

Student Disrespect Takes Down Another Teacher

In case one needed further evidence that American schools are in chaos, the video below will put any doubts to rest.

The clip, taken at Patrick Henry High School in Minneapolis shows two female students in a tussle with an older male teacher. According to [local news channel KSTP](#), the teacher got the raw end of the bargain when he stepped in to break up a fight between the girls:

“In the process, the teacher gets hit over the head and on the back.

The three tumble back and forth across the room as the teacher tries to keep the girls separated.

The video of the fight goes on for more than a minute, with desks getting tossed and other students laughing in the background.”

That last part – students standing on the sideline laughing and watching the fight as if it’s a spectator sport – is perhaps one of the most disturbing parts of the whole video. Clearly, a culture of disrespect permeates the classroom.

And that culture of disrespect isn’t unique to this one classroom, either. A number of incidents in the last few years – including a teacher receiving a [traumatic brain injury](#) from a student – demonstrate that teachers are truly [“powerless to discipline.”](#)

Commenting on the incident, Roy Magnuson, a teacher from a nearby high school who was previously the victim of student violence [noted](#):

“This shouldn’t happen. I think we need to be willing to have consequences that act as a deterrent.”

In all likelihood, Magnuson is right that schools need to implement better discipline policies. But is it possible that we need to go even deeper than that?

Former New York teacher John Taylor Gatto [believes](#) such is the case. In fact, he believes that until we reincorporate the family back into the schools, no reform – no matter how good – will work:

“Independent study, community service, adventures and experience, large doses of privacy and solitude, a thousand different apprenticeships – the one-day variety or longer – these are all powerful, cheap, and effective ways to start a real reform of schooling. But no large-scale reform is ever going to work to repair our damaged children and our damaged society until we force open the idea of ‘school’ to include family as the main engine of education. If we use schooling to break children away from parents... we’re going to continue to have the horror show we have right now.

The ‘Curriculum of Family’ is at the heart of any good life. We’ve gotten away from that curriculum – it’s time to return to it. The way to sanity in education is for our schools to take the lead in releasing the stranglehold of institutions on family life, to promote during schooltime confluences of parent and child that will strengthen family bonds.”

Do you think Gatto’s assumption is correct? Would we see improvement in the chaos of the classroom if schools allowed parents to once again accept their role as the ultimate authority in the child’s life?