



Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong

By James W. Loewen

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This updated and revised edition of the American Book Award-winner and national bestseller revitalizes the truth of America's history, explores how myths continue to be perpetrated, and includes a new chapter on 9/11 and the Iraq War.

Americans have lost touch with their history, and in *Lies My Teacher Told Me* Professor James Loewen shows why. After surveying eighteen leading high school American history texts, he has concluded that not one does a decent job of making history interesting or memorable. Marred by an embarrassing combination of blind patriotism, mindless optimism, sheer misinformation, and outright lies, these books omit almost all the ambiguity, passion, conflict, and drama from our past.

In this revised edition, packed with updated material, Loewen explores how historical myths continue to be perpetuated in today's climate and adds an eye-opening chapter on the lies surrounding 9/11 and the Iraq War. From the truth about Columbus's historic voyages to an honest evaluation of our national leaders, Loewen revives our history, restoring the vitality and relevance it truly possesses.

Thought provoking, nonpartisan, and often shocking, Loewen unveils the real America in this iconoclastic classic beloved by high school teachers, history buffs, and enlightened citizens across the country.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Loewen's politically correct critique of 12 American history textbooks—including *The American Pageant* by Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy; and *Triumph of the American Nation* by Paul Lewis Todd and Merle Curti—is sure to please liberals and infuriate conservatives. In condemning the way history is taught, he indicts everyone involved in the enterprise: authors, publishers, adoption committees, parents and teachers. Loewen (*Mississippi: Conflict and Change*) argues that the bland, Eurocentric treatment of history bores most elementary and high school students, who also find it irrelevant to their lives. To make learning more compelling, Loewen urges authors, publishers and teachers to highlight the drama inherent in history by presenting students with different viewpoints and stressing that history is an ongoing process, not merely a collection of—often misleading—factoids. Readers interested in history, whether liberal or conservative, professional or layperson, will find food for thought here. Illustrated.

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From [Booklist](#)

When textbook gaffes make news, as with the tome that explained that the Korean War ended when Truman dropped the atom bomb, the expeditious remedy would be to fire the editor. Loewen would rather hire a new team of authors bent on the pursuit of context instead of factoids. In Loewen's ideal text, events and people illuminating the multicultural holy trinity of race, gender, and social class would predominate over the fixation on heroes and acts of government. Such is the mood adopted throughout this critique of 12 American history texts in current use. Vetting 10 topics they commonly address—from the Pilgrims to the Vietnam War—Loewen bewails a long train of alleged omissions and distortions. To account for the deplorable situation, he offers this quasi-Marxist explanation: "Perhaps we are all dupes, manipulated by elite white male capitalists who orchestrate how history is written as part of their scheme to perpetuate their own power and privilege at the expense of the rest of us." Certainly students' appalling ignorance of history is troublesome, and broken families and excessive TV viewing are at least the equals of white male conspirators as the cause. However, libraries located where dissatisfaction with textbooks exists should be interested in Loewen's critique. *Gilbert Taylor*

Review

"Every teacher, every student of history, every citizen should read this book. It is both a refreshing antidote to what has passed for history in our educational system and a one-volume education in itself." -- Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States*

"An extremely convincing plea for truth in education." -- Mary Mackey, *San Francisco Chronicle*

"Remarkable." -- *USA Today*

"A lively critique." -- *The New York Times*

"Powerful and important...deserves to become an instant classic." -- *The Washington Post Book World*

Users Review

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Anna Brooks:

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