

What is happening in our schools?

Specifically in Social Studies and Science

“The philosophy of the schoolhouse in one generation will be the philosophy of the government in the next.”

Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States

Part One

On December 7, 2006, I asked my 12 year old grandson what day it was. He was given no hints or prompting.

“Thursday?”

“Unhunh. That’s right. What else?”

“Uhhhh, I don’t know. Christmas is coming?”

It was then that my hackles rose. I told him it was on December 7, 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and we were launched into WW II. Okay...

On December 8, 2006, I asked my 12 year-old grandson and his 14 year-old brother if their teachers, any of their teachers, had discussed the events of 12-7-1941. The 12 year-old said “No.” The 14 year-old said only his PE teacher had mentioned it. Then I made the decision to start investigating what our local school system is teaching our children about the history of the U. S.

A week or so later the 7th grader told of a film they’d been viewing in his science class about global warming. They spent two and a half class periods on the film. The film was none other than Al Gore’s documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*. At that point in time, I wrote a letter to Tom Horne, Superintendent of the AZ Department of Education. Copies were sent to Dr. David Schauer, Superintendent of the Kyrene School District and to Mrs. Nancy Corner, Principal, Altadena Middle School. The letter was dated 12-20-2006. It was mailed 12-21-06. In mid-January, after the holiday break, I received an e-mail memo from Mrs. Corner and a letter from Mrs. Patricia Weegar, a representative of Dr. Schauer’s. To date, no reply has been received from Mr. Horne.

After exchanging e-mails a time or two, Nancy Corner and I met in February to discuss the subjects of social studies and science. Because of other commitments, she was unable to see me before February, 2007. However, we had some e-mail correspondence on the subject of social studies and she directed me to the Kyrene District office which is in the process of conducting a survey on some new textbooks which might be used in teaching Social Studies for grades 4-8.

Now, back to the science issue...I was asked to send an e-mail memo with my questions about the film and they would be answered after making a review of them. This was done on 2-5-07. The questions presented in my memo were: 1. Why was the film shown in the first place? 2. Was

similar class time given to scientific arguments which differ with the Gore film? 3. Who authorized the showing of the film? 4. How was it funded? 5. How many schools used the film? On 2-12-07, I had an meeting with Mrs. Corner and her assistant, Doug Olson. The answers to the questions in my memo were eye-openers. Answer to #1. It's current science and needs to be addressed. It's the teacher's choice. #2. No, but as the film progressed, opposing scientific views were mentioned. #3. The use of the film was approved by Mrs. Jump, the student advisor for the 7th grade. #4. The teacher paid the rental fee out of her own pocket. #5. Didn't know.

We then discussed the significance of the 12-7-41 history and why it wasn't brought up in Social Studies class. It was pointed out to Mrs. Corner and Mr. Olson that the day was of great historical significance. They agreed, but neither gave much of an answer as to the reason for ignoring it in class discussions. After this meeting, I began to make preparation to visit the Kyrene District Office to do my own review of the proposed Social Studies textbooks which are to be used in the school year 2007-2008 and beyond.

On Feb. 23rd, I started the textbook review at the Kyrene District Offices.

At the outset, I became acquainted with Joy Fogarty and Carrie Furedy, Teacher Specialists in Curriculum and Assessment. Mrs. Fogarty gave me a Social Studies Resource Adoption Feedback Form to complete when I had finished my review.

I spent about three hours reviewing the Prentice Hall textbook, *America, History of our Nation*. The authors all were college professors with Ph. D.'s from various colleges. My first day there took me through about the first 300 pages of the book. Before leaving for the day, I thought I should take a close look at the Feedback Form. It contained jargon familiar only to the teaching establishment and was devoted only to procedure. There was no mention of content. I asked Mrs. Fogarty about it and was given what seemed to be a credible explanation at the time while she introduced me to the Social Studies Curriculum Course of Study guideline manual. At the moment, I decided not to complete the form until I'd finished my review of the textbook. I closed my file and left.

On 2-28-07, I returned to the Kyrene District Offices to continue my book review. All was going well until I decided to take a look at the Feedback Forms which were lying in a filing tray on the table where I was working.

Based on my conversation with Doug Olson on 2-12-07, I expected to find only one or two sheets, at most. Imagine my surprise when I counted 49 separate sheets. Then I noticed that the same name appeared on more than one sheet. After recognizing that fact, I counted the number of sheets which one individual had completed. In all, there were only ten individuals who had completed the 49 Feedback Forms. They were all teachers. When Mrs Fogarty saw what I was

doing, she took the forms while telling me they weren't for public knowledge and that a summary would be made available at a later date.

3-2-07 at about 11:30 a.m., I contacted Mrs. Carol Warren, Social Studies Specialist, State Social Studies Standards, AZ Department of Education by phone. Mrs. Warren and I discussed the Adopted Social Studies Curriculum Course Study guideline manual. Her attention was directed to the Age of Revolution and the implication that the Industrial Revolution was a radical revolution which caused the overthrow of government. Believe it or not, she saw nothing wrong with the connection or the implication. It's my understanding this woman is in her late 50's or early 60's. Therefore, somewhere in her life's journey she has probably learned or decided the Industrial Revolution was a radical revolt which overthrew governments.

During our conversation, I learned the following:

1. State standards are developed by a committee of educators—college professors, community college professors, grade school, middle school, and high school teachers. She thought there may have been one person from out of state on the committee. There are 60 people on the committee. I asked if the names were available to me. Her initial reply was “No”. Then she found them on the State website, so she recanted her comment. It's interesting she had the same negative reaction the administrator at the Kyrene District office had when I asked to review administrative policy documents, i.e. the Feedback Form.
2. The revision and review cycle is on a seven year schedule.
3. The Standards are mandated for all public schools and charter schools. The school districts may make alterations and/or additions, but they must follow the state-mandated standards at all times.
4. Once the guidelines have been established they are sent to the various school districts. Each district then uses them to establish their own guidelines within the State established boundaries. In the case of the Kyrene District, they followed the State manual without change.
5. I asked Mrs. Warren if she was aware of the Institute of Education Science. She said she'd heard of it, but knew very little about it. I asked if she was aware of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement. She was not. Then, I explained to her what they were. At that time, she reiterated she had heard only of the IES.

Since these are federal agencies, my reason for asking the question was to try to determine how much influence the federal government was having on the subject matter. Unless I miss my guess, someone at the State level knows the ultimate source of the guidelines. It's hard to believe a group of 60 committee members, all of whom are academics and teachers, would, as a whole,

believe the Industrial Revolution had anything to do with the radical overthrow of governments. The idea had to come from a source far beyond their purview.

As a matter of record, the IES is the successor to the OERI which was the successor to the National Institute for Education (NIE). According to an article by Ben Boychuk in the October 15, 1997 issue of the Investors Business Daily, the agency was originally put together during the Lyndon B. Johnson administration in 1968. The “mission was to bring ‘structure and cohesion’ to Washington’s role in formulating education standards.” That means Federal control of the education system.

Further, the article states the following programs have been developed and implemented by the NIE, OERI, IES establishment—“Whole language, new math, outcome-based education, higher-order thinking skills, mainstreaming (special education), social promotion, portfolio assessment (grade elimination), culturally appropriate learning, non-directive learning, cooperative learning, bilingual education, self-esteem education.” And that was as of October of 1997. Goodness only knows what else has been perpetrated on the unsuspecting population since then.

March 5, 2007—Meeting with Mrs. Nancy Corner, Principal, Altadeña Middle School.

We discussed the Social Studies Curriculum Course of Study guidelines manual in general, but emphasis was placed on the section about the Age of Revolution. Her attention was directed to the premise the Industrial Revolution was connected to the radical overthrow of government as described on page 43 of the manual. Her attention was also directed to page 45 on which “The Age of Imperialism” is discussed. Implicit in the guideline manual is the argument that industrialized nations are imperialistic. As an aside...she hadn’t read the manual.

After some thought she seemed to be unimpressed with the direction of the guidelines. Indifferent might be more accurate. She even tried to justify the U. S. as an imperialistic force in the westward movement of our national borders by our various wars with the Indians, etc. To me, that’s a bit of a stretch inasmuch as there were no formal Indian nations, only tribes who had staked out territories of their own. I suppose one could loosely say the tribes were nations.

During this meeting I asked how the public was notified of the textbook survey. Mrs. Corner said notices were published in the newspapers in the “legal notices” section. Small wonder the public isn’t aware of the process, and, if unaware, the public cannot review and evaluate the textbooks. No one reads the legal notices as a matter of course. Nevertheless, the School Board had fulfilled its legal duty by placing the notice in the newspaper.

For my own amusement, I reviewed some dictionary definitions of the “Industrial Revolution” and “Imperialism”. Somehow they don’t seem to fit into those suggested by the guidelines manual. This exercise seemed appropriate inasmuch as the educators to whom I’d spoken took the subject matter very lightly.

Definitions of industrial revolution: 1. *Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary* ©1977—"1. The changes resulting from the replacement of handicraft production by machine and factory production."

2. *Webster's Universal Encyclopedic Dictionary* ©2002—"a rapid major change in an economy (as in England in the late 18th century) marked by the general introduction of power-driven machinery or by an important change in the prevailing types and methods of use of such machines."

3. *The American College Dictionary* © 1947—"the term applied to the social and economic changes in England from the mid 18th to the 19th centuries during the beginnings and growth of modern industrialism."

4. Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary ©1988—same definition as that found in #2 above.

Definitions of imperialism: 1. *The American College Dictionary* © 1947—"the policy of extending the rule or authority of an empire or nation over foreign countries, or of acquiring and holding colonies and dependencies."

2. *Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary* © 1977—"The creation, maintenance, or extension of an empire, comprising many nations and areas, all controlled by a central government."

3. *Webster's Universal Encyclopedic Dictionary* © 2002—"the policy, practice, or advocacy of extending the power and dominion of a nation especially by direct territorial acquisitions or by gaining indirect control over the political or economic life of other areas; *broadly*: the extension or imposition of power, authority or influence (union *imperialism*)". This definition seems to fit that which is implied in the Course Study guideline manual.

4. This exact wording is used in the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary* ©1988.

In the meantime, I've been in touch with State Senator John Huppenthal to review my findings. After a few phone calls to him and his executive assistant, he agreed to meet with me after the budget was settled. That takes us into late April, 2007. The proposed textbooks will be available for review by the public until May 17, 2007. So, there may time to complete this study to make it available to the public through the printed media, if one of the newspapers will entertain the idea.

What is happening to our schools? It looks as if they're being used as an experimental playground for those who would destroy us from within either knowingly or unknowingly. The enemy from within pays lip service to supporting the need for better education while failing to teach proper American History and eschewing environmentalism. Thereby making it easier for them to take over the government. Strong words. Nevertheless, the facts support them. We spend more money each year to improve the education system while test scores continue to drop in most areas of the U. S. The research is easy to do. So please take the time to do it.

My conclusion, to date, is that the school system is a world all its own and the unwashed public isn't invited into the inner sanctum. Generally speaking, the public knows little or nothing about how the system works and what it's doing to our children. And, ultimately, to the future of our nation.

Now that I've completed a review of the three proposed American History textbooks suggested for use in the Middle Schools, it should be noted they all had one very interesting item in common, and that was a short commentary on Senator Joseph McCarthy and his efforts to eliminate communists from Hollywood and the Federal Government in the 1950s. That surprised me in that his work was such a small blip on the historical scene that it was of relatively little consequence except to those who were exposed. None of books were complimentary of his work. However, one of them had the decency to tell of the Alger Hiss case and the Rosenberg case. The other two didn't mention those two spy cases, didn't credit McCarthy with their exposure, and made McCarthy look like some kind of monster whose mission in life was to ruin careers. None of them reviewed the events leading to his senate subcommittee hearings.

Further no mention was made that such hearings had been held since the 1920s. None of them told of the Communist movement in our nation and its objective. That begs the question—why did they choose McCarthy as the one to crucify? Was it because he exposed the movement in Hollywood and in our own government? So...only a small part of the story was presented and it was only the opinion of the authors. Not the facts.

Today, that's a point of view which is supported only by the Marxists in our midst. Does someone have an agenda? If so, who's at the bottom of it?

April 4, 2007—2:45 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. I had a conference at the Altadeña Middle School with Mrs. Nancy Corner, Principal, and Social Studies teachers, Mrs. Sheila Nice (6th grade level), Mrs. Lorrie Harris (8th grade level), and Mr. Mark Parrish (7th grade level).

At the outset, I asked the question “What's your vision for the future of the United States?” Then I said to put it in the back of their minds until the end of the session. All of them groaned when I asked the question. None had given much thought to such an abstract notion. Then we began a discussion of the Adopted Social Studies Curriculum Course of Study guideline manual.

Apparently the manual is new this year and none of them had the chance to review it until our meeting. However, Sheila Nice was on the Social Studies Standards Committee of 60 educators who developed the manual. That was a good break for me. It allowed me to gain some insight into the process of creating the ideas presented in the manual.

Mrs. Nice informed me the committee would make suggestions and send them to Tom Horne's office for approval, revision or rejection. She lead me to believe the final edition of the manual was an amalgam or synthesis of the AZ Department of Education's ideas and the ideas of the committee. However, she said the AZ Department of Education was the final authority.

As we progressed in our review of the manual, emphasis was placed on the material presented on page 43 under the heading of "The Age of Revolution" and the fact the manual included the Industrial Revolution as part of the discussion regarding revolution as the overthrow of governments and economies. There was a lot of equivocation and parsing of sentences in order to justify such a connection. The ladies were much more amenable to the concept than was Mr. Parrish. In his defense, Mr. Parrish had trouble presenting his ideas because of constant interruption by the ladies.

After talking about "The Age of Revolution", we turned our attention to page 45 of the manual which reviews "The Age of Imperialism" in the context of World History. The heading of this part implied that industrialization was responsible for imperialism. As you studied the ideas which were to be presented to the students, you began to get the feeling the U. S. could be considered an imperialist nation. Again there was equivocation and waffling on the part of the ladies. Mr. Parrish didn't get to say much.

Then we turned our attention to page 63 which discusses government systems of the world. In Grade 7, democracy was omitted while teaching of dictatorships, totalitarian government and monarchies. Democracy and all of the others were taught in the 6th grade, so why not include it in the 7th grade material? An error of omission of commission?

During the conversation, it became apparent the ladies were of the opinion there is a lot of latitude in the presentation of history. Many gray areas of interpretation of history. Mr. Parrish didn't agree with such a thesis. Neither do I. In my opinion, history is made up of facts. An event occurred on a certain date. It was caused by certain events which led up to it, etc. There must be some discussion of ideologies, but those ideologies must be presented in such a way as to make the student think of their consequences as proven by history, i.e. what works and what doesn't work. Complete neutrality in presentation of the facts must be the rule rather than the exception.

We concluded our meeting with the answer to the question which I posed at the beginning of the conference. The ladies refused to answer in a direct way. They both began by saying they wouldn't give me their vision for the future of the nation. But, both launched into a discussion of

teaching methodology. Very interesting. We ran out of time, so Mr. Parrish didn't have the opportunity to give his answer.

After the meeting, Mr. Parrish and I talked about his vision for the future of the country. He was less than optimistic. He talked about the "enemy from within" which is a concept usually discussed by those who aren't politically correct. It was, and is, talked about by people like Joe McCarthy, Richard Nixon, Cleon Skousen, Ayn Rand, George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, Whittaker Chambers, Sean Hannity, Rush Limbaugh, Ann Coulter, Charlie Daniels, and others too numerous to mention. We talked about the liberal media and its effect on our country. He brought up Sun Tzu's work on "The Art of War". Much to his credit, he'd read it. This man is knowledgeable and is a credit to the profession.

Part Two

An evaluation of the proposed textbooks for the coming school year 2007-2008.

Prentice Hall's *America History of our Nation...*

Let me preface my appraisal of this textbook, and the others, with the caveat that I was interested only in content, and the way the content was presented. Was it factual or was it couched in terms that may have created an unfair or an inappropriate image? The procedural aspects of the textbook are evaluated in the Feedback Form which was so expertly done by Joy Fogarty.

At the beginning of the textbook, there are some color-coded maps. The one on page A-2 fails to include a legend explaining the meaning of the various colors. The ensuing pages were fine.

As I proceeded with the review, in a description on page 89 in the section titled "The Back Country", reference was made to people who lived in "simple one room shacks." What are the connotations of such a description? Why wasn't it appropriate to say they lived in one-room cabins? Since most people in the rural areas lived in hand-built log cabins during that time period wouldn't that have been more accurate? Is this a way of promoting class warfare by innuendo?

On page 153, Section "From Protest to Rebellion", General Gage's nationality was not mentioned. It would help if it was made clear he was British. An error of omission or commission?

In Chapter 8 on page 279 there is wording describing Washington's home as a "comfortable estate". Indeed, it was a comfortable estate at that time, but why couldn't the authors have said

“home” or “residence”? Why describe the residence as “comfortable”? Does this smack of the promotion of class warfare? Depends on how the teacher presents it and how the students interpret the teacher’s presentation.

There is mention of a discussion of similes and metaphors. Why? Why complicate the study of history by bringing up such an exercise? Shouldn’t the students be learning of the concepts, the precepts and the facts of history rather than be concerned with a discussion of similes and metaphors? Save that for English class and creative writing.

In one discussion of the colonists, some were referred to as “wealthy Americans”. This was in the context of investing in land to make a profit when sold. Granted, there may have been some of that, but most Americans were buying land to farm, and not for speculation. This gives the appearance of being very class oriented. Probably not a neutral presentation of the historical facts.

Page 226 has a good discussion on the Constitution. Plus the full text of same. There is also the full text of the Declaration of Independence in an earlier part of the book.

Section titled “A Time of Conflict”—it was mentioned we defeated the Barbary States. There was no mention of the fact they were of the Muslim faith or that the Muslim pirates were kidnaping our seamen and those of other nations and asking for, and receiving, ransom. This is important in that it helps lay the foundation for the conflict which is taking place today by showing it’s nothing new. And that the Muslims have been making war in the Middle East for many, many years. It was the act of kidnaping and the paying of ransom that caused President Thomas Jefferson to say “Millions for defense, but not one penny for tribute.”

On page 343, the authors refer to John Marshall as a Federalist sympathizer. If they can make that observation why not refer to the Barbary Pirates (States) as Muslim?

On page 400, under the heading “Resistance to Slavery”, The text tells of Nat Turner’s slave revolt in 1831. It says 60 whites were killed but it says nothing of what happened to Turner. It says only “In reprisal, many innocent African-Americans were executed.” Could this be considered inflammatory wording? Racist?

I noticed the word “capitalist” is used frequently. In today’s society, the word “capitalist” has negative connotations and conjures up the image of the greedy businessman as is often characterized in political cartoons and by Marxists—thanks to Marxist propaganda .

Chapter 18—Industry and Urban Growth—gives an inadequate discussion of labor unions—in my opinion.

Chapter 19—In discussing the Wilson administration’s legislative accomplishments, no mention was made of the graduated income tax law which was passed in 1913, Also, no mention was made of the Aid to Dependent Children Act which was passed in 1913. These are both significant in that they gave the nation a strong start down the road to socialism.

This chapter says something about W. E. B. Du Bois and his accomplishments, but there was no mention of his Marxist philosophy.

Chapter 20 starts referring to the American Empire. Why? We aren’t an imperialistic nation. Although those who oppose our political and economic philosophies are sure to refer to us as “imperialists”. Those nations who make such reference usually are Communist or Muslim dictatorships, and are of a warlike nature. And they consider us as the enemy until they need our money or military help.

Chapter 21 begins the discussion of WW I. Section 1—The Road to War— The usual material is included, however, there is judicious use of the terms “imperialism” and “nationalism”. Imperialism wasn’t defined, but nationalism was defined as “pride in one’s nation or ethnic group”. Why define one and not the other?

This is the first time I’ve seen the definition of nationalism massaged to include “ethnic group”. I consulted four dictionaries and not a one of them included “ethnic group” as part of the definition of the word.

The authors also give a definition of “propaganda” which is about as politically correct as it can be. It is as follows: “...the spread of information designed to win support for a cause.” That could be the definition of “salesmanship” or “marketing”.

Let’s pursue this a little further...the definition of “propaganda” as given in three dictionaries: **First**, *The American College Dictionary* © 1947—1. the particular doctrines or principles propagated by an organization or concerted movement. **Second**, *The Reader’s Digest Encyclopedic Dictionary* © 1977—1. A systematic effort to persuade a body of people to support or adopt a particular opinion, attitude, or course of action. **Third**, *Webster’s Universal Encyclopedic Dictionary* © 2002—1. the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person.

Today, the term “propaganda” is usually used in a pejorative manner. It’s been so for the past 60-70 years to the best of my knowledge. Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Information for The Third Reich, was the man who gave the term such a negative meaning.

In Section 1., there was a short piece on the Russian (Bolshevik) Revolution of October, 1917. However, nothing was said about the fact said revolution overthrew a republican government

which had been established in May, 1917 when the Czarist monarchy was overthrown. To me, this is a serious omission. However, there is further mention of the event in Section 3 of this chapter, and the Bolshevik Revolution is mentioned, but nothing was said of the previous republican government which it replaced by armed force.

Chapter 28–New Direction for a Nation–1977-2000.

Faults Reagan for the federal deficits due to tax cuts and increased military spending. Said his policies helped expand the economy and shrink inflation. Didn't say why this was achieved or that the tax cuts substantially increased federal revenues. And this was in spite of a Democrat controlled Congress during both terms. Omissions of this kind often lead to an incorrect understanding of the true events of history.

Section 2–End of the Cold War–Gives Reagan no credit for the end of the Cold War.

Section 4–Conflict in the Middle East–Gives a fair description of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Describes the Camp David Accords in a fair-minded way. In the discussion of the Palestinian Issue, the text makes Israel look bad. This isn't accurate. In the discussion of “An Extreme Form of Islam”, the text doesn't go far enough.

Chapter 29–Challenge for a New Century–

Section 1. Discusses the threat of terrorism. Touches on the roots of terrorism. The KKK is brought into the picture. But it makes no sense to talk about the KKK when it's Al Qaeda which is the terrorist threat of today. The KKK was originally established in 1866 and died out in 1871. It was resurrected in 1915. Today, the KKK is considered to be an extreme *hate* group rather than a terrorist organization. So...the connection exists only in the minds of the authors.

Section 3–The Energy Supply– Discusses Global warming as a problem. Says the U. S. signed the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and stops there. It doesn't say that Clinton signed the document, but that the Senate wouldn't ratify it. So...we have only half of the story. Why? In later discussion, the text says Bush rejected it in 2001 but doesn't say why. Again this is half right. Is a half-truth a whole lie?

Section 4–A Changing Society–

Gives some good information. However, a point is made regarding the “inequality of income”. Why? Is this important to anyone but a socialist or a communist? It's a utopian concept which has no merit in a history book unless it's being used to describe Marxist concepts. Why bring it up?

The final paragraph of the text is good, but it could be better. It could have discussed freedom, liberty and our republican democracy. It reads as follows: "...faith in democracy, respect for individual rights, tolerance for different viewpoints, the opportunity to build a better future. These ideals define our nation and as a people." This is a good start, but it falls short of the true meaning of the reasoning of our Founding Fathers.

A review of the **teacher's edition** of the Prentice Hall textbook was based on the treatment of 5 topics: 1. Senator Joseph McCarthy; 2. Imperialism, its definition and its application; 3. Environmentalism and the way it is discussed; 4. President Reagan, his policies and how they're handled; 5. W. E. B. du Boise and how his impact on society was handled.

1. The treatment of McCarthy's work was not complimentary and was given to half-truths. The approach which is used could be that of a Marxist.
2. The teacher's edition makes a vague link of imperialism to the expansion of trade. Seems to be a bit of a stretch, but I could have missed something there.
3. Environmentalism is handled in such a way as to lead one to believe "The environment is tied to the global economy." Seems like a very broad use of the concept. Environmentalist is defined as "a reformer who seeks to protect the environment." A nice broad definition. I would prefer to see the word "reformer" replaced with "activist". Fidel Castro was a "reformer" to hear our State Department tell it in 1952.
4. A fair discussion of Reagan's policies was given, although it was very brief. If the teacher stays with the textbook discussion, it should work.
5. A nice job was done describing the achievements of Mr. du Bois, but nothing was said about his Marxist ideology. A serious omission.

Holt *United States History*

Let me preface my appraisal of this textbook, and the others, with the caveat that I was interested only in content, and the way the content was presented. Was it factual or was it couched in terms that may have created an unfair or an inappropriate image? The procedural aspects of the textbook are evaluated in the Feedback Form which was so expertly done by Joy Fogarty.

1. The format is very similar to the Prentice Hall textbook.
2. Study aids are similar.

3. Coverage of events is similar to Prentice Hall. At the outset, Holt seems to be a little less political in its presentation. However, toward the end of the text on page 780 there is reference to the uneven distribution of wealth. This is Marxist rhetoric. It has no place in a history textbook.

In the presentation of the Hoover administration, reference was made to its conservative approach to socio-economic issues. However, when discussing the subsequent Roosevelt administration *no reference* was made to his socialistic handling of our socio-economic problems. Only said his programs brought “economic relief”.

FDR embraced Keynesian socialist economics with such a passion that Keynes was an integral part of the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944 as the British economic leader to the Conference. No point in going into detail here, but suffice it to say, the textbook misses or intentionally overlooks this important detail.

In discussing the Holocaust, Holt doesn’t measure up. Prentice Hall does a better job.

On page 855, there is a brief discussion of the McCarthy hearings of the 1950s. The material which is presented is strictly Marxist rhetoric. The text only describes the hearings as destroying careers and reputations. No mention is made of the Alger Hiss trial and the Rosenberg trials in which the aforementioned were all convicted of spying for the Russians. At least, the Prentice Hall textbook had the decency to mention those achievements.

The final paragraph of the Holt text is as follows: “While the diversity of our population grows, Americans of all backgrounds share a belief in many basic ideals. Our shared commitment to the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice helps keep our nation strong. So does our shared dedication to the responsibilities of citizenship. Americans also share many of the same hopes and dreams for the future.” To me, this is a bit politically correct, indecisive and weak.

At this point I concluded my review of the Holt textbook. It was too political to suit me. The tenor of the text changed as it went on.

Teacher’s edition

A review of the of the Holt textbook, Teacher’s Edition, was based on the treatment of 5 topics:

1. Senator Joseph McCarthy; 2. Imperialism, its definition and its application;
- 3.Environmentalism and the way it is discussed; 4. President Reagan, his policies and how they’re handled; 5. W. E. B. du Boise and how his impact on society was handled

1. McCarthy is portrayed as a jingoist, at best, while being a chauvinist, at worst. Nothing was said of his achievements. The Alger Hiss case was mentioned in an early paragraph, but no credit was given to McCarthy for uncovering Hiss's work as a spy for the Soviets. The Rosenbergs were mentioned, but not as a victory for McCarthy's work.
2. Imperialism is given a fair treatment, but there is a vague reference to U. S. westward expansion in such a way that it might be considered as imperialistic.
3. Environment is discussed in such a way as to lead one to believe the Panama Canal may not have been a good thing. Otherwise, the presentation seems to be fair. Depends on the teacher's presentation of the facts.
4. Reagan is handled fairly well.
5. du Bois is handled as the other textbooks do...only reference to his achievements, but no comment on his Marxist ideology.

McDougall Littell *American History*

Let me preface my appraisal of this textbook, and the others, with the caveat that I was interested only in content, and the way the content was presented. Was it factual or was it couched in terms that may have created an unfair or an inappropriate image? The procedural aspects of the textbook are evaluated in the Feedback Form which was so expertly done by Joy Fogarty.

The authors have good credentials, as do the other textbooks in review.
The book gives many online references which can be very helpful to the student and teacher.
The book is well organized and easy to follow: primary sources, features, etc.

Most of the material in the textbook is very similar to that of Holt and Prentice Hall. However, in Chapter 28, "The Equal Rights Struggle Expands" there is discussion of the political and economic aspects of the Feminist Movement, the Cesar Chavez Union, La Raza, and the National Congress of American Indians. But none of the sociological consequences were mentioned. The divisive nature of these organizations was completely overlooked or ignored with a purpose.

Regarding the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee hearings of the 1950s, the chairman, Senator Joseph McCarthy was treated very shabbily. Only negative remarks were made. There was no mention of the Alger Hiss case or the Rosenbergs. All of whom were convicted of spying for the Soviets. This isn't presenting the facts.

Pages 302 and 303 have some good material on “What are your Rights?” and “What are your Responsibilities?”

There is a good discussion of the principles of the Constitution.

Teacher’s Edition

A review of the **teacher’s edition** of the McDougall Littell textbook was based on the treatment of 5 topics: 1. Senator Joseph McCarthy; 2. Imperialism, its definition and its application; 3. Environmentalism and the way it is discussed; 4. President Reagan, his policies and how they’re handled; 5. W. E. B. du Boise and how his impact on society was handled

1. McCarthy was very poorly presented. The text speaks only of his destroying lives and careers. There is no mention of his successes such as the Hiss and Rosenberg cases. Those cases were mentioned separately with no reference to McCarthy.

2. Imperialism—describes America as an “Imperial Power”. This is linked to our westward expansion and growth during the 19th century. Somehow this textbook links establishing colonies to imperialism.

3. Environment—this text seems to try to equate conservationism and environmentalism. The two are different. There is a lot of latitude on this subject, and it isn’t well presented.

4. Reagan’s policies were not fairly presented. The text said that his economic program of tax cuts caused the deficit to increase while saying nothing of the fact the Congress was controlled by Democrats and that he won the Cold War

5. W. E. B. du Bois is presented as a great champion of civil rights without a discussion of his Marxist ideology.

Now...you ask what are the credentials of this person who challenges the wisdom of our professional educators? A reasonable question.

In 1950, I started my study of Marxism, communism and the various political ideologies of the time (Islam hadn’t asserted itself). Those studies were done at Dartmouth College on a formal basis from 1950 through 1954 when I graduated with a degree in Sociology. My study of the subjects has continued these past many years with heavy emphasis on the study of propaganda .

I was privileged to learn the fine points of propaganda from Professor Michael Choukas and the nuances of the many and varied political ideologies from Associate Professor Rene Fulop-Muller.

Professor Choukas had been the second in command at the United States Office of War Information during WW II. The OWI was our official department of propaganda. Professor Choukas was originally from Hungary. He escaped the Nazis and Communists of his day. Who better to teach the subject of propaganda?

Associate Professor Fulop-Muller was born and raised in Vienna, Austria, and, at the time, was one of only four people in the world who was licensed to practice psychiatry without having his M. D. His mentor was Sigmund Freud. During October of 1917, he lived with Nicholas Lenin and witnessed the Bolshevik Revolution first hand. He also was an acquaintance of Mahatma Ghandi. He was a very special man, to say the least. And he almost always started class with the comment...“communism and capitalism cannot coexist.” Who better to teach ideologies?

Addendum...Re: Global warming issue as discussed on pps 1 & 2.
8-9-07

On August 7, 2007, I had the opportunity to discuss the global warming presentation which was done by the Altadeña Middle School science department with a contemporary of my grandson. She informed me the entire 7th grade science class (3 pods) was required to see *An Inconvenient Truth* as an assembly group. This was confirmed by my grandson. Funny how he failed to mention this in December, 2006 during our original conversation.

Further, both students said there was no instruction about science to the contrary of that which was presented in the film. This is indoctrination— pure and simple. Is this what we want in our schools?

Addendum 2...Re: Global warming

My 15 year old grandson said his history class was required to watch *An Inconvenient Truth* on 8-27-07. The substitute teacher said he disagreed with the concept, but he had to show the film.