

Radio Interviews

Pamela Phelan Meek, Ph.D. is available for interviews about how to teach children about democracy, war and the right to vote.

Dr. Meek is a psychologist and creator of the idea for Sniffing for Democracy which was written by her daughter Nora P. Meek, age 11.

Publication Date: 2004

Publisher: PM, INK

Radio Interview Phone Number: 301-424-0683

Email: Pamela.Meek@verizon.net

Days and times not available for interviews.

Blackout dates/times: M-F 7:15-7:45AM, M-F 2:30-3PM

Dr. Meek's Media Experience:

- December 29, 11-11:30am, WQYK, Tampa, Florida, Karen Boyd
- November 24, 1:35, KXL, Portland, Oregon
- November 3, 9:05-10am, WBIG, Chicago, Paul Morgan Show
- November 2, 8:10-8:20, WKRC Cincinnati, Jerry & Craig Show
- October 31, 3-4pm, KDKA, Pittsburgh, Susie Barbour Show
- October 25, 5:05-5:20 pm Nationally Syndicated Drew Mariani Show.
- October 16, 7:05-7:20, WTKK, Boston, Bruce Stephens Show

Headlines that express the concept of Sniffing for Democracy

- Teach Your Children Well...About Democracy
- It's Important for Young Children to Be Educated About Democracy
- What Should Young Children Know about Democracy, War and Elections?
- A Child's Point of View on Democracy, War and the Current Political Scene
- A Child Gets 'It.' Pass it On

- Ask Any Dog—Our Democracy Stinks!
- A Crash Course in Democracy for Kids

The most controversial aspects of Sniffing for Democracy

- The main character's sense of smell makes him smarter than the president who is a monkey. He senses that something is wrong with the democracy he lives in because it started to stink when he was arrested for criticizing the president.
- Dogs know better than to make a pre-emptive strike against another dog. The president, who is a monkey, should, too.

Media headlines that Sniffing for Democracy addresses

1. The Iraq War
2. The Kyoto Treaty
3. Count Every Vote, The Right to Vote
4. Outsourcing
5. Environmental Impact of Deforestation
6. The Presidential Debates

Benefits to Children from Reading Sniffing for Democracy

1. Studies show that young adults are not involved in the political process. It is predicted that many 18-21 year olds won't vote in the upcoming election.
[Link](#)
 - Children need to learn from a young age the importance of participation in a democracy.
 - With Sniffing for Democracy the parent can teach their child at an early age about important aspects of a democratic system so that when they do reach voting age they are more likely to take part.
 - The book inspires children to get involved in the political process at a young age.
2. Complex topics such as voting rights, war and democracy presented through the metaphor of a dog's sense of smell makes learning about complex topics fun for and understandable to the young reader.

- Using the metaphor of a dog sniffing for a democracy that smells right the reader is taken around the world in search for the right smell.
 - The main character, Spangle, goes to England, France, Russia, China, Australia and South Africa in his attempt to find it.
 - He finally finds out what a true democracy smells like and learns its basic tenets by being thrust back in time to Philadelphia in 1776 what a real democracy smells like.
3. From pollution to outsourcing to pre-emptive war, children can understand the dilemmas we face.
- When Spangle goes to England he finds out that a U.S. car manufacturer makes pollution-free cars in England that are not sold in the U.S. He realizes why the air stinks back in his own country.
 - Spangle and his side-kick, Liberté, whom he meets in Paris, find out about outsourcing in China. They learn the difference between capitalism and democracy.
 - What do they learn about pre-emptive war? Dogs aren't supposed to attack another dog unless he comes into their territory in a ferocious way.
 - To follow up, how should parents talk to their children about war? [Link](#)
4. Don't underestimate the child's ability to comprehend complex issues. They just need to be presented in a child-friendly way.
- Many words and names were changed to a kind of dog language.
 - For example, the Kyoto Treaty is changed to the Boneyoto Treaty, the Vice President's name is Chow Chow, and the leader of the country that President Weed decides to invade is a Bully Rott, both of which are based on the names of breeds of dogs.

Synopses of Favorite Chapters

1. Chapter 1 Freedom of Speech Takes a Dive! The fast paced book begins with the arrest of the main character, Spangle, for criticizing the President of the United States of Dogs. Children are introduced to the idea that freedom of speech is one of the hallmarks of a true democracy.
2. Chapter 8 The Writing's on the Cave Wall-- In this chapter children learn about the African concept of Ubuntu which is tied in later in the book to one of the underpinnings of democracy, i.e. that government's job is to look out for the well-being of the common dog, not for the wealthy or elite.

3. Chapter 10 What is Democracy--The main characters are thrust back in time and meet dogs named Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Paine. Children will learn about Paine's essay Common Sense and how it provided the foundation for democracy in the United States.
4. Chapter 13 Talk About Stench! Florida—Children learn about the studies that show the deterioration of the Florida Everglades ([Link](#)) as well as get a review of the Florida election debacle which leads into needing every vote to count.
5. Chapter 14 Election 2004! Not to give away the ending but the main character runs for president against the incumbent. Since the incumbent is a monkey, he can only hoot and holler in the debate.

How will Sniffing for Democracy Help Children?

- Children will inherit a world they did not create, but which they will have to fix. This book presents in a child-friendly way the issues they will be faced with. Hopefully their heightened awareness will hopefully result in their taking a bigger role in demanding that adults change direction.

Possible questions to ask during an interview with Dr. Meek

1. How did you and your daughter work together to come up with the idea for Sniffing for Democracy
2. How does Sniffing for Democracy help children understand about Democracy?
3. How did you make democracy child-friendly?
4. What issues does Sniffing for Democracy teach children about?
5. What does Sniffing for Democracy tell children about war? And what should children know about war?
6. How does Sniffing for Democracy address issues like dwindling oil supplies and what can be done about it?
7. What kinds of devices were used to make the book child-friendly?

8. The African concept of Ubuntu is presented in the book. Why was this concept included in the book and what does it have to do, in your opinion, with democracy?
9. What does a good democracy smell like?
10. Does the book provide a study guide?

Two main ideas Dr. Meek would like the audience to come away with after the interview.

- Children are able to understand complex topics like freedom of speech, preemptive war, and outsourcing if they are presented in a child-friendly way.
- Parents need to educate their children about current events so they don't have to helplessly accept the world that is handed to them.

Bio--Pamela Meek, Ph.D.

Dr. Meek has worked as a child psychologist for over 30 years providing therapy, consultation and psychological evaluations for children, families and schools.

Education

- 1976 Ph.D. Psychological Foundations of Education, U. of Fla.
- 1971 M.Ed. Psychological Foundations of Education, U. of F.
- 1970 B.A. Psychology, U. of Florida

License/Certification

- 1986 Psychologist District of Columbia
- 1980 Psychologist State of Maryland
- 1973 School Psychologist Maryland State Board of Ed.

Professional Experience

- 1973-2004 School Psychologist Montgomery County, Maryland, Public Schools
 - Individual and group counseling
 - Psychological evaluations for ages 4-21
 - Learning disabilities
 - Autistic Spectrum Disorders
 - Emotional disturbance
 - Intellectual Limitation
 - Consultations with students, staff and parents in alternative programs such as the Phoenix program for drug involved youth
- 1987-89 Psychologist, Part-time
 - Montgomery Psychiatric Services, Olney, MD
 - Individual and family therapy
 - Psychological evaluations
- 1984-87 Psychologist, Part-time
 - Oak Leaf Center, Bethesda, MD
 - Individual and group therapy
 - Psychological Evaluations

Publications

- 1990 The Role of the School Psychologist During a Post-Suicide Crisis