



## Review of History's Greatest Libels

[History's Greatest Libels](#), by Steve Byas, Indianapolis, Indiana: Dog Ear Publishing, 2015, 128 pages, paperback.

There was a time when students could feel reasonably assured that, when taking a class in history or reading a history text, they would be presented with accurate accounts of various events and of the lives of historical figures. Today, however, in many colleges and universities, that is no longer the case. Instead, those who teach these classes often use their positions to try to promote leftist ideology and, as part of that process, to sully the memory of historical figures whom the Left regards as enemies or who represent a point of view inimical to leftism. In so doing, they poison young minds with a warped pseudo-history.



An identical technique is almost universally employed by the mass media for precisely the same purpose: to distort the historical record and thereby propagate a worldview that by its very nature *must* rely on lies to achieve its ends. The result is that certain falsifications of history become deeply etched in the public mind, skewing the perception of the past and, consequently, skewing the public's political outlook. In this superb volume, Professor Byas considers a number of these fabrications, explaining why they are false and correcting the record.

### Lying About Leaders

The first such libel is that the Father of our Country, George Washington, was a deist and not a Christian; second, he examines whether it is true that Thomas Jefferson engendered a child by his slave; next is whether President Polk led our country to war against Mexico in order to seize Texas; fourth is that Warren Harding was our worst president; fifth are the massive distortions widely believed about the famous 1925 Scopes Trial (often called the "Scopes Monkey Trial") in which a Tennessee law that forbade the teaching of evolution in public schools as an established fact (as opposed to a mere theory) was challenged; sixth on the professor's list is that Senator Joseph McCarthy made a career of smearing innocent people; seventh discusses the controversy that swirled about the confirmation hearing of Clarence Thomas; eighth considers the "politically correct" view of Christopher Columbus, which describes the great explorer as a genocidal maniac; ninth examines the role of Queen Marie Antoinette in igniting the French Revolution; tenth presents the facts with regard to the allegation that Adolf Hitler was a "champion of Christianity;" and, finally, the last chapter discusses the author's views regarding the creation of the modern State of Israel. Let us investigate three of these questions.

The popular media has repeatedly promoted the story that DNA testing done in 1998 proves conclusively that Thomas Jefferson fathered a child by his slave, Sally Hemings. In fact, the actual published conclusion drawn from the DNA testing is that one of the sons of the slave Sally Hemings was



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fathered by a “Jefferson male.” There were, of course, other male members of the Jefferson family alive at that time besides Thomas Jefferson, many living relatively close to the Jefferson estate, at least one of whom was much more likely to have fathered the child, as the author shows. So there is really *no evidence* proving the culpability of Thomas Jefferson in this matter. Yet the media ignores the actual findings of the DNA testing for no other reason than to damage the good name of the author of the Declaration of Independence and our third president. Why would they do that? By damaging or destroying the good names of the genuine heroes of American liberty and independence, they hope to enhance, by way of comparison, the sleazy reputations of their own modern bogus heroes.

It is highly probable that Left-liberals have expended more venom, more unmitigated hatred, against the late Senator Joseph McCarthy than against any other American. And amazingly, although the senator from Wisconsin died almost 60 years ago, the hatred has never abated. As the author writes, the mass media portray the early 1950s — what they call the “McCarthy Era” — as years in which all, or most, Americans trembled in fear of “McCarthyism,” that is, of being accused of communist sympathies or of actual membership in the Communist Party.

The truth is that during that period very, very few Americans were fearful of Senator McCarthy. The only Americans who had any reason to be fearful were those who occupied positions in the federal government, since the senator’s investigations encompassed only federal government officials and employees who in the past had given, or were then giving, support to the international communist conspiracy. Let us remember that these American communists and communist sympathizers were not benign social reformers, but were proponents and obedient servants of the regime of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, one of the greatest mass murderers in the history of the world. In other words, they favored consigning all Americans to the “tender mercies” of a man who had already killed tens of millions of people. Moreover, having infiltrated the government of the United States, especially during the Roosevelt and Truman administrations, they were prepared to lie, cheat, steal, sabotage, spy, subvert, or do whatever else their superiors in the Communist Party asked them to do in order to advance the cause of the USSR in the world.

Those are the sorts of traitors Senator McCarthy sought to expose and to root out of positions of power and influence in our government. Sadly, the senator, while successful to a degree, nevertheless failed in his mission to rid our government of enemy agents, in part because he was stabbed in the back, so to speak, by men pretending to be conservatives but who were actually weak-kneed compromisers and also because he underestimated the tremendous power of crypto-communists and fellow travelers in other segments of American society. Senator McCarthy did not smear innocent people.

### **Dreadful Discovery**

Let us examine one additional chapter in Professor Byas’ book. In history classes in many of our universities, it is now official dogma that Christopher Columbus not only did nothing good for the indigenous peoples of the Americas, but did incalculable harm to them. The “politically correct” view of the man is that he “was a racist killer, who enslaved Indians, started the African slave trade, and even used captured Indians as dog food!” Contrast that jaundiced view with that of our ancestors only a little over a century ago. In 1893, Chicago hosted the World’s Columbian Exposition, a huge world’s fair held in honor of Columbus on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of his discovery of the New World. The opinion of an overwhelming majority at that time, and the opinion that prevailed until fairly recently, is that Columbus was one of the greatest men in world history, the man whose vision brought knowledge of two huge previously unknown continents to the remainder of the world. Clearly, it took courage and



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tenacity to sail off into the unknown, to resist the angry demands of a superstitious crew, and to push forward week after week across an apparently endless sea.

Was Columbus a “racist”? First let us note that the terms “racist” and “racism” have no objective meaning (like the term “enemy of the people”) and so are frequently thrown around to defame anyone the Left dislikes. Columbus did not hate the native people he found in the New World but felt great affection for them, wishing only the best for them. The translator of Columbus’ log, Robert Fuson, noted that Columbus expressed “nothing but love and admiration for the Indians.” And, obviously, the great explorer had nothing to do with the slave trade, which did not even begin until many years after his death.

But if such allegations are untrue, why does the Left demonize Columbus? That he brought Christianity to the peoples of the New World is what most infuriates the Left-liberals, Professor Byas charges, since they hate Christianity and the civilization that Christianity created and nurtured. They hate Christianity because, in its genuine forms, it is an almost invincible barrier against the objectives of the Left. Hence, for his piety and his missionary zeal to advance his faith, Columbus is portrayed as one of the most evil men of history.

Many of our readers will disagree with the author’s chapter concerning the modern State of Israel. That is indeed a complex issue and one that is the cause of endless strife and controversy. The author’s presentation reflects one point of view of that controversy, but there are other views that are at least as legitimate and as worthy of a hearing. Apart from that chapter, I highly recommend this book. It is a valuable resource for young people, especially those subjected to public-school brainwashing and the process known as “dumbing-down,” which extinguishes the ability in our young to think critically and independently. Left-liberalism can only prosper through ignorance. Its basic premises and the whole of its ideology are nothing more than a huge tangle of lies. Deception is its byword, chicanery its chief method. Exposed to the light of truth, as happens with Professor Byas’ [History’s Greatest Libels](#), it withers and dies. By supporting books like this, we help to brighten that light.



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