

I am grateful for Pat Elder's generosity in sending the text of his remarks as well as the cover letter ([see below](#)) providing references and additional background concerning the vital, life-affirming work of countering the military recruitment of our children beginning in elementary schools and going up through high schools. See also at [the end of this file](#): John Judge speaking in two films (2011 and 2000) about the Committee for High School Options and Information on Careers, Education and Self-Improvement ([CHOICES](#)). —[David Ratcliffe](#).

Countering Military Recruitment Celebrating and Carrying On John Judge's Legacy

by Pat Elder

Remarks delivered at the Celebration of the Life of John Patrick Judge

(See [film of Pat's remarks](#), starting at 32:50)

National Press Club, Washington DC

31 May 2014

Phone skit

I saw the email message about a week ago and it said, We've lost John Judge!

We haven't lost John!

Hell, we're just finding him.

*I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night,
alive as you or me.*

Says I "But Joe, you're ten years dead"

"I never died" said he,

"Says Joe, I didn't die."

I mean c'mon! Have you ever felt John more alive?

I loved John.

I remember the first time I met John. It was in September of 2001 and a couple hundred of us came together – I think it was All Souls Church up on 16th Street.

It was a Forest Gump moment for me. Remember the part when Forest was being chased by those guys in the pickup truck and he ran through the football field faster than all the players and the Alabama coach said, "Who in the hell was that?" Except John wasn't dumb.

That evening he talked about Blowback – remember that Chalmers Johnson term? He said we needed to mobilize and get on the street.

But he also said it wouldn't be enough. He said we needed to focus where wars start – in high school cafeterias where military recruiters convince vulnerable kids to join the military.

It was an epiphany for me.

He spoke of a poverty draft and starving a wicked war machine of its most vital resource. And he never strayed from his most fervent non-violent stance.

John's life was an epiphany for all of us.

He opened my eyes to the Pentagon's invasion of our high schools and he taught me how to resist it.

He understood the inherently unfair arrangement between recruiter and recruited, especially the psychological training and the advantage recruiters have.

I initially saw it in terms of military recruiters lying to my sons and my daughters in the high school lunch room. But John helped me to connect the dots.

To John, countering military recruitment confronts an ugly mix of a distinctively American brand of institutionalized violence, racism, militarism, nationalism, classism, and sexism. It gets to the root of the problem.

Countering recruitment. What a concept. John said it would make me an enemy of the state.

We differed on our methods. He had a bottom up strategy. Mine, top down. He talked to kids and counseled youth. Tens of thousands of them.

We understood each other.

He always emphasized how the DoD relies on four major programs in the schools and I believe that he'd want me to talk about that to insure that his work in this realm continues.

Those four areas are the JROTC program, the ASVAB testing, the Directory Information gained through the No Child Left Behind Act, and the Access recruiters enjoy in the public schools.

JROTC is the **Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program**. It's a recruiting program that operates in the high schools and teaches a half million kids annually military culture and a dangerous, reactionary version of US History and Government. To give you

a sense, the unit on Constitutional law in the JROTC Civics textbook is entitled “You the people.”

John loved that. “You the people – shut up, do what I tell you!” Gwoh-ver-nur Morris actually wrote “We the People.” At least that’s the way John learned it – and lived it.

According to the JROTC history textbook, in use today in three thousand, eight hundred high schools across the country, being used by five-hundred, fifty thousand children, the United States had to use nuclear weapons against the Japanese to save a million lives and we had to defend American honor when those pesky North Vietnamese opened fire on the USS Maddox.

This is what fascism looks like. (I’m channeling John.)

John would say, “You didn’t think they were just teaching the kids how to march did you?”

Ever wonder how Glen Beck can get a couple hundred thousand people on the streets of D.C.?

American schools exercise no control over the JROTC curriculum. It’s up to you – and me – to point out the lying liars.

The way John saw it the revolution we engender is at least a generation away. We’ve got to get into the schools. The DoD funds several programs starting in the elementary schools. The [Young Marines Program](#) targets kids from seven up.

John pointed out that JROTC instructors don’t need college degrees or teacher certification while all other teachers are routinely expected to have Masters degrees. JROTC instructors are the only non-professionals allowed to be in the American classroom without professional supervision.

John asked, “Where are the teacher’s unions?”

John cited DC school officials who admitted that half of the district’s high schools have indoor firing ranges to accommodate the JROTC Marksmanship Program. The lead pellets spew deadly particulate matter into the air that circulate throughout the school in air vents and on the clothing of shooters. The kids track the lead particulate matter throughout the school on their shoes. Press reports confirm raised lead levels in the blood of the child shooters.

The **ASVAB** or the **Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery** is an even more insidious program. More than a half million American high school kids attend school, take a military entrance exam proctored by Department of Defense employees, and have all

their information sent to military recruiters without parents knowing about it. Maryland and Hawaii prohibit it. 48 states to go.

John shared his frustration that a thousand American high schools are brazen enough to force kids to take the ASVAB without parental consent and hardly anyone complains.

If you want to honor John look into it and start working legislators and school administrators.

So, that's JROTC and the ASVAB.

In 2001 the Bush administration (I think most of you know) codified into law **section 9528** of the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act** (we call it the **No Child Left Behind Act**). It's a provision that requires high schools to hand over the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all kids if requested by recruiters unless parents opt out of the lists being sent to recruiters.

Most parents are oblivious. They can opt out. All they need to do is fill out a form, hand it in, and their child's name isn't sent to the recruiters. We need to tell them. Maryland has a law (it's the only one like it in the country): the opt out form appears on the emergency contact card. Most everybody in Maryland opts out. 49 states to go.

The same legislation (that's section 9528 of the No Child Left Behind Act) guarantees that military recruiters shall have the same access to high school children as college recruiters. The problem is that in most high schools college recruiters have to make appointments to see kids one-on-one in the guidance office. Military recruiters chill, and enjoy far greater access to kids than their college counterparts. They chill in the parking lot. They chill in the lunch room. It never was a question of equal access. The law was passed based on bogus claims.

John would ask, Whose schools? They're our schools.

Whose schools? They're our schools!

Whose schools? They're our schools!

Thank you.

----- Original Message -----

Subject: John Judge and countering recruitment

Date: Sun, 1 Jun 2014 07:38:14 -0400

From: Pat Elder

To: Dave Ratcliffe

Hi Dave,

It was great getting to know you yesterday. I'm attaching the [text of my remarks about John](#). Here's the website of the **National Coalition to Protect Student Privacy**: <www.studentprivacy.org>. You can learn about the ASVAB (**Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery**) issue here. On the homepage, if you have the time, scroll down and read the [ASVAB Overview](#) and the [ASVAB campaign](#) for a primer. Also on the home page, look on the right side and download the single-page excel sheet showing the state by state snapshot of military testing. Finally, a little further down on the right side, click to access the Massachusetts Database.

If you have a couple more hours to learn this stuff and you know a progressive member of the MA legislature you could have a lot of fun without spending much time at all.

Here's a site where several of us across the country have pooled our resources: the **National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth** (NNOMY) is a national networking body that brings together national, regional and local organizations to oppose the growing intrusion of the military in young people's lives, <www.nnomy.org>.

Here's a fantastic resource: **Project YANO**, the **Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities**, <www.projectyano.org>.

And here's our 600 member strong national list serve –

<<https://groups.yahoo.com/neogroups/counter-recruitment/info>>

– National Network Opposing Militarization of Youth ([NNOMY](#)) Discussion group for people working to counter military recruiting in local schools in communities nationwide.

Group Website

Members: 586

Category: [Peace and Nonviolence](#)

Founded: Jan 26, 2000

Language: English

Group Settings

This is a restricted group.

Attachments are permitted.

Members cannot hide email address.

Not listed in Yahoo Groups directory.

Membership requires approval.

Messages are not moderated.

All members can post messages.

Group Email Addresses

Post Message: counter-recruitment@yahoogroups.com

Subscribe: counter-recruitment-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Unsubscribe: counter-recruitment-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

List Owner: counter-recruitment-owner@yahoogroups.com

All the best,

Pat Elder

John Judge: In His Own Words



[C.H.O.I.C.E.S., John Judge](#), from “[A Better Welcome Home for Veterans: Transformative Models to Support Veterans and Their Families](#)” held at the Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard University, November 2, 2011, (07:41). [C.H.O.I.C.E.S.](#) brings veterans and military family members together to tell schools and communities about military, war, and veterans’ problems. How You Can Help:

1. Realize this is our military, and how it treats recruits, enlisted members, and veterans is up to all of us;
2. Encourage Washington, DC-area veterans and military family members to join [C.H.O.I.C.E.S.](#), to talk in our high schools about military life, combat, and veterans’ issues;
3. In other cities and states work with or create similar groups. See The National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth website at <www.nnomy.org> to find groups and more information.



[U.S. Wars & Military Recruitment](#), Seattle Interview with John Judge of the Committee on High School Options & Information on Careers, Education and Self-Improvement ([C.H.O.I.C.E.S.](#)), 22 Jan 2000 (52:21)