after that.

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