



Twisting Children's Minds With School Textbooks

If you saw a book stating that America was not a republic but a democracy, that a role of our government was to “socialize the young,” and with a picture labeled “Muslim scholars studying with the Greek philosopher Aristotle,” you might think it was a work of bad fiction, not an American school textbook. But even though the United States is a republic, socializing the young isn't a role of American government, and Aristotle died 900 years before Mohammed's birth, textbooks are exactly where the above misinformation is from.



These are just a few of the shocking facts brought to light after comedienne and actress turned political aspirant Victoria Jackson reported on a review of Tennessee's school textbooks by the group Textbook Advocates (TA). Writes Jackson, “During August of 2013, scores of TN volunteers reviewed the 72 books on the State textbook list – 39% were declared acceptable for TN classrooms, 12% need major revisions to meet acceptable standards, many more need minor fixes.” Jackson's characterization is even more damning. She opines that many school textbooks are “inaccurate, revisionist, anti-American, racist ... anti-Christian, anti-Semitic, pro-Islam, Marxist, globalist, pro-Socialism/Communism, pro-homosexuality, pro-abortion, and sexually explicit.” Is this hyperbole?

Decide for yourself. Aside from socializing the young, *Government in America* (Pearson Education, 9-12) [tells students](#) that something else government “should” do is “Preserve order” and then explains, “When people protest in large numbers government may resort to extreme measures to restore order.” In China, yes — but in the United States people actually have to violate the law first.

In a similar vein, *Magruder's American Government and Civics* (Pearson Education, 9-12) states, “Government is made up of ... all those who have *authority and control over people*. The public policies of a government are, in short, all of those things a government decides to do.... Indeed the list of public policy issues handled by government is nearly endless.” (Emphasis added.) The fact that our government is supposed to be limited in scope and power by the Constitution is not related to students, reports TA.

The same book recounts the fall of the Eastern Bloc communist governments and the USSR, but neglects to mention, writes TA, the “56 to 62 million ‘unnatural deaths’ for the USSR overall, with 34 to 49 million under Stalin.” The approximately 70 million killed under Mao Tse-tung also aren't mentioned. Instead, the book cites China as a communist success story, even though the nation dispensed with the Marxist model many years ago, instituted some free-market reforms, and is now akin to a fascist state.

Unfortunately, textbooks rife with errors and propaganda are nothing new. As I [reported](#) in “Written by the Losers” (*The American Conservative*, March 13, 2006), there is a textbook that defines jihad as doing one's best “to resist temptation and overcome evil,” and another informing students that “Napoleon won the battle of Waterloo,” despite its being the defeat that ended the French emperor's reign. Then there's the book telling us that the “Crusades were in progress” in the seventh century,



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even though they weren't launched till 1096. Yet another book related that there are 53 states in the United States.

TA also warns that pro-Islamic bias in modern textbooks is the norm, not the exception. For instance, there are the claims in *Ways of the World* (Bedford Freeman & Worth) that "Islamic Civilizations have a long history of encouraging religious tolerance and guaranteeing the rights of religious minorities" and that "the Quran affirms religious pluralism, cultural diversity and human rights." TA complains that this misinformation ensures "that our children will not be able to understand how the Middle East and North Africa went from being Christian to become nearly 100% Muslim." TA is referencing what sparked the Crusades, namely "more than four centuries of conquests in which Muslims had already captured two-thirds of the old Christian world," as Saint Louis University History Department chairman Thomas Madden [put it](#).

Yet textbooks' treatment of Christianity is somewhat different. For instance, *Discovering our Past — A History of the World* (McGraw-Hill) writes about Jesus' crucifixion: "They may have charged Jesus with Treason, or disloyalty to the government.... He was questioned by the Roman Governor and sentenced to death." This is immediately followed by "Romans regularly crucified criminals and political rebels." TA rhetorically asks, "What would a 7th grader who knew little about biblical history take away from this?"

TA also reports that, in general, Christianity and Judaism are ignored in textbooks in favor of Islam. As a representative example, TA reports that *My World History & Geography, Early Civilization thru Renaissance* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) has one unit and five chapters on Islam and none on Christianity or Judaism; in addition, the book contains more than three times as many references to Muslims as to Christians and Jews *combined* and almost twice as many to Mohammed as to Jesus.

But the most shocking book is one TA didn't review, *It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex & Sexual Health* (Candlewick Press). Written by Planned Parenthood Board of Advocates member Robie Harris, some critics might say the work is Dr. Seuss meets the Marquis de Sade. As Joseph Collison [wrote](#) at Orthodoxy Today:

The book is designed for 10 year-olds and contains material recommended by the Connecticut Department of Education for fourth graders. Over fifty graphic colored illustrations of naked boys and girls are used to teach little children about various sexual practices and to assure them of the normality of homosexuality. The book shows children how to masturbate and how to engage with others in sexual activities, short of intercourse. It discusses contraceptives and illustrates how to put on a condom. It also lists nine reasons for having an abortion.

Explaining that this book isn't an anomaly, Collison continues:

Probably the most popular sex ed text in American high schools is *Changing Bodies, Changing Lives*. it [sic] teaches that "bisexuality is an openness to loving, sexual relationships with both sexes — our true nature," and graphically describes sexual practices of homosexuals. Then there is *Learning About Sex*, which is, says the blurb on the cover, "a must for all young people." This textbook blithely observes that "Sado-masochism may be very acceptable and safe for sexual partners who know each other's needs." All texts for older students recommend fornication. *Learning About Sex* also in effect recommends adultery: "Some people are now saying that partnerships — married or unmarried — should not be exclusive. They believe that while a primary relationship is maintained with one person, the freedom for both partners to love and share sex



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with others should also be present.”

TA makes clear that the propaganda in today’s textbooks runs the gamut, encompassing global warming, religion, culture, race, political figures, ideology, civil rights, voter fraud, sex, and beyond. Yet perhaps the most destructive is, not surprisingly, what seems the most banal. *Magruder’s American Government & Civics* states on page 10:

But what is justice? The term is difficult to define for justice is a concept, an idea, an invention of the human mind. Like other concepts such as truth, liberty, and fairness justice means what people want it to mean.

This is philoso-babble that, in a common contradiction, makes an absolute statement that everything is relative. It brings to mind what G.K. Chesterton said was the confused, relativistic modern man’s attitude toward education: “We cannot decide what is good, but let us give it to our children.”

And given to our children it is. Whether reviewed in Tennessee or elsewhere, note that publishers don’t create textbooks for single-state markets; they’re available nationwide. Publishers don’t print them for an illusory market, either. Every textbook is — or will be — used in schools somewhere.

So what is in your child’s school? Given, as Abraham Lincoln said, that “the philosophy of the classroom today will be the philosophy of government tomorrow,” today is a good time to find out.



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