15,000 years past the end of the Reign of the United States of America and 40,000 years past the termination of the GEP ( Global Education Programme, as it was called) was a city in the Globular Cluster M-13 in Hercules called XJ-9. Gerold Bunch II was the Grand Chancellor of the Unified Universe. He had an IQ of 2,097 -this was low for the time period- and always wore a standard-issue, green World War III infantry helmet over his dense, curly grey hair. He often contemplated suicide while he was alone in his office, but overpowered this feeling with virtual skeet shooting and chronic masturbation. And by George, did he have a plan!

 "We're re-instating the GEP immediately." Gerold said stonily as he looked down upon the pearl-white, orbiting, satellite city of XJ-9.

 "Noted, sir." said Gerold's assistant who now rustled nervously in his white, pleated jump suit, while his shiny dome of a head *just* peaked over the raised, zip-up collar of his also-white overcoat. "The what?" he finally asked.

 "Kids should go to school and learn more stuff. They need to know more stuff." -apparently the kids needed to know more stuff.

 "Noted, sir. You're serious, though? As I recall, that was a failed program was it not? It destroyed the education system and all the.... Um... Less intelligent kids held back the students that actually had some sense. I think. Sir." The assistant let out a high-pitched, staccato expulsion from his bottom out of nervousness.

 "Less intelligent? Look son, everyone's got the same sized brain, so we're all equally good thinkers. It's really basic physics that you should understand. Remind me to sign you up for 'Basic Physics' when the program starts again."

 "Noted, sir. But-"

 "Men are doers." -the Chancellor now looked away from his city and mechanically removed his glasses as he blinked his beady, grey eyes- "Not thinkers. It's why we *men* are the Grand Chancellors' of the Unified Universe. Not women or hermaphrodites."

 "Noted, sir."

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 Educational Facility 108-2 swarmed with noise like an Earthling beehive after being struck with what was once called a "stick", with similar amounts of pain being inflicted upon the aggravator: in this case, the teacher. The teacher was a middle-aged man of three hundred and forty two with a birthday coming up in only one hundred and eighty more Earthling hours. His attire was conservative: a skin-tight metallic jump suit from the Gap, zinc boots that his son made him, and elbow- length white gloves that occasionally combusted in pink flaming resplendence. Greasy, dark hair fell from cranial mass in strands like Earthling kelp where it lay out to dry on his broad shoulders, and his pillowy-soft words defied his deep, echoing voice when he spoke to his pupils, causing a paradox that was all too enticing to hear.

 "If you would, children, have a seat seeing as the siren has rang." The room did not get any more quiet, but he proceeded anyways. "We're watching a hologram today"

 A behemoth of a boy unhinged the orifice that he referred to as his mouth and said "You can 'holo-' my 'gram', twice!" It was an instant classic and the masses gushed and oozed with laughter.

 For the enjoyment of the class, the hologram was a cartoon. It went like this: An enjoyably cute dog appeared alongside an equally appealing bluebird. A song began to play as the two proceeded to act out the song sang by the children's choir.

Birdy go 'Tweet-Tweet!'

And Doggy go 'Woof!'

Doggy get scared and says louder, 'Woof- WOOF!'

Birdy doesn't know

Flies a little close

Doggy rips off his limbs! Birdy, uh-oh!

Birdy will not hurt

Why'd he have to die?

We kill what we don't understand, that's the reason why.

 The hologram buzzed and whirred with the last frame frozen on the image of the dog mercilessly shaking the bluebird with exes over its eyes, and blood and feathers spraying like a ripped down pillow from Doggy's unforgiving maw.

 "What a stupid bird!" splurged a boy in full military attire. "Why would a bird be dumb enough to come near a full grown dog?" This time, the laughter flow was so heavy, that it flooded not only the lecture hall, but seeped out the door where it sloshed in the courtyard and managed to leak into some other Education Facilities too.

 "That just made me sad! It didn't even do anything, except *that*! Wha!" said a female student.

 A boy in the front nested his head in his arms contemplating the grave situation. What he had just witnessed; not within the movie but within his own peers, was the most disheartening thing one could ever witness. He lifted his head and looked back at his hearty peers.

 "Don't you get it?" said the boy in the front.

 "Hey, fuck you!" cooed a voice in the back.

 "Yeah, AP HONORS ENGLISH!"

 "Up your nose with a rubber hose!"

 The boy in front proceeded with, "Have you ever wondered why we have have a Galactic Defense?" as he raised his voice over the clamor. "You, in the Galactic Defense uniform, what are you going to war against?"

 He grinned smugly through braces and said, "Bad guys, dumb shit."

 "What the heck is a 'bad guy'?" rebuked the boy in front.

 Something dammed up the laughter.

 "Like, a guy who kills lots of innocent people." said the uniformed boy as he looked about for approval on his answer. "And doesn't even worry about it, and stuff!" The masses bobbed their heads up and down in approval at one another at this answer.

 "Our galaxy has done that before. What do you think Interstellar Missiles are for? They definitely aren't for just *one* 'bad guy'."

 "That's because they're meant to kill lots and lots of bad guys!"

 "Or lots and lots of good guys and a dozen bad guys."

 "That isn't true, that's not what!-"

 "- what they told you in the holograms?"

 The boy in front had everyone's attention now.

 "We fight because we're afraid of what *might* happen. That's sort of a dangerous game isn't it? Do any of you want to just go out and murder some people, just for the sport of it?"

 Almost everybody shook their head in disapproval of the grotesque thought. "Then why do we think others want to? They are people just like you and me, with brothers and sisters and dogs and parents..." he paused and proceeded " And passions and lovers and dreams even! They wake up in the morning and go to sleep at night! They hold each other when they cry! They kiss their little kids to bed at night, too! They scrape their knees playing games and we're afraid of them because they don't speak like us or look exactly like us, but they *are* us!"

 All was quiet.

 The uniformed boy reached both hands into his front pockets, pinned a *Go Army* pin on with his left hand, and aimed his *Hypersonic Blaster 2000* with his right, as he vaporized the boy in front first with one squeeze of the red, white and blue trigger, and then vaporized the frozen dog eating the frozen bird with a second squeeze of the red, white and blue trigger. Everything was just how the Global Education Programme had intended, with the ones who didn't care in the back, and the ones who did care in the front (in a pile of dust).

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 The boy in front was cloned, as was customary after death in this time period deep in the future; however, when resurrected, he decided to attend school not on XJ-9, but on the minuscule, salty planet Earth. A gravestone was erected over the clone of the boy in front (this was clone number four of this particular person) on XJ-9, as was customary after death in this time period. Inscribed upon the polished marble were the words,

"*Every passing hour brings the Solar System forty three thousand miles closer to Globular Cluster M13 in Hercules — and still there are some misfits who insist that there is no such thing as progress. -Kurt Vonnegut"*

Nobody got it, but at least it was *a pretty cool quote.*