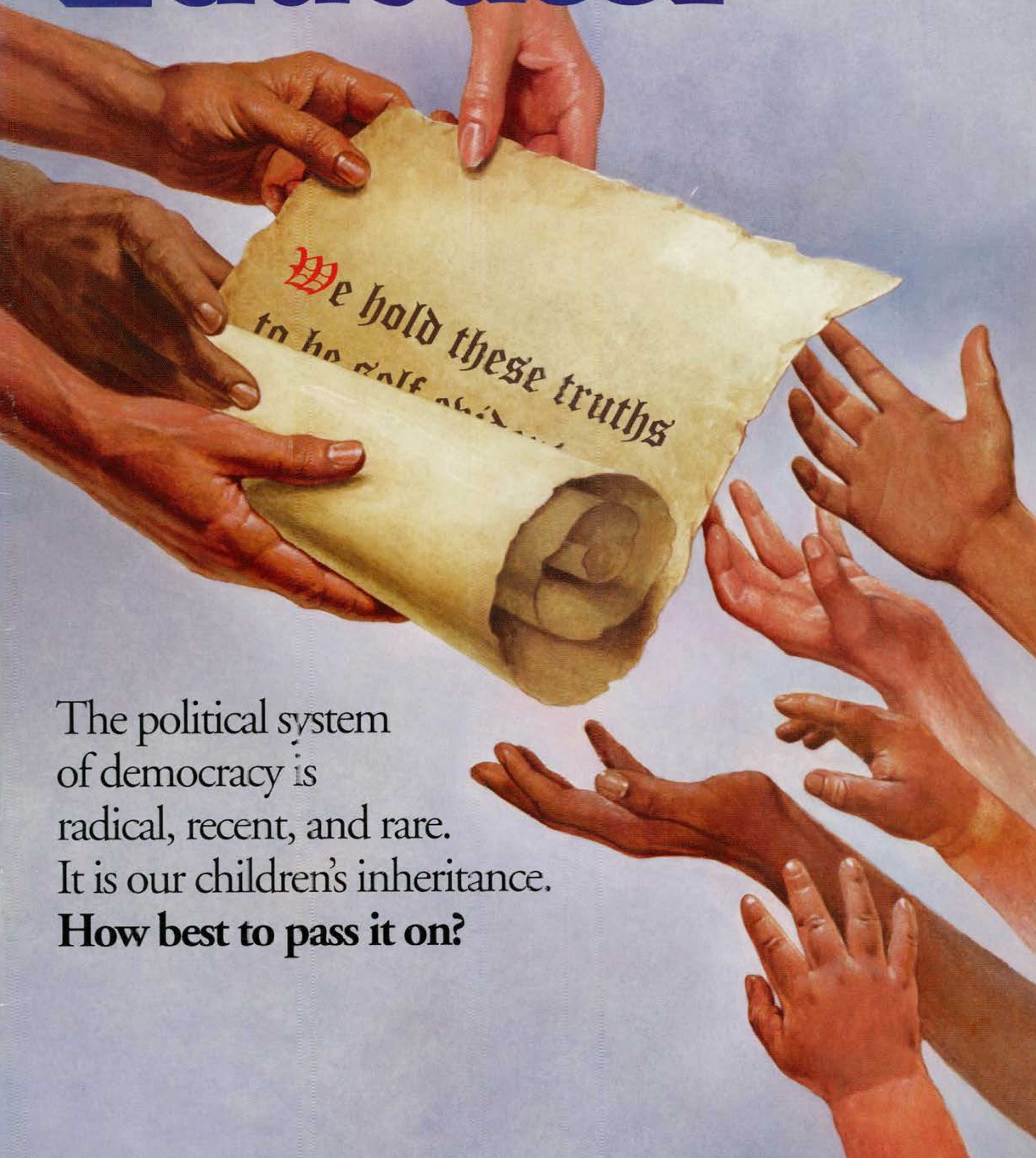
AMERICAN
Educator

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
FALL 2003



The political system of democracy is radical, recent, and rare. It is our children's inheritance.
How best to pass it on?

THERE'S NOT ENOUGH ART IN OUR SCHOOLS.

NO WONDER PEOPLE THINK LOUIS ARMSTRONG WAS THE FIRST MAN TO WALK ON THE MOON.

It's a long way from the Apollo Theatre to the Apollo program. And while his playing may have been "as lofty as a moon flight," as *Time* magazine once suggested, that would be as close as Louis Daniel Armstrong would ever get to taking "one small step for man."

But as the premier jazz musician of the 20th century, giant leaps were a matter of course for Satchmo. No person before or since has ever embodied — and revolutionized — jazz the way Louis Armstrong did.

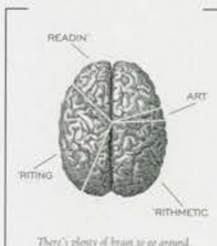
Armstrong left his footprints all over the jazz world. And he usually did it in lace-up oxfords.

Take solos, for instance. It's impossible to imagine jazz without them. But they actually didn't become an established part of the jazz vocabulary until Armstrong helped popularize them. Seventy years later, his solos are still revered for their audacity and virtuosity.

In the 1950s, when his popularity became too big to be contained within our borders, he accepted an invitation from the State Department to act as an American goodwill ambassador around the world. And when he became the last jazz musician to hit #1 on the Billboard pop chart, he beat the Beatles to do it.

Instead of a giant leap, Louis Armstrong delivered one giant free-form crazy jazz groove for mankind.

Not bad for a kid whose first experience with a trumpet was as a guest in a New Orleans correction home for wayward boys. If only today's schools were as enlightened as that reformatory was.



There's plenty of brain to go around. Give more to art.

LOUIS THE FIRST.

Ask almost any parent, and they'll say arts education is very important to their child's well-being. Virtually every study shows that moms and dads like the effects the arts have on their children. They like that dance and music and painting and drama teach kids to be more tolerant and open. They like that they allow boys and girls to express themselves creatively. And they appreciate that the arts help promote individuality, bolster self-confidence while also improving overall academic performance.

Which makes it so surprising that the arts have been allowed to virtually disappear from our schools. And our children's lives.

THIS IS WHAT HORNS ARE FOR.

A little art is not enough. If you think the hour or so of art your kids are getting each week isn't nearly their fair share, it's time to make some noise. To find out just how to get involved or for more information on the ways your child can benefit from arts education, please visit us on the web at AmericansForTheArts.org. Just like the great Satchmo, all you need is a little brass.

ART. ASK FOR MORE.

AMERICAN
Educator
Fall 2003

2 **Notebook**

6 **Education for Democracy**

The political system of democracy is "radical, recent, rare. It is our children's inheritance." How to pass it on? How to embed a commitment to it "deeply in their souls"? Over one hundred prominent Americans, from across a wide political and cultural spectrum, signed this statement, which begins to answer these complicated, vitally important questions.

24 **In Pursuit of a "Civic Core"**
A Report on State Standards
By Paul Gagnon

The author finds that despite many good efforts, state standards for secondary-level social studies subjects are either too vague or the topic lists too long—either way, the core ideas and events that are indispensable to the formation of young democrats are impossible to discern. What we need is a "civic core," standards that specify a limited set of such ideas and topics. Beyond this, states, communities, and teachers could add additional topics.

32 **Leaving Reality Out**
How Textbooks (Don't) Teach About Tyranny
By Diane Ravitch

To really understand democracy—to understand why our predecessors fought for it, why each generation since has fought to strengthen, expand, and preserve it, why they created the institutions they did—you need to understand democracy's opposite. Trouble is, you'll be hard pressed to find a textbook that reveals the reality of life under tyranny.

39 **Freedom's Opposite**
Recommended Readings on Totalitarianism and Tyranny
By Arch Puddington

Since the textbooks say so little, teachers could use extra background on the realities of tyranny. We offer here a suggested reading list.

43 **Glimpses of Tyranny and Resistance**

Tyrannies come in different forms and produce different horrors. In Rwanda, as in Hitler's Germany and elsewhere, the government used its immense power to foment and unleash ethnic hatred so terrible it produced genocide. In Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini's regime meant harsh treatment of dissidents, the end of academic freedom, book banning, required wearing of the veil—and a secret literature class in which Iranian women were able to find in books a "pocket for freedom" denied them in life. In these excerpts from two outstanding books, we get glimpses of life and tragedy under two tyrannies.

43 *Genocide in Rwanda*
By Philip Gourevitch

47 *Reading Lolita in Tehran*
By Azar Nafisi

Cover illustrated by Sonja Lamut

AMERICAN
Educator

The Professional Journal
of the American
Federation of Teachers
Volume 27, No. 3
Fall 2003

SANDRA FELDMAN
President
American Federation of Teachers
Ruth Wattenberg
editor
Lisa Hansel
assistant editor
Sandra Hendricks
copy/production editor
Jennifer Chang
production/editorial assistant
Jeanine Williams
editorial intern
Andrew Bornstein
designer/art director

American Educator (USPS 008-462)
is published quarterly by the
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001-2079
Telephone: 202-879-4420

American Educator is mailed to all AFT teacher, higher education, and other school-related professional members. Annual subscription price: $1.75 for members. Others may subscribe by mailing $8 by check or money order to the address above.

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices.
Postmaster: Send address changes to
American Educator
555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001-2079

Subscribers: To change your address, please cut out your label with code numbers from the back of the magazine and mail it with your new address to the address above.

American Educator cannot assume responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts. Please allow a minimum of four weeks for copyright permission requests.

Letters to the editor may be sent by regular mail to the address above or via e-mail to amered@aft.org.

Signed articles and advertisements do not necessarily represent the viewpoints or policies of the American Federation of Teachers.

General advertising office
555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001-2079
Telephone: 202-879-4420

Advertising Sales Representative
Peter Li, Inc.
801 Wells St., Suite 901
Chicago, IL 60607
800-799-5080
312-939-1344

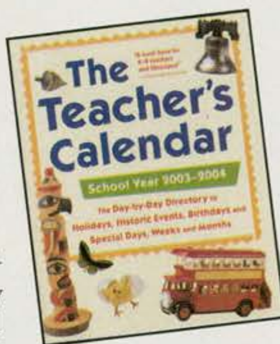
American Educator is produced with the assistance of members of Local 2, Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, and members of AFT Staff Union. Composition and printing are done in 100 percent union shops.
© American Federation of Teachers, 2003.

mjklmk

NOTEBOOK

Everyday Celebrations To Spark Up Lessons

Breaking the sound barrier, the anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr. winning the Nobel Peace Prize, as well as Dwight D. Eisenhower's birthday and a Lewis and Clark Bicentennial event—these all fall on October 14th. With the *Teacher's Calendar,* each day offers an array of historical events, presidential proclamations, astronomical phenomena, and religious holidays to inspire a new lesson plan or just bring a fun fact to the classroom. While most entries in the calendar are a short paragraph, dozens of topics particularly relevant for K-8 classes—like Thomas Edison's birthday, the anniversary of the Titanic sinking, the 1963 March on Washington, and Arbor Day—are explored in sidebars that offer a little more background information along with books and Web sites. If you purchase a *Teacher's Calendar*, be sure to check out the resources in the back: facts about U.S. presidents, contact information for senators and governors, and even the 2003 American Library Association's children's books awards. To order a copy from the publisher, McGraw-Hill, go to **http://books.mcgraw-hill.com/** or call 800-262-4729.



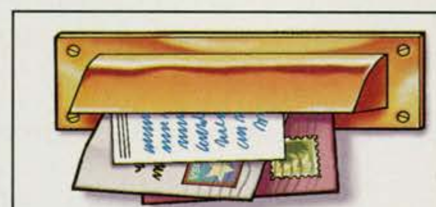
Let Tiger Woods Help Educate Your Students

Looking for a way to create an afterschool program, expand academic and career counseling, offer parenting classes, or improve professional development? The Tiger Woods Foundation would like to help. The Foundation supports education, youth development, parenting, and health organizations or projects in urban areas. Grants are awarded four times a year, with proposals due by the first of November, May, August, and February. The main body of the proposal is limited to four pages, so this is a good opportunity for educators with little to no grant-writing experience. To get started, read the full description at **www.twfound.org/grants/funding.sps?section=grants&sid=941&lid=1&gra=0**.

Report on Civic Participation

Two hundred years ago, fostering an able, active citizenry was the central argument for establishing free common schools—and today it remains a key concern of our educational system: witness the theme of this issue of *American Educator.*

According to *The Civic Mission of Schools,* a report published by the Carnegie Corporation and The Center



Write Us!

We welcome comments on *American Educator* articles. Address letters to Editor, *American Educator*, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, DC 20001 or via e-mail at **amered@aft.org**. Letters selected may be edited for space and clarity and must include your complete address and phone number or e-mail address so we may contact you if necessary.

for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), there are many signs that students aren't taking to their civic roles with the enthusiasm we'd love to see. The report lays out strong evidence that student knowledge of history and civics is too low, that students have little interest in public affairs, and that they have little desire to vote. "Education for Democracy," in this issue of *American Educator,* draws on some of this evidence.

The report offers preliminary research suggesting that selected strategies, such as engaging students in debates of current issues and student government, may increase subsequent student participation in voting and other civic activities. The full report is online at **www.civicmissionofschools.org/**.

Display Freedom's Spread in Your Classroom

Each year Freedom House tracks the spread of democracy throughout the world with a survey called Freedom in the World. Now in its 30th year, the annual reports reveal some remarkable accomplishments: Back in 1972, 35 percent of the world's population lived in free countries; today 44 percent enjoy such freedom.

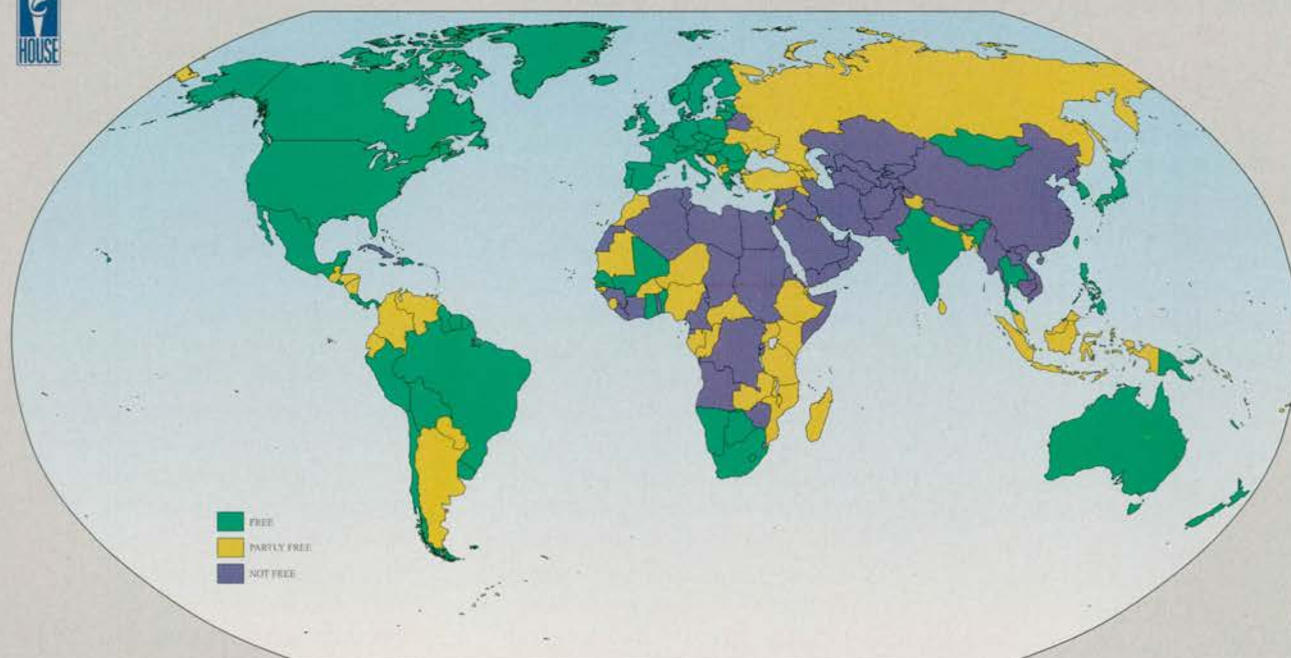
The survey designates countries as free if citizens have a broad range of political and civil rights, partly free if rights are somewhat limited, and not free if even the most basic rights are not recognized. Political and civil rights are rated on questions such as:

- Are the legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?
- Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system open to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?
- Are there free trade unions and peasant organizations or equivalents, and is there effective collective bargaining? Are there free professional and other private organizations?
- Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free of extensive political indoctrination?
- Does the rule of law prevail in civil and criminal matters? Is the population treated equally under the law? Are police under direct civilian control?
- Are property rights secure? Do citizens have the right to establish private businesses? Is private business activity unduly influenced by government officials, the security forces, or organized crime?

Since 1972, the number of free countries rose from 43 to 89 while the partly free countries increased from 38 to 55 and, most importantly, the not free countries declined from 69 to 48. Today, almost 60 percent of the 2.2 billion people enduring the lack of freedom live in just one country—China. But today's concerns are not just restricted to places like China. Nearly one-quarter of the world's electoral democracies are on shaky ground, lacking stable rule of law and widespread respect for human rights. Nevertheless, the past 30 years established a general march toward respecting the inherent rights of all people.

To learn more about Freedom in the World, go to **www.freedomhouse.org/research/survey2002.htm**. *And to order a free, poster-size Map of Freedom for your classroom, call (212) 514-8040.*

MAP OF FREEDOM 2003



DUE TO THE SMALL SIZE, THIS MAP OMITS THE NAMES OF COUNTRIES AND BODIES OF WATER AS WELL AS SMALL PLACES SUCH AS CHECHNYA AND MONACO. FOR A COMPLETE MAP, SEE THE WEB SITE.

NOTEBOOK

The No Child Left Behind Law

For over a decade, there's been an effort to establish in American education a system of "standards and accountability" in which standards would set forth what students should know and be able to do in each grade/subject; aligned assessments would help measure students' and schools' progress toward these standards; and, in different ways, students, schools, and schoolpeople would be held accountable for that progress.

Until recently, efforts to bring standards and accountability to education have been mainly the province of states and districts. But with the adoption of the No Child Left Behind Act on January 8, 2002, the federal government became a major influence. What should we expect as its timelines begin to take effect?

The New Law Is a Challenge *and* an Opportunity

Is the new law an obstacle to improved education or an opportunity to more tightly focus schools on the most important educational aims and strengthen the growing public confidence in public schools? (For evidence of the growing public confidence, see "High Standards," American Educator, *Notebook, Summer 2003,* ***www.aft.org/american_educator/summer2003/notebook.html****.) That's the question AFT President Sandra Feldman put to the 3,000 AFT members who attended this summer's AFT QuEST educational issues conference.*

Her answer: It's both. Noting that some critics of the law call it "the most anti-public school legislation ever" and some public school advocates call it the right "medicine," Feldman stated that, "As with most things, the truth lies somewhere in the middle—with a lot yet to be revealed in the law's implementation—and most especially in the willingness of the Bush Administration and the Congress to fund its mandates."

Feldman noted that "this union has always stood up to radicals who push destructive schemes in the name of reform," and promised members that they could "continue to count on that, again and again." But, she continued, "this union and its members have also always understood that some criticisms of public education are legitimate. Often, in fact, we're the first to point out problems and the first to propose solutions—and we're going to carry on that proud tradition."

She called the federal No Child Left Behind Act, with its newly reshaped Title I provisions, the latest "test of our ability to be constructive, responsive, and creative while simultaneously fighting and protecting against the indefensible." The following excerpts are condensed from her speech.

NCLB and Teacher Qualifications

NCLB requires that all newly hired teachers be "highly qualified" and that veteran teachers meet the "highly qualified" standard by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. Feldman addressed the opportunities, as well as the problems, that this presents:

"[Until now, it's been standard practice for states to have] reams of fairly useless rules and regulations for teachers to follow [but nevertheless to] fail to define what competent teaching actually is.... Yet here is this new law requiring states to provide every classroom with a highly qualified teacher.... A lot of state and district administrators don't like this—after all, it's a lot cheaper and more convenient to recruit for hard-to-staff schools by waiving qualifications or assigning teachers out of field. But, that is a totally unacceptable substitute for providing the salaries and working conditions necessary to ensure an adequate supply of qualified teachers—in every field and for every school.

Now for the first time, because of this law, each state is being forced to develop real standards for the skills and knowledge that qualified teachers should have, as well as a system for seeing whether these standards have been met.

Opportunity or challenge? Both.

There are real problems that have to be addressed.... [These new requirements] could be mishandled in ways that could drive a lot of talented people out of the classroom.... Retesting experienced teachers...is one sure way to do that. Another sure way is to use the law's teacher-quality provision as a backdoor to wipe out qualifications for teaching altogether.

We're not going to stand idly by and let that happen.... Yet, if all we do is focus on the potential harm that can be done by the law, then we'll be doing a disservice to our students, our profession, our union, and to each and every individual teacher.

Some states are open to seeing the law's provision as an opportunity to replace meaningless requirements with high standards and sound practices for qualifying teachers, including improvements in teacher education, induction and professional development programs, and perhaps even an end to out-of-license teaching.

To the credit of affiliate leaders across the country, the AFT has already started to work with community allies, superintendents, and state education departments to come up with ways to address these provisions to the benefit of students, teachers, and the profession as a whole."

NCLB and Accountability

In 1994 when standards, testing, and accountability provisions were added to the

old Title I law, there were many problems—many similar to those in the new law. The 1994 law required that Title I students be brought to higher standards quickly; as with this new law, the earlier law also failed to require that teachers be given the necessary training, materials, or other resources. Tests often didn't align to standards, and accountability was often meted out with gratuitous harshness (and with no positive effects for kids). With regard to the earlier and current laws, Feldman said:

"The AFT protested and worked to ameliorate the wrong-headed parts of that law. But, in the AFT way, we did more than just protest. Together, we continued to fight for our vision of how to do this right—from district offices to state capitols, while simultaneously working ourselves to the bone to seize every opportunity that Title I provided, to do what we've pressed for from the first day of our history: improve the education of the most vulnerable children in this land.

The result was our best work ever. AFT leaders and members across the country did an extraordinary job of transforming the pressure of the new Title I into working with parents, community groups, administrators, and school board members to make turning around low-performing schools a top priority; getting research on what works to help kids learn and discovering proven programs; seeking major improvements in the standards and the tests; insisting on professional development that was actually helpful; expanding our Educational Research and Dissemination program (ER&D); turning around beginning reading instruction; even writing curriculum because no one else would provide it. And this is just a bare summary.

So, standards, assessment and accountability, not to mention pressure, aren't exactly new to us. And if we didn't back away from Title I and the standards movement at a time when every mistake in the book was being made by states and districts first learning to deal with these changes because—pain notwithstanding—we believed so strongly that this was right for our students, then we're not about to do it now. We are not going to put ourselves above a program whose resources, inadequate though they are, continue to be so desperately needed by our poorest students and most underfunded schools.

But, neither are we going to give up our right—indeed, our obligation—to criticize, to point out what's wrong, and to seek improvements."

MICHAEL CAMPBELL

AFT President Sandra Feldman addresses the 2003 QuEST conference on the No Child Left Behind law.

The crux of the problem with the accountability portion of this law is the formula for what's called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Under the law, all schools generally must raise achievement so that all their students are "proficient" within 12 years. Feldman explained:

"This means that schools whose students are way behind from the start have to make far, far more annual progress—both on average and with each of their subgroups—than schools already at or beyond the state's starting point. Indeed, the experts told us—and we and they tried to tell Congress—that this AYP formula is not only statistically stacked against diverse schools; it also calls on most high-poverty schools—with their well-documented lack of resources—to achieve a rate of academic progress that has never before been seen—not in our most advantaged schools and not even in so-called world-class school systems.

Moreover, despite the word "progress" in "adequate yearly progress," the formula doesn't always give credit for progress. A school may make great progress in a year—let's say 6 points—but if the predetermined target is 7 points, tough luck; like the school that made no progress, it will be named a school "needing improvement" and certain requirements may kick in.

Now, AFT has always believed all children can learn and that the effects of poverty can be overcome with the right conditions and supports. I believe no child should have to go to a school we wouldn't want our own to attend. And we have worked hard to achieve that goal—and we are making great progress.

But this AYP formula staggers the imagination and maybe even human capacity. Furthermore, this formula could put a large number of good schools on the "failing" list—which, since states are then required to help them, could result in even less money to help schools that are really in trouble.

You can be absolutely sure that we are watching all of this very closely. And, again, we're doing this in the AFT way: protesting, yes—but also gathering the evidence.

We are already working with measurement experts to evaluate whether, for example, the annual AYP targets set for various districts and schools are indeed attainable, and whether a school is being identified for sanctions because of statistical anomalies or for genuine academic reasons....

We will provide that evidence...and mobilize...to get changes.... Because accountability for that which is attainable is legitimate. But accountability for that which is humanly impossible, laudable as it may sound, is unacceptable."

NCLB Resources

To read President Feldman's full speech at QuEST, go to **www.aft.org/presscenter/feldman_quest03.html**. NCLB is fully explained at **www.aft.org/esea/**—you'll find a summary of the law, as well as Q&A packets on key issues like school improvement, school choice, and using funds. With the NEA, AFT developed a booklet on the law's teacher-quality requirements, which is available at **www.aft.org/edissues/downloads/ESEANEAAFT.pdf**.

Education for Democracy

A Statement Signed by Over 100 Distinguished Leaders

In recognition of the vital role our public schools play in the preparation of citizens and the creation of a common civic culture, a broad cross section of prominent Americans from various fields—education, government, public policy, labor, business, civil and human rights—came together in 1987 to issue *Education for Democracy: A Statement of Principles*. The purpose of this call was to offer perspective and encouragement to teachers and schools as they sought to instill in our youngsters a deep attachment to democratic values and institutions. The document was widely read and well-received.

More than 15 years have now passed, and much has happened during that period. On the education front, the standards movement was born—the long overdue idea that a common core and orderly sequence of learning in each of the major subject fields, including history/social studies, should be set forth in specific terms as a guide for curricular materials and teaching. This effort continues, with all the rough edges one would expect of something new and big. But there is wide consensus that the job of refinement is indeed a worthy one, and good evidence that the movement has brought renewed emphasis both to content and to accountability. We support and salute this historic undertaking.

Regarding the fate of democracy in the world, events have also been dramatic. The Soviet Union, under the grip of Communist totalitarianism for more than 70 years, disintegrated. The Berlin Wall was torn down by people thirsty for freedom. More than a dozen countries emerged from behind the Iron Curtain. Apartheid rule ended in South Africa and Pinochet's regime was swept away in Chile. All was not progress, though: When the fresh winds of democracy reached Tiananmen Square, they were brutally suppressed by the Chinese authorities. Who among us will ever forget the image of the young man—alone and undaunted—facing down the oncoming tanks?

Overall, however, the trend seemed to be toward the democratic model. Some were even predicting the "end of history"—the idea that liberal free-market democracies would eventually become the universal norm. Then came September 11, 2001: the sudden and brutal attack on our country. History was in the saddle again, its early demise a premature call. A new tyranny—Islamist extremism—confronted us, striking at the heart of our cities and symbols. The issue of defending our democracy was no longer an abstraction, the question of civic education no longer an option. As more than one commentator observed, "We were attacked for being American. We should at least know what being American means."[1] We revisit that question now, and the many others that surround and underlie it.

Our purpose, once again, is to strengthen schools' resolve to consciously impart to students the ideals and values on which our free society rests. While our emphasis is on the schools, we recognize, as Lincoln understood so well, that

---

The Education for Democracy initiative is a project of the Albert Shanker Institute. The Institute, named in honor of the late president of the AFT, works in three broad areas: children's education, unions as advocates for quality, and both civic education and freedom of association in the public life of democracies.

The principal author of the document published here is Elizabeth McPike, former editor of American Educator. *Sections of this document are drawn from the original* Education for Democracy: A Statement of Principles *(1987), whose principal author was historian Paul Gagnon, now senior research associate at Boston University's Center for School Improvement. The 1987 statement was a joint undertaking of the AFT, the Educational Excellence Network, and Freedom House. See the back cover for ordering information.*

ILLUSTRATED BY NENAD JAKESEVIC

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS
TO BE SELF EVIDENT

the preparation of citizens is a task too great for our schools alone. Outraged by a series of vicious mob actions, Lincoln spoke in 1838 to the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois, about the need for all the major institutions of society—families, churches, schools, universities, courts, government—to share responsibility for instilling democratic values in the nation's citizenry:

> Let the reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap. Let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges. Let it be written in primers, spelling books, and in Almanacs. Let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation.

Lincoln's particular focus on this occasion was the rule of law, but his insistence that *all of society* join in the task of making citizens extends to the *whole composite of democratic values*—and is as true today as it was in 1838. Our primary and secondary schools do not exist in a vacuum. They cannot succeed in their civic mission without a supportive culture. The prevailing ideas of that larger culture, for better or for worse, seep through the bricks and mortar of their walls. We begin, then, by trying to take the temperature of the times in which we live.

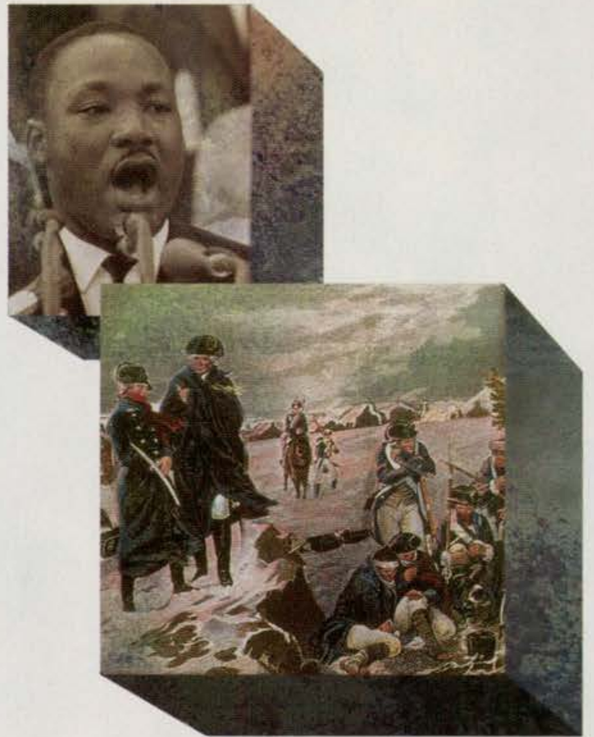
Why We Are Concerned

Consider first this description of how Americans in the mid-19th century observed one of our most venerated national holidays:

> On May 30, 1868, our first official Memorial Day, children all over America picked wild flowers and placed them on the graves of soldiers. In Washington, D.C., people wore mourning scarves and decorated the graves of unknown men who had died at the Battle of Bull Run. Four thousand citizens marched to the National Cemetery in Richmond and marked each of 7,000 graves with a miniature American flag. In Baltimore, disabled veterans witnessed ceremonies from horse-drawn wagons. Across the nation, governors and generals extolled bravery and self sacrifice. Cannons fired. Ministers gave thanks for a reunited nation and the abolition of slavery and searched for God's purpose behind the slaughter of 620,000 soldiers. From Nantucket to San Francisco, from North Carolina to Texas, in large and small towns, Americans honored their Civil War dead by creating statues and memorials on an unprecedented scale.[2]

Now consider by contrast this recent description of children's understanding of the meaning of Memorial Day: In December 2000, Congress established the White House Commission on the National Moment of Remembrance to help recover Memorial Day's meaning and to encourage acts of remembrance throughout the year. "The idea for the Commission was born in 1996, when children touring Washington,

The political system of democracy . . . is radical, recent, rare. It is our children's inheritance.



D.C., were asked what Memorial Day meant to them and they responded, 'That's the day the pools open.' "[3]

Something has gone awry, and this is not the only disquieting sign we see. We now have convincing evidence that our students are woefully lacking in a knowledge of our past, of who we are as Americans. In its 2001 assessment of students' knowledge of U.S. history, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that 69 percent of 12th-graders did not know the purpose of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Only 35 percent of 8th-graders understood the meaning of "Jim Crow" laws, and only 29 percent could give an "appropriate" or "partial" explanation of the purpose of checks and balances in the Constitution. The percentage of high-schoolers scoring at the proficient or advanced level in U.S. history was a mere 11 percent. And in the most recent NAEP Civics Assessment, 75 percent of students scored at "basic" or "below basic" levels. Nor is this lack of common civic knowledge limited to the pre-collegiate level. In a recent survey of seniors at the nation's 55 most elite colleges and universities, 81 percent earned an F or D when quizzed on 32 American history questions drawn from a typical high school curriculum—not surprising given that *not a single one* of these institutions requires a course in U.S. history.[4] The historian David McCullough has re-

marked that in his 25 years of lecturing, he's seen a steady decline in students' historical sense: "I don't think there's any question whatsoever that the students in our institutes of higher learning have less grasp, less understanding, less knowledge of American history than ever before."[5]

Attitudes toward political involvement have also deteriorated. Over the last 30 years, the percentage of young people (under 25 years of age) who vote has dropped by about 15 percentage points, and when asked in the year 2000, only five percent of the 18-to-25 age group said they follow public affairs on a regular basis, down significantly from a generation ago.[6]

Further, many of our students have been left to flounder in a state of moral confusion. Following a visit to Yale in October of 2001, when the ashes of 9/11 were still being sifted through, the commentator David Brooks made this observation:

> If I had to summarize the frustration that some of the students expressed, I would say this: On campus they found themselves wrapped in a haze of relativism. There were words and jargon and ideas everywhere, but nothing solid that would enable a person to climb from one idea to the next. These students were trying to form judgments, yet were blocked by the accumulated habits of non-judgmentalism.[7]

Additional unsettling insights come from a 1999 study conducted by the Center on Adolescence at Stanford University under the direction of William Damon. The study probed young adults' views about themselves and society:

> What struck us was not only what these young people said but also what they did not say. They showed little interest in people outside their immediate circle of friends and relatives (other than fictional media characters and entertainment or sport figures); little awareness of current events; and virtually no expressions of social concern, political opinion, civic duty, patriotic emotion, a sense of citizenship in any form.
>
> For example, when asked what American citizenship meant to him, one student replied, "We just had that the other day in history. I forget what it was." Another said, "I mean being American is not really special.... I don't find being an American citizen very important," and yet another said, "I don't know, I figure everybody is a citizen so it really shouldn't mean nothing...." Although such statements are by no means universal, neither are they atypical. In fact, they are strikingly similar to sentiments that I hear from students in every formal or informal setting that I visit.[8]

What has gone wrong, and what to do? Why this loosening from our heritage, this disconnect from the American story? Where is the dignity owed to memory, the gratitude for the freedoms we enjoy? What is the source of the detachment, the indifference to the common good? Why the lack of moral clarity? What was different about the citizens of 1868, who strew flowers across the land on Memorial Day, and the citizens of today, who are more likely to be found checking out the special Memorial Day sales at the local mall? Is it that those past citizens were closer to the experience of the American Revolution and remembered what it was about? Is it that they were agonizingly close to the experience of human bondage and the Civil War and knew that their sons, brothers, and husbands had warred over the most fundamental issues of human dignity? Is it that more of them were closer to the experience of immigration and retained poignant images of why their parents or grandparents had fled other lands? Probably some or all of that. Perhaps more.

These would be questions to ponder at any moment, but never more consequentially than now, when the graves at Ground Zero are still fresh in our memory. It may be that September 11 presents us with a moment, an opportunity for civic renewal. Recent studies show that the attacks have "fuel[ed] positive feelings towards political participation and government for significant majorities of young adults." Seventy percent of young people say they are now "somewhat more likely to participate in politics and voting, including a full third (34 percent) who say they are now *much* more likely to participate."[9] Trust in government is also at a new modern high among young people. The challenge is to harness these feelings and this new energy into the creation of a deep and lasting civic engagement.

We Are Not Born Democrats

The Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski opened his 1986 Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities by noting that the most famous single sentence ever written in the Western hemisphere was probably the one that announced this country's beginning: "We hold these truths to be self-evident...."

These words continue to move the world. The political system of democracy that is built upon them is radical, recent, rare. It is our children's inheritance. We must not think we can give it to them casually. We must embed it so deeply in their souls that no one can take it away.

We the undersigned come together as citizens of diverse political persuasion but united as partisans of democracy to address this great mission. Our inquiry—and our concern—rests on three convictions:

First, that democracy is the worthiest form of human governance ever conceived.

Second, we cannot take its survival or its spread—or its perfection in practice —for granted. We must transmit to each new generation the political vision of liberty and equality that unites us as Americans, and a deep loyalty to the political institutions put together to fulfill that vision.

Third, while recognizing that democracy found its first, deepest, and most sustained roots in the West, we explicitly reject the notion that democracy is a uniquely Western value. We believe that liberty and self-governance, based as they are in a belief in the dignity of every human person, are the natural birthright of all people.

The values and habits upon which democracy rests are neither revealed truths nor innate habits. There is no evi-

dence that we are born with them. Devotion to human dignity and freedom, to equal rights, to social and economic justice, to the rule of law, to civility and truth, to tolerance of diversity, to mutual assistance, to personal and civic responsibility, to self-restraint and self-respect—all these must be taught and learned and practiced. They cannot be taken for granted or regarded as merely one set of options against which any other may be accepted as equally worthy.

We call on our schools to purposely impart to their students the learning necessary for an informed, reasoned allegiance to the ideals of a free society. We want our graduates to come out of school possessing the mature political judgment Thomas Jefferson hoped for, an education that will "enable every man to judge for himself what will secure or endanger his freedom." Our students must learn about democracy's short and troubled tenure in human history. They must comprehend its vulnerabilities. They must recognize and accept their responsibility for preserving and extending their political inheritance.

Without knowledge of our own struggle for civil rights, how much can students understand of democracy's capacity to respond to problems and to reform? In ignorance of the Second World War and its aftermath, how much can they grasp of the cost and necessity of defending democracy in the world? Having never debated and discussed how the world came to be as it is, the democratic citizen will not know what is worth defending, what should be changed, and which imposed orthodoxies must be resisted. As the late Albert Shanker observed:

> If a youngster has to take a wild guess that Stalin is either an Olympic athlete or a Renaissance painter, he can't have much of a grasp of the terrors of a totalitarian society as a basis for comparison to his own life.[10]

We do not ask for propaganda, for crash courses in the right attitudes, or for knee-jerk patriotic drill. We do not want to capsulize democracy's arguments into slogans, or pious texts, or bright debaters' points. The history and nature and needs of democracy are much too serious and subtle for that.

Education for democracy is not indoctrination, which is the deliberate exclusion or distortion of studies in order to induce belief by irrational means. We do not propose to exclude the honest study of the doctrines and systems of others. Nor to censor history—our own or others'—as closed societies do, nor to hide our flaws or explain them away. We can afford to present ourselves in the totality of our acts. And we can afford to tell the truth about others, even when it favors them and complicates that which indoctrination would keep simple and comforting.

And then we leave it to our students to apply their knowledge, values, and experiences to the world they must create, confident that they will find their own best ways of doing so, on the basis of free, uncoerced thought.

The kind of critical thinking we wish to encourage must rest on a solid basis of factual knowledge. We reject the educational theory that emphasizes "learning skills" over content and that considers any kind of curricular content to be as good as any other. We insist, on the contrary, that the central ideas, events, people, and works that have shaped our world, for good and ill, constitute an essential not an optional body of knowledge.

How Youngsters Come To Cherish Their Freedom

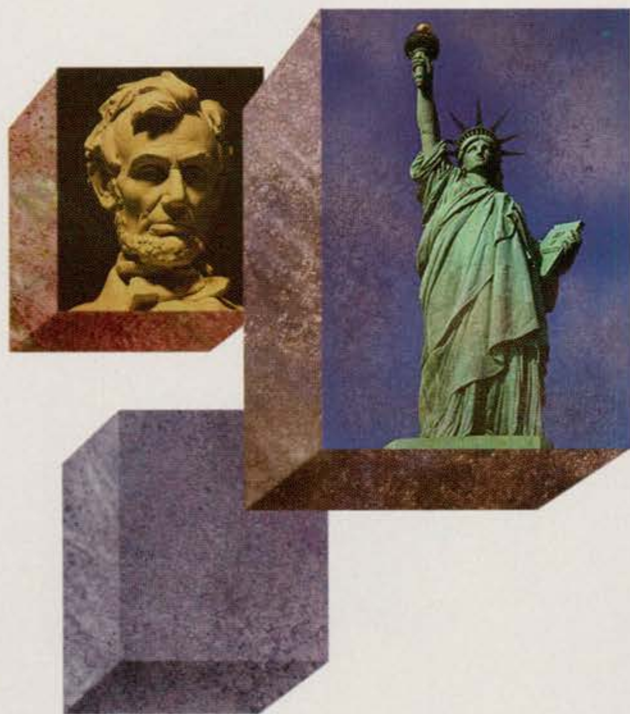
Our charge, put simply, is this: How do we instill in our youngsters an understanding of and an appreciation for their stunning political heritage? How do we educate citizens? How do we raise democrats? These are not simple questions. The Founding Fathers pondered them. Lincoln, perhaps more than any other, worried about them. Political philosophers have debated them since the Greeks. Is the answer found in knowledge? Experience? Temperament? Is simply living in a democracy sufficient—does one breathe in the bedrock values of liberty, opportunity, tolerance, the rule of law?

While the focus of this document is on the role education can play, it is revealing to reflect, and to have our students reflect, upon the many different ways people acquire some piece of the democratic idea—and lodge it deep in their souls.

We begin, then, with three stories. The first illustrates some of the many nuances of civic education and the strong influence the common school culture can have upon youngsters. The two that follow show how other formative experiences can infuse a deep appreciation for democracy and an awareness of the fragility of what we often take for granted:

> Going to school in multiracial rural California in the early 1960s, I did not merely hear about the checks and balances of the Constitution or learn a repertoire of patriotic songs and brief life stories of Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln. My classmates and I also developed a sense of American exceptionalism—a deep appreciation for just how distinctive the culture of the United States had proved to be over two centuries and more, and how it belonged to and benefited all of us....
>
> The class was about 65 percent Mexican-American, 10 percent Asian and African-American, the rest mostly poor rural whites whose parents had fled the Dust Bowl. Yet I cannot recall a single reference by our teacher, a native Oklahoman, to race, class, or gender, which might so easily have divided us. Instead, we repeatedly heard that President Lincoln, Mark Twain, and John Henry belonged to a heritage we all shared—that we natives had no more claim on FDR or Guadalcanal than did the new arrivals from Oaxaca or the Punjab.
>
> ...The most recent immigrants from Mexico, the Philippines, and India often reminded us more complacent native students just how lucky we were to live in the United States. Even when impoverished newcomers identified with past victims of American intolerance, they still believed that they were beneficiaries of a system that could and would improve and thus always offer them more advantages than any al-

"We repeatedly heard that President Lincoln, Mark Twain, and John Henry belonged to a heritage we all shared—that we natives had no more claim on FDR or Guadalcanal than did the new arrivals from Oaxaca or the Punjab."



ternative.... Contrary to today's popular mythology about our past, slavery and exploitation were not taboo subjects then. Yes, they were evils, we learned; but their amelioration exemplified the constant moral development that was possible and normal in a country like the United States.

—*Victor Davis Hanson*
"The Civic Education America Needs"[11]

I grew up in secure and comfortable circumstances, give or take an emotional problem or two; but an awareness of the fragility of civilization was instilled early, though subliminally, by the presence in London during my childhood of numbers of unreconstructed bomb sites that were like the gaps between the rotting teeth in an old man's mouth. Often I played in small urban wildernesses of weeds and rubble, and rather regretted their gradual disappearance; but even so, I could hardly fail to see, in the broken fragments of human artifacts and in the plasterwork with wallpaper still attached, the meaning of the destruction that had been wrought before I was born....

The Blitz was within every adult's living memory: my mother's apartment building had been bombed, and she woke one morning with half of it gone, one of her rooms now open directly to the air. In my house, as in many other households, there was a multivolume pictorial history of the war, over which I pored for entire mornings, or afternoons, until I knew every picture by heart. One of them was ever present in my mind when I entered a bomb shelter with my friends: that of two young children, both blind, in just such a shelter, their sightless eyes turned upward to the sound of the explosions above them, a heartrending look of incomprehension on their faces.

More than anything else, however, the fact that my mother was herself a refugee from Nazi Germany contributed to my awareness that security—the feeling that nothing could change seriously for the worse, and that the life you had was invulnerable—was illusory and even dangerous.

—*Theodore Dalrymple*
"What We Have to Lose"[12]

Parents are actually quite concerned—even somewhat alarmed—by a threatening sense that something, some part of America's identity as a nation, is eroding and slipping away.... A Secaucus, New Jersey, parent had this story to tell: "There are a lot of freedoms that we very often take for granted. We recently took a friend to the Statue of Liberty. He was an immigrant from China whose family is not allowed to leave, and he fell to his knees and kissed the ground. And it was the most moving thing I ever saw in my life because I realized the basic things we take for granted. My children were awed, just absolutely dumbstruck. And you know teenagers are hardly ever without something to say."

—From *A Lot To Be Thankful For: What Parents Want Children To Learn About America*
Public Agenda Report, 1998

These vignettes help us reflect on some of the elements that compose the democratic idea and the democratic temper. We should collect more such stories, ones that help us delve deeply into this complex topic—and ones that stir us. We should include in our democratic anthology the struggles taking place this very moment: No matter how brutal the tyranny they face, nor how frightening the consequences

to themselves, there are people in every part of the globe who, with courage, determination, and ingenuity, are developing ways to survive—and to resist. From these inspiring contemporary accounts, students will see that freedom's cry is truly universal and its narrative far from finished.

We should draw too from the deep truths found in good literature. Students will not soon forget Atticus's devotion to equality under the law in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. They will remember Huck Finn daring to choose nonracial friendship over the prejudices of the day. Younger children can learn from *Crow Boy*, a story set in a small Japanese village, that cruelty—like all human vice—is a universal phenomenon, as is the capacity for empathy and kindness to overcome it. And we can all be reminded by *All the Places To Love*, and the other works by Patricia MacLachlan, that large, abstract allegiances (such as love of country) begin with small, particular ones.

We should share these stories with our students, for youngsters need characterizations of the democratic vision that will resonate in their minds and in their hearts. They are wary of George Washington and the Cherry Tree pieties. Without giving up the best of the old, we need a new collection of democratic stories, including ones that give flesh to the democratic creed. By this shall they know us.

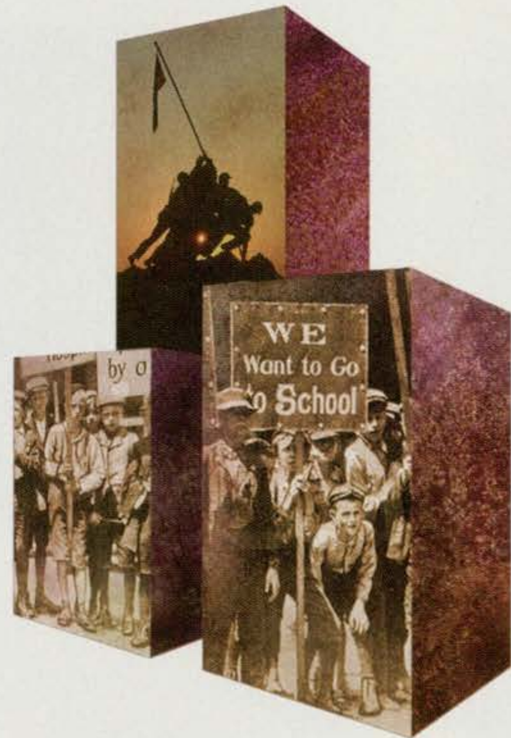
The Education We Hope For

What specifically must our schools teach in order to prepare young democrats? We propose four essentials:

1. A robust history/social studies curriculum, starting in the elementary years and continuing through every year of schooling;
2. A full and honest teaching of the American story;
3. An unvarnished account of what life has been and is like in nondemocratic societies; and
4. A cultivation of the virtues essential to a healthy democracy.

We now take up each of these in turn.

Only history can give students an appreciation for how long and hard and tangled the road to liberty and equality has been.
Only history can place them at the center of the battles—philosophical, political, military—that have determined our fate.



A Robust History Curriculum

A serious engagement with history is essential to the nurturing of the democratic citizen. Only history can give students an appreciation for how long and hard and tangled the road to liberty and equality has been. Only history can place them at the center of the battles—philosophical, political, military—that have determined our fate, and stir them with the stories of those who stood willing to sacrifice all they possessed to those battles. History allows students to witness endless natural experiments—ones that cannot be reproduced in the laboratories of human behavior—that illuminate which conditions proved toxic to democracy, and which nourished it. History helps students recognize antidemocratic ideas, in all their disguises, thus preparing them for the next—inevitable—false colors. History imparts a deeper understanding of the truly radical ideas upon which democracy is built, and of the institutions established to bring life and permanence to those ideas. History grounds students in reality, allowing them to see the limits imposed by human nature and protecting them from utopian fantasies. History tempers self-righteousness, by providing the perspective students need to compare themselves with people of other times, other places. History teaches young citizens about unexpected consequences and the trade-offs that choice imposes. History forces them to stand with those who had to make difficult decisions, so that they know the demands of responsibility and resist the easy shots of those who breathe only the pure air of the sidelines. History accustoms students to look behind assertions and appearances, to insist on the "whole story." History also shields them from despair—we have, after all, survived much—and blesses them with the belief that truth is more powerful than the lie, and that a few good people can make all the difference.

The study of the past does something else: It gives youngsters a sense of historical consciousness—a connection and continuity with those who came before. This feeling, which is one of both belonging and responsibility, begins with knowledge but touches something that knowledge cannot reach: the mystic chords of memory that Lincoln immortalized. In feeling the presence of the past in their lives, students begin to see that there is a path that has been made ready for them, one on which they can find their place, extend into uncharted territory, and leave their footprint.

Finally, in the proudly pluralistic society that is so uniquely American, the mastery of a common core of history binds us together, creates a common civic identity based on a patriotism of principles, and unites us in the shared undertaking that is both our past and our future.

The study of history should begin in the primary grades. We know from both common sense and cognitive science that knowledge is the only reliable basis for more knowledge, that knowledge builds upon itself in a slow cumulative march, and that we must start early with a carefully crafted, sequential curriculum. We have learned, particularly from the experience of hundreds of schools across the country that follow the Core Knowledge curriculum, that young children are eager to learn about the world. In contrast to the typical second-grade social studies texts, with their vacuous, boring topics such as "We Work Together" and "Our Needs and Wants," second-grade Core Knowledge students are beginning to learn about the geography and ancient civilizations of Asia, the importance to the world of early Chinese inventions, the new kind of government being born in Athens, the role James Madison played in the writing of the American Constitution, the development of the steamboat and the building of the Erie Canal, and so forth.[13]

Proceeding into the middle grades and high school, a strong history/social studies curriculum would devote at least six years to history, geography, civics, and economics, with history as the integrative core. United States and World History, segmented by era, would each receive three years, leaving a year of electives in middle school and in high school. (For extensive detail on a model curriculum, see *Educating Democracy: State Standards To Ensure a Civic Core* by Paul Gagnon for the Albert Shanker Institute, excerpted in the following article.)

All the social science topics would be taught together around the chronological narrative, so that each subject enlivens the other. Political scientist Diana Schaub offers an example of how questions of political philosophy might be incorporated:

> Selections from Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* can be a wonderful way for even quite young children, and certainly for high schoolers, to reflect on the various meanings and preconditions of freedom.
>
> Douglass's first act of self-emancipation was not his bodily flight north to freedom, but rather his spiritual flight—his ingenious and laborious self-education. The young Frederick had heard his master rage about the dangers of slaves learning to read. He had overheard his master say that "If a slave learns to read…it will forever unfit him to be a slave." This speech, Douglass later wrote, was "the first decidedly anti-slavery lecture" he had heard, for from that moment he "understood the direct pathway from slavery to freedom." On his own, spurred by his conviction of the transformative power of knowledge, Douglass taught himself to read.
>
> His master was right about the incompatibility of literacy and slavery. With knowledge, the adolescent Douglass became increasingly sullen and obstreperous. He was turned over to a man who was known as a Negro-breaker. After six months of backbreaking labor and the lash, Douglass determined not to submit to the next beating. He defended himself in a two-hour, hand-to-hand fight which the Negro-breaker was unable to win. Douglass was never whipped again. Writing about this incident in his autobiography, Douglass said "I had reached the point at which I was not afraid to die. This spirit made me a freeman in fact, though I still remained a slave in form."
>
> These two episodes provide rich and controversial material for inquiring into the meaning of freedom. Douglass suggests that all men live in a kind of slavery so long as they live in ignorance and fear.[14]

In approaching history instruction, what else can we do to avoid turning all of it into just one long parade of facts, what Henry Ford famously dismissed as "one damned thing after another"?

Addressing this problem, historian Wilfred McClay has spoken about the importance of selectivity and meaningfulness to memory. His insight may help us understand why so many students seem to forget—or never to have learned—so much of the history they are taught:

> Memory is most powerful when it is purposeful and *selective*. It requires a grid, a pattern of organization, a structure within which facts arrange themselves in a particular way, and thereby take on significance. Above all, it requires that we possess stories and narratives that link facts in ways that are both meaningful and truthful, and provide a principle of selection—a way of knowing what facts are worth attending to…. We remember those things that fit a template of meaning, and point to a larger whole. We fail to retain the details that, like wandering orphans, have no connection to anything of abiding concern….The design of our courses and curricula must be an exercise in *triage*, in making hard choices about what gets thrown out of the story, so that the essentials can survive….We need to be willing to identify those things every American student needs to know, and insist upon them...while paring away vigorously at the rest.[15]

We agree—both on the need for compelling theme and narrative, and on paring down the over-stuffed history frameworks and textbooks that now wear down our students

and teachers. One answer is to focus upon the unending drama of the historical struggle for democracy. The overarching story, in both modernized and traditional societies, is the struggle to civilize, to curb the worst impulses of human nature, and to secure freedom of conscience, speech, and assembly; consensual government; the rule of law; the right to own property and to pursue opportunity—Lincoln's "open field"; change without chaos or violence; social justice. The ongoing, worldwide struggle for a free center of "broad, sunlit uplands," in Churchill's phrase, is the best hope of the earth, and we would make it the heart of a reordered curriculum for history and social studies.

Telling the American Story

Our students need and deserve to be told the story of their country—a full and truthful account. An honest rendering of American history would not ignore its serious flaws, past or present. Students should learn about the Trail of Tears, and about the promises made and broken to Chief Joseph. They should learn about the Middle Passage, the Dred Scott decision, the Fugitive Slave Law, and all the degradations and inhumanities of slavery. They should learn about the Triangle Shirt Waist fire and black lung disease, and they should read the 1861 description, "Life in the Iron Mills." They should learn that in the 19th century, the law offered no recourse to a woman whose husband beat her. They should know that in 1890, the average American life expectancy was about 47 years. They should learn about the Know-Nothing Party and the Chinese Exclusion Act. And much more that was wrong.

But an honest account would also tell students about the legislation enacted to end child labor; the establishment of the eight-hour-day and the 40-hour-week, and the safety-and-health regulations that have done so much to protect workers; the provision for a floor of financial security for the elderly, and medical care for the indigent; the establishment of Yellowstone Park (larger than Rhode Island and Delaware combined) and other public preserves, and the many ambitious efforts to clean our rivers and air and restore our forests; the accommodations required for the disabled in building construction, transportation, and employment; the provision for a separate judicial system for juveniles; the mandate to provide an appropriate education for the handicapped; the commitment to give special help to those students whose first language is not English. An honest account will tell students that women—who until 1920 were not even allowed to vote—now occupy seats of honor in the Supreme Court, the Congress, and the President's Cabinet, and as corporate board members, newspaper publishers, law firm partners, and college presidents.

A truthful rendering would also remind students that their country provided the fertile ground for unparalled material and scientific progress, which has contributed so much to the quality—and length—of hundreds of millions of lives. Students can take pride in the fact that American ingenuity has given the world the electric light and the telephone, the alkaline battery and modern air conditioning, nylon and synthetic rubber, the laser and photographic film, the computer and the Internet, jazz, baseball, and the skyscraper. American medical research produced the vaccines for polio, hepatitis B, and yellow fever; and invented the MRI, the CAT scan, and the pacemaker.

Most important, students should learn that only once was their country willing to have its young men slaughter each other in war by the hundreds of thousands, and that was when it could no longer walk away from the glaring contradiction between its practices and the principles enshrined in its Declaration of Independence. The quest for racial equality did not, of course, end with the Civil War, and students should learn of the great struggles and achievements of the modern civil rights movement, America's long-overdue reckoning with the historic national shame of racial discrimination.

From the accounts of these transformations—and of the individuals, the organizations, the movements that fought for them—students will recognize the genius of democracy: When people are free to dissent, to criticize, to protest and publish, to join together in common cause, to hold their elected officials accountable, democracy's magnificent capacity for self-correction is manifest. It is important that students see this, not only because it is true, but also because they will realize that change is possible and that the future is indeed in their hands.

Unfortunately, not enough students are learning about the American past from such a perspective. In too many instances, America's sins, slights, and shortcomings have become not just a piece of the story but its *essence*. Legitimate self-criticism has too often turned into an industry of blame. It is not just that we are flawed, the account goes, but that we are *irredeemably* flawed. Such an interpretation is distorted, harmful to students, and strongly counter to the views of parents.

We begin, once again, with some seasoned observations. The first is from Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, a professor of American foreign relations at San Diego State University. Self-described as someone "from the activist left and...proud of that heritage," she writes:

> It is time to admit that this generation of historians—with some notable exceptions—has yet to deliver to students, and to the public, a usable and balanced interpretation of the past.... There are numerous examples of the castigating tendency of American scholars, but my personal favorite is an anthology I reviewed a few years back. This textbook gave undergraduates three articles on World War II. The first was on Japanese internment, the second on segregation of black troops in the South, and the third on harassment of Italian Americans. Every article discussed an aspect of the war that was absolutely true, yet, collectively, they made for a portrait of the war that was fundamentally false. No Adolf Hitler, no Emperor Hirohito, no Holocaust—only an imperfect America battling its demons....

"It would not hurt," she concludes, "for professional skeptics to meditate—only briefly, if it hurts too much—on the nature of American goodness."[16]

The ongoing, worldwide struggle for a free center of "broad, sunlit uplands," in Churchill's phrase, is the best hope of the earth, and we would make it the heart of a reordered curriculum for history and social studies.

Our second observation comes from veteran history teacher Peter Gibbon, who has spent the last several years traveling the country talking to students about who—if any—their heroes are and what constitutes heroism. "As a historian," he writes:

> I have been tracing the changing face of the American hero, researching what has happened to the presentation of heroes in history books, and analyzing ways revisionist historians have shaped teachers' attitudes, which in turn shape the way students respond.... I taught American history for many years and from many different books. There is much in these texts now about income inequality, environmental degradation, the horrors of immigration, and the hardships of the Western frontier. Strikes, massacres, and lynchings are vividly described. Contemporary history books cover in detail the Vietnam War and our shameful treatment of Native Americans.
>
> Little mention is made in them, however, of genius or heroism.... From many of our textbooks, one would not know that in the span of human history, the United States has stood for peace, wealth, and accomplishment and has made possible millions of quiet and contented lives.[17]

Gibbon is worried about the cumulative effect of this "sour, sort of suspicious view" of American history upon youngsters. "Why is this damaging to young people?" he asks:

> First, it makes them ashamed of their past and pessimistic about the future. Second, it implies that we are superior to our ancestors and encourages attitudes of ingratitude and self-righteousness. Third, by repudiating the notion that one person can make a difference, it makes young people suspicious of greatness. And, finally, attributing all progress to social and economic forces fosters historic fatalism. Concentrating on the dark side can lead young people to conclude that the world is a hopeless place.[18]

The prevalence of a strong negative bias in the telling of the American story is confirmed by two recent studies that examined the most widely used American history textbooks.

A year 2000 report, *History Textbooks at the New Century*, by the American Textbook Council began by describing the important role textbooks play in our civic life: "The ways that history textbooks affect how students see themselves, their nation, and the world cannot be quantified. But their civic impact is uncontested. American history textbooks are the official portraits of our country's past that are purchased by local and state governments and that are assigned to students with the foreknowledge that these students will someday participate in public affairs. How much these students know and what they think about their nation and world will indelibly affect civic character."

Reviewing approximately 20 texts published since 1997, and concentrating on U.S. history textbooks commonly used in the fifth, eighth, and eleventh grades, the study concluded that "[F]aith in progress and patriotic pride have vanished.... What has replaced them is too often a nation that has repeatedly fallen short of its ideals, led by a patriarchy that deserves censure.... Young readers....may learn about a nation's shameful past...in such a way as to undercut civic confidence and trust.... The new history textbooks are helping to erase—if not national memory—then juvenile appreciation of the nation's achievements."[19]

The second study comes from the historian Diane Ravitch, who recently completed a review of both U.S. history and world history textbooks. Her observations are presented in her book, *The Language Police*. Examining the presentation of U.S. history, Ravitch too found that the narrative of the American story has been dramatically altered:

> What is truly new about American history textbooks of the late 1990s is their ideological slant. Like the world history texts, they too are committed to cultural equivalence. The old U.S. history narrative stressed the important contributions of England and the European enlightenment to the new American nation. It centered on the rise of democratic institutions and the ongoing struggle to expand the rule of law....
>
> The new textbooks have adopted the "three worlds meet" paradigm that the UCLA history center advo-

cated as part of its [1994] proposed national standards for U.S. history. In the new textbooks, democratic values and ideals compete with a welter of themes about geography, cultural diversity, economic development, technology, and global relations. In order to show how "three worlds" met, the texts downplay the relative importance of the European ideas that gave rise to democratic institutions and devote more attention to pre-Columbian civilizations and African Kingdoms.... The textbooks...have nearly buried the narrative about the ideas and institutions that made our national government possible.[20]

It is jarring to place the observations and study results presented above alongside the views of what American parents think of their country and what they want their children taught. A 1998 report by Public Agenda, which included a random sample survey of 800 parents of school-age children plus focus groups and individual interviews with parents and teachers in different parts of the country, found the following:

- Eighty-four percent of parents consider the United States "a unique country that stands for something special in the world," and 90 percent agree that it "is a better country than most other countries in the world";
- Eighty-nine percent of parents overall, 88 percent of African-American parents, and 84 percent of Hispanic parents believe "there's too much attention paid these days to what separates different ethnic and racial groups and not enough to what they have in common";
- Eighty-four percent of parents overall, 81 percent of African-American parents, and 80 percent of Hispanic parents would be "upset/somewhat concerned" if their child were "taught that America was, and still is, a fundamentally racist country."[21]

This disharmony between parents' views and the content and tone of current curricular materials should embolden our efforts to bring about a more truthful, more profound perspective to the American experience. This is not the place for specifics, but for the spirit that we believe should animate the American story and, by implication, the story of the West—the spirit of progress toward a more just and humane society—we turn to the eloquent words of Alan Charles Kors, professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania and editor-in-chief of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*:

> It is a dangerous intellectual error to imagine that goodness, wisdom, order, justice, peace, freedom, legal equality, mutual forbearance, and kindness are the normal state of things in human affairs, and that it is malice, folly, disorder, injustice, war, coercion, legal inequality, murderous intolerance, and cruelty that stand in need of historical explanation.... We understand the defaults; what should astonish us is the ability to change them....
>
> It is not aversion to difference, for example, that requires historical explanation; aversion to difference is the human condition. Rather, it is the West's partial but breathtaking ability to overcome tribalism and exclusion that demands explanation, above all in the singular American accomplishment. It is not the injustice of difference in America that requires historical explanation, as if that were the odd phenomenon of human affairs. That injustice indeed requires reflection, so that we never lose sight of human moral weakness in general or of our own malice in particular. But historically, it is the existence and agency of Western values by which that injustice has been and is being progressively overcome that truly should excite our curiosity and awe....
>
> The fruits of that civilization have been an unprecedented ability to modify the remediable causes of human suffering, to give great agency to utility and charity alike; to give to each individual a degree of choice and freedom unparalleled in all of human his-

Accustomed ... to living in a society where the right to nonviolent protest is taken for granted and political differences are settled peacefully, students cannot grasp—unless we tell them—that there have been and still are brutal regimes that have a different view of how to deal with conflict and dissent.

tory; and to offer a means of overcoming the station in life to which one was born by the effort of one's labor, mind, and will.

Abundant as they have been, with merely these fruits the civilization of the West might well have remained a parochial one to the rest of the world, closed, xenophobic, and all-conquering. There have been those, indeed, who wished and worked for that, and there have been depredations occasioned by our arrogance—which we subject to critical study and restudy in almost all domains of social, political, and moral knowledge. The drama, however, is that this civilization of the West, for all of its faults and sins, believed that its values and knowledge were not parochial, but universal, the birthright of every human life and soul....[22]

Teach Students What Life Is Like in Nonfree Countries

It is not surprising that American society is found so wanting when most of our students have nothing with which to compare it. If left ignorant of what life has been and is like in nondemocratic societies, the mind has no meaningful point of reference and finds refuge in a utopian—and therefore dangerous—fantasy of perfection. Against this abstract ideal, needless to say, we fall short again and again.

Until images of the Taliban flashed across American television screens—women clubbed for being out at the "wrong" hour of the day, homosexuals buried alive, music and even kites banned—our children hadn't a clue (how would they know?) that there is a world out there where the assault on human rights and dignity is commonplace, where the concept of political liberty is unknown. Or known but trampled.

As the British historian and poet Robert Conquest has written, "People forget what a remarkable thing it is that in our countries we have such rights and liberties. Civilizations have existed for thousands of years in which there was no trace of the mere idea of criticizing the government, of being secure from arbitrary arrest, of having a fair trial (or even a fairish trial, or even a trial at all), of printing almost anything one likes, of voting for one of a number of candidates for public office."[23]

Accustomed, for example, to living in a society where the right to nonviolent protest is taken for granted and political differences are settled peacefully, students cannot grasp—unless we tell them—that there have been and still are brutal regimes that have a different view of how to deal with conflict and dissent. Hitler offered this advice for dealing with Gandhi:

> "Shoot Gandhi," he said, "and if that does not suffice to reduce them to submission, shoot a dozen leading members of Congress; and if that does not suffice, shoot two hundred and so on until order is established. You will see how quickly they will collapse as soon as you make it clear that you mean business."[24]

It is our natural inclination to want to protect children from the knowledge of evil. But the price we—and they—pay for that silence is too high. Just as parents must explain to their children, in an age-appropriate way, that there are child molesters, and how to spot them and how to protect oneself against them, so must we tell them of other evils in the world. The classicist and military historian Victor Davis Hanson reminds us that, "All the great evils of the 19th and 20th centuries—chattel slavery, German Nazism, Japanese militarism, and Soviet Communism—led to the ruin of countless millions of innocents because millions of other Westerners were either too timorous, too confused, too ignorant of, or reticent about, their innately evil natures and the great peril they posed to free peoples."[25]

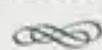
Diane Ravitch's textbook study, which in addition to U.S. history also includes an analysis of a dozen world history texts, helps explain why students are likely to have a distorted view of the world:

> The textbooks published in the late 1990s do...contain a coherent narrative. It is a story of cultural equivalence: All of the world's civilizations were great and glorious, all produced grand artistic, cultural, and material achievements, and now the world is growing more global and interconnected. Some bad things happened in the past, but that was a long time ago and now the cultures of the world face common problems....
>
> The textbooks sugarcoat practices in non-Western cultures that they would condemn if done by Europeans or Americans. Seemingly, only Europeans and Americans were imperialistic. When non-European civilizations conquer new territories, the textbooks abandon their critical voice. They express awe toward the ancient empires of China, India, Africa, and Persia but pay no attention to how they grew....
>
> Some texts present Mao as a friendly, inclusive leader who listened to the peasants and won their support, just like our politicians. Most texts point out that the Communist Party killed one million landlords and that at least 20 million Chinese people died because of a famine caused by Mao's disastrous Great Leap Forward. Some mention the humiliation of teachers and professionals during the Cultural Revolution. But it often seems as though these were just unfortunate events that occurred while Mao and the Communist Party were successfully transforming China into a modern industrialized society. Not much is said about thought reform, stigmatizing people by their social origins, prison camps, the cult of personality, class warfare, the "anti-Rightist campaign," the systematic oppression of political opponents, and other ugly elements of totalitarianism. Students who read these texts...might well conclude that the Chinese Communist program had its ups and downs, its good policies and its bad policies (just like ours), but overall produced great gains for the Chinese people.[26]

This half-education of our children must stop. We applaud

the programs that bring students to Washington, D.C., to see the workings of their government, but we must also take them with words and stories to North Korea, to Nazi Germany, to Stalinist Russia, to apartheid South Africa, and to the Islamist theocracy that now terrorizes Sudan.

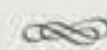
It is revealing to contrast the sanitized treatments presented in the textbooks to the real-life horrors that afflict so many in the world. There is, sadly, a large body of literature on the barbarity of the human race from which to draw. We offer three examples: a description by Christopher Hitchens of a recent trip to North Korea, a recollection by Nelson Mandela of his imprisonment in South Africa, and an account from Amnesty International Canada about the treatment of women in Saudi Arabia.



In the closing months of the twentieth century, I contrived to get a visa for North Korea. Often referred to as "the world's last Stalinist state," it might as easily be described as the world's prototype Stalinist state. Founded under the protection of Stalin and Mao, and made even more hermetic and insular by the fact of a partitioned peninsula that so to speak "locked it in," the Democratic People's Republic of Korea still boasted the following features at the end of the year 2000. On every public building, a huge picture of "The Great Leader" Kim Il Sung, the dead man who still holds the office of President in what one might therefore term a necrocracy or mausolocracy. (All other senior posts are occupied by his son, "The Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il.) Children marched to school in formation, singing songs in praise of aforesaid Leader. Photographs of the Leader displayed by order in every home. A lapel button, with the features of the Leader, compulsory wear for all citizens. Loudspeakers and radios blasting continuous propaganda for the Leader and the Party. A society endlessly mobilized for war, its propaganda both hysterical and—in reference to foreigners and foreign powers—intensely chauvinistic and xenophobic. Complete prohibition of any news from outside or any contact with other countries. Absolute insistence, in all books and in all publications, on a unanimous view of a grim past, a struggling present, and a radiant future. Repeated bulletins of absolutely false news of successful missile tests and magnificent production targets. A pervasive atmosphere of scarcity and hunger, alleviated only by the most abysmal and limited food. Grandiose and oppressive architecture. A continuous stress on mass sports and mass exercise. Apparently total repression of all matters connected to the libido. Newspapers with no news, shops with no goods, an airport with almost no planes. A vast nexus of tunnels underneath the capital city, connecting different Party and police and military bunkers.

...[T]here really are "hate" sessions during breaks in factory or office work, and at an evening of "mass games" I was shown, via multiple hypnotizing flashcards, the hideous image of a grim-visaged "enemy" soldier hurtling towards me, to be replaced by the refulgent and reassuring face of The Great Leader. These are details; what was entirely unmistakable was the atmosphere of a society where individual life is *absolutely pointless*, and where everything that is not absolutely compulsory is absolutely forbidden.

—From *Why Orwell Matters*
by Christopher Hitchens



Newspapers were more valuable to political prisoners than gold or diamonds, more hungered for than food or tobacco; they were the most precious contraband on Robben Island. News was the intellectual raw material of the struggle. We were not allowed any news at all, and we craved it.... The authorities attempted to impose a complete blackout; they did not want us to learn anything that might raise our morale or reassure us that people on the outside were still thinking about us.

We regarded it as our duty to keep ourselves current on the politics of the country, and we fought long and hard for the right to have newspapers. Over the years, we devised many ways of obtaining them....

When we did get hold of a paper, it was far too risky to pass around. Possession of a newspaper was a serious charge. Instead, one person would read the paper....and make cuttings of relevant stories, which were then secretly distributed to the rest of us. Each of us would write out a summary of the story we were given; these summaries were then passed among us, and later smuggled to the general section....

When I noticed the newspaper lying on the bench, I quickly left my cell, walked to the end of the corridor, looked in both directions, and then plucked the newspaper off the bench and slipped it into my shirt. Normally, I would have hidden the newspaper somewhere in my cell and taken it out only after bedtime. But like a child who eats his sweet before his main course, I was so eager for news that I opened the paper in my cell immediately.

I don't know how long I was reading; I was so engrossed in the paper that I did not hear any footsteps. Suddenly, an officer and two other warders appeared and I did not even have time to slide the paper under my bed. I was caught black-and-white-handed, so to speak. "Mandela," the officer said, "we are charging you for possession of contraband, and you will pay for this."

—From Nelson Mandela's autobiography,
Long Walk to Freedom

Women in Saudi Arabia who walk unaccompanied, or are in the company of a man who is neither their husband nor a close relative, are at risk of arrest on suspicion of prostitution or other "moral" offenses.

Neives, a Filipina who was working as a maid in

If we can bring our students to truly comprehend that the survival of civilization in the 20th century was, as Robert Conquest has written, "a near thing," they may become more serious about wanting to understand the genesis of democracy, its long path, the many stumbles, the unfinished work, the no guarantees.

Riyadh in 1992, was invited by a married couple to celebrate the wife's birthday at a restaurant. She and a female friend decided to go. At the restaurant they were joined by a male friend of the couple. A group of mutawa'een (religious police) entered the restaurant, saw the group and arrested them. They suspected Neives of being there for an introduction to the male friend of the couple. Neives denied the accusation, but was deceived into signing a confession written in Arabic that she understood was a release order. That confession was the sole basis of her conviction and sentence—25 days imprisonment and 60 lashes, which were carried out....

Women who breach the strict dress code for women also face arrest. Margaret Madill, a Canadian nurse working in Saudi Arabia in 1993, took a taxi home with a female friend after a shopping trip in Riyadh. Suddenly a mutawa' jumped into the taxi and forced the driver to go to the headquarters of al-Mutawa'een. When they arrived, the women were locked in the taxi in the extreme heat for up to six hours. They screamed for help and were then beaten. They were accused of indecent dress and public intoxication. They were then transferred to al-Malaz prison and held for two days before being released without charge.

—From Amnesty International: *Saudi Arabia: End Secrecy, End Suffering*[27]

Reading these descriptions, and other accounts of the many scars on human history, students will demand to know: How could these things happen? How did such oppressive regimes come to power? Why don't people rise up against them? Could anything similar happen here? And they will think, perhaps even aloud: I am so fortunate.

Students will be particularly interested in—and we have a special obligation to tell them about—the nightmares that drowned the 20th century in blood, and who supported them, who apologized for them, who stood against them. If we can bring our students to truly comprehend that the survival of civilization in the 20th century was, as Robert Conquest has written, "a near thing,"[28] they may become more serious about wanting to understand the genesis of democracy, its long path, the many stumbles, the unfinished work, the no guarantees.

There is something else we must tell our students, for it is one of the most potent lessons of the 20th century: Education has not proven to be sufficient armor against antidemocratic ideas. Some of the best minds of Europe, including two Nobel Prize winners, were in Hitler's thrall. And many, many intellectuals—people who had received the best education, who had undoubtedly read Locke and the *Federalist Papers* and who could recite Pericles's funeral oration—returned from political pilgrimages to Stalinist Russia, North Vietnam, Mao's China, and a host of other tyrannical regimes with idealized accounts of the "workers' paradise" they had seen. Describing the visits to the Soviet Union, one observer summed up the suspension of reality that permeated:

> There were earnest advocates of the humane killing of cattle who looked up at the massive headquarters of the OGPU with tears of gratitude in their eyes, earnest advocates of proportional representation who eagerly assented when the necessity for a Dictatorship of the Proletariat was explained to them, earnest clergymen who walked reverently through anti-God museums and reverently turned the pages of atheistic literature, earnest pacifists who watched delightedly tanks rattle across the Red Square and bombing planes darken the sky, earnest town-planning specialists who stood outside over-crowded ramshackle tenements and muttered: "If only we had something like this in England!" The almost unbelievable credulity of these mostly university-educated tourists astonished even Soviet officials used to handling foreign visitors.[29]

It is true, too, that terrorist movements such as Peru's

Shining Path and Italy's Red Brigade were drawn heavily from the ranks of university students and the professoriate. Students were part of Hitler's vanguard, and in fascist Italy "Giovinezza! Giovinezza!" (Youth! Youth!) was a common rallying cry. We know also, of course, that most of the leadership of al Qaeda are university graduates, many of them educated in the West.

What are we to make of all this? Is it an argument against education, or intellectuals? Quite the contrary. It is an argument for studying this phenomenon, this aberration, as an important part of education for democracy.

The moral and intellectual failures that led many to ignore what was there for the seeing and to embrace ideological and political extremism should be examined by high school students. What was so powerful as to overwhelm intellect and knowledge and render the mind impervious to evidence? Was it utopian longings? A desire for power? The romanticism of revolution? The vanity of claiming to hold the moral high ground? The need for an Idea that answers all questions, stills all doubts? Was it inspired, as Francois Furet thought, by the age-old hatred of everything bourgeois?

We do not have all the answers to this complex phenomenon, and we may never have. But by making students aware of it, by making it part of their political education, we can help inoculate them against it and enable them to recognize those who succumb. This alone would be a great accomplishment for the 21st century.

Cultivate the Virtues Essential to a Healthy Democracy

The hero of the American Revolution and the revered first president of our new republic understood that democracy cannot rest on formal institutions alone. Its pillars must be set deeper. "The foundation of our national policy [must be] laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality," George Washington declared in his First Inaugural Address.

Two centuries later, the hero of another revolution and the revered first president of a newly-freed Czechoslovakia, echoed Washington's view. President Vaclav Havel, his imprisonment as a dissident still fresh, addressed his fellow citizens:

> It is my responsibility to emphasize, again and again, the moral origin of all genuine politics, to stress the significance of moral values and standards in all spheres of social life, including economics, and to explain that if we don't try, within ourselves, to discover or rediscover or cultivate what I call "higher responsibility," things will turn out very badly indeed for our country.... The best laws and the best-conceived democratic mechanisms will not in themselves guarantee legality or freedom or human rights— anything, in short, for which they were intended—if they are not underpinned by certain human and social values.[30]

Our students will have no problem understanding this, for they have experienced what happens when the moral fabric of society begins to unravel. To take one example: It would have been unthinkable only a generation ago to imagine that hundreds of thousands of students would begin each school day by having to pass through metal detectors and hand over their backpacks to be searched. Students may agree with the need for the searches, and they may be grateful for the security the detectors provide. But they also know that something has gone very wrong along the way. Shouldn't the most abundant, most influential, and most democratic republic in the history of the world produce a culture in which it is *not* necessary for children to be checked daily for weapons?

The statutes outlawing violence can double or triple in number, but absent a deeply embedded respect for the rule of law—what the political scientist Roy Godson calls "a culture of lawfulness," absent a moral bond with the community, absent the social compact that makes freedom possible, the metal detectors will not go away.

The most exemplary Constitution, the most wisely-crafted plans for the separation of powers in government, scrupulously honest elections, an independent judiciary, tightly-worded laws: As essential, as hard-won as these are, they cannot by themselves give us a rich, flourishing democratic culture. Only a society underwritten by personal and civic virtue can do that.

Education for democracy, then, must extend to education in moral issues and democratic dispositions: training the heart as well as the head. What do we do with this freedom we have, the choices and decisions we daily face? How do we live as free men and free women? Is freedom the same as license? Or does self-government begin with the governing of one's self? What happens when rights are not accompanied by responsibilities?

These are some of the questions with which we must engage our students. And these are the questions our children want us to engage them in, for—despite their transparent protests—they do not want to be set totally adrift, unmoored, "free" to make up the rules as they go along. This, as they know in their hearts, is not freedom but abandonment.

We need not be stymied in our efforts by the debilitating influence of the concept of "moral relativism," which robs us of any ethical standards. If there is only opinion—yours, mine, Osama bin Laden's—only personal perspective or preference or conditioning, then on what basis do we pass judgment on Hitler's gas chambers or Hussein's torture chambers? Objectivity does not require neutrality or blind tolerance. It is hardly necessary to be neutral in regard to freedom over bondage, or the rule of law over the rule of the mob, or self-mastery over irresponsibility, or reflective, consequence-accepting choice over mindless impulse, in order to describe objectively the differences among them, or among their human consequences.

Values are best taught when they are encountered, in school and in life. Here the humanities have much to contribute. Wide reading and study in the humanities provides students the opportunity to reflect, in the company of the best that has been thought and said, on the elements that

"We are given, by inheritance, our unchained state. But to make of oneself a free man or woman is the work of a lifetime."

compose the good life and the good society. Through their engagement with history, literature, law, philosophy, and biography, students will grow in their ability to judge the moral worth of various outcomes. In doing so, they will begin to lay claim to an essential ethical faculty: moral clarity. For to choose the good, one first has to discern the good.

Biography—the real-life stories of exceptional men and women—can be especially compelling for youngsters. In his book, *A Call to Heroism*, Peter Gibbon explains why:

> Heroes instruct us in greatness when they triumph. Idealistic, they ask us to be better. Courageous, they ask us to be braver. Visionary, they show us how to transcend our time. But they also instruct us when they are imperfect and in doubt, when they suffer and fail.... Human beings become heroic when, against all odds, they persist; when, despite their flaws, they achieve....
>
> With heroes, we experience the extraordinary and expand our notion of what it means to be human.... We are in prison with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Growing deaf, we compose the *Ninth Symphony;* on our backs, we paint Adam on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.... When Nelson Mandela leaves his South African cell without rancor and invites his guards to his inauguration, we are instructed in magnanimity. By not quitting after the winter at Valley Forge, George Washington teaches us perseverance and endurance. When Mother Theresa leaves her comfortable convent school and moves to Calcutta, we learn about compassion.[31]

Our 18th-century founders would be pleased to have such stories as part of the school curriculum, for they took education in moral issues very seriously indeed. This is hardly surprising. The basic ideas of liberty, equality, and justice, of civil, political, and economic rights and obligations are all assertions of right and wrong, of moral values. The authors of the American testament had no trouble distinguishing moral education from religious instruction, and neither should we. The democratic state can take no part in deciding which, if any, religion forms its citizens' consciences. But it is absurd to argue that the state, or its schools, cannot be concerned with citizens' ability to tell right from wrong, and to prefer one over the other in all matters that bear upon the common public life. This would be utterly to misunderstand the democratic vision, and the moral seriousness of the choices it demands of us. As Diana Schaub has written:

> We are given, by inheritance, our unchained state. But to make of oneself a free man or woman is the work of a lifetime. It is not a work that was completed by the founding generation, or Lincoln's generation, or what has been called "the greatest generation," or that will be completed by the millennial generation. The work of fitting the mind and spirit for freedom is the work of each and every generation, and of each and every individual. To be the land of the free—in the full sense, in the sense made possible by liberal education—would be a new birth of freedom indeed.[32]

Across the country, many, many schools and teachers have stayed faithful to the legitimate civic mission of our schools. They have given an honest account of the American story. They have insisted on a serious, rigorous approach to subject matter. They have celebrated the resplendent diversity unique to this country while making it clear that there is much more that unites us than divides us. They have taught their students to be humble before evidence, logic, observation, experience. They have let no ideology cloud their vision nor political fashion mute their voice. They have told their students that there is such a thing as truth and that it can be sought. They have modeled civility and self-restraint and a respect for the views of others. They have spoken of the neglected virtue of gratitude.

They have done all this out of their good instincts, their commitment to truth, and their faithfulness to high standards in their academic disciplines. At times, as we believe this document demonstrates, they have had to stand against influential currents in the larger culture.

We salute and honor these efforts, and place ourselves fully on their side. By supporting the core of our democratic heritage, these teachers and schools have provided indispensable sustenance for its continual renewal. They have taken to heart Lincoln's summons: that each generation must take up the task of perpetuating the American experiment.

As citizens of a democratic republic, we are part of the noblest political effort in history. Our children must learn, and we must teach them, the knowledge, values, and habits that will best protect and extend this precious inheritance. Our schools play a major part in this mission, and we the signatories of this document pledge them our full support and call upon all Americans to join us. □

(References on page 50)

Signatories*

** List in formation. Organizational names appear for identification purposes only.*

Joe Aguerrebere
President, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Fouad Ajami
Majid Khadduri Professor and Director of Middle East Studies, Johns Hopkins University

Anthony J. Alvarado
Chancellor of Instruction, San Diego City Schools

Morton Bahr
President, Communications Workers of America

Rhonda Barad
Eastern Director, Simon Wiesenthal Center, New York Tolerance Center

Benjamin Barber
Author, *Jihad vs. McWorld* and *Fear's Empire*

Raymond "Buzz" Bartlett
President and CEO, Council for Basic Education

Peter L. Berger
Director, Institute for the Study of Economic Culture, Boston University

Walter Berns
Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute

John Brademas
President Emeritus, New York University

Senator Bill Bradley
Managing Director, Allen and Company

Terry Branstad
Former Governor of Iowa

Donna Brazile
Chair, Democratic National Committee Voting Rights Institute

Eli Broad
Chairman, AIG SunAmerica Inc. and Founder, The Broad Foundation

Ann Bryant
Executive Director, National School Boards Association

R. Thomas Buffenbarger
International President, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

Gaston Caperton
President, The College Board

Leo Casey
Civic Education Consultant and Special Representative, United Federation of Teachers

Linda Chavez-Thompson
Executive Vice President, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

Henry Cisneros
President and CEO, American CityVista

Reverend Richard Cizik
VP, Governmental Affairs, National Association of Evangelicals

William Jefferson Clinton
Former President of the United States

David Cohen
Professor of Public Policy, Center for Public Policy Research in Education, University of Michigan

Michael Cohen
President, Achieve, Inc.

Robert J. Cottrol
Harold Paul Green Research Professor of Law and Professor of History and Sociology, George Washington University

Midge Decter
Writer

Larry Diamond
Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution

Douglas H. Dority
International President, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union

Christopher Edley
Professor, Harvard Law School and Member, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

John M. Engler
Former Governor of Michigan

Amitai Etzioni
University Professor, George Washington University

Sandra Feldman
President, American Federation of Teachers

Edward Fire
President, International Union of Electronic, Electrical, Salaried, Machine, and Furniture Workers/CWA

Harvey Flaumenhaft
Dean, St. John's College, Annapolis

John Fonte
Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

Elizabeth Fox-Genovese
Eléonore Raoul Professor of Humanities and History, Emory University

Hillel Fradkin
President, Ethics and Public Policy Center

Patricia Friend
International President, Association of Flight Attendants

Mary Futrell
Dean, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University

Paul A. Gagnon
Senior Research Associate, Center for School Improvement, Boston University

William A. Galston
The Saul Stern Professor, School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland

Matthew Gandal
Executive Vice President, Achieve, Inc.

David J. Garrow
Author, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference*

Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
W.E.B. Du Bois Professor of the Humanities and Chair of Afro-American Studies, Harvard University

Carl Gershman
President, National Endowment for Democracy

Ron Gettelfinger
President, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America International Union

Peter H. Gibbon
Senior Research Fellow, School of Education, Boston University

Roy Godson
Professor of Government, Georgetown University

John Goodlad
President, Institute of Educational Inquiry

Nancy S. Grasmick
Superintendent of Schools, Maryland

Ernest G. Green
Managing Director for Public Finance, Lehman Brothers

Vartan Gregorian
President, Carnegie Corporation of New York

Joy Hakim
Author, *Freedom: A History of US*

Sonny Hall
International President, Transport Workers Union of America

Lee Hamilton
President and Director, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Wade Henderson
Executive Director, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

Alexis Herman
Former U.S. Secretary of Labor

Frederick M. Hess
Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute

Sylvia Ann Hewlett
President and Founder, National Parenting Association

Norman Hill
President, A. Philip Randolph Institute

E.D. Hirsch, Jr.
Chairman of the Board, Core Knowledge Foundation

Byron Hollinshead
President, American Historical Publications

G. Thomas Houlihan
Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers

James B. Hunt, Jr.
Former Governor of North Carolina

Joseph Hunt
General President, International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental, and Reinforcing Iron Workers

Frank Hurt
International President, Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers, and Grain Millers International Union

Sol Hurwitz
Retired President and Honorary Treasurer, Committee for Economic Development

Gloria T. Johnson
President, Coalition of Labor Union Women

John F. Jennings
Director, Center on Education Policy

Donald Kagan
Sterling Professor of Classics and History, Yale University

Richard D. Kahlenberg
Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation

Ambassador Max M. Kampelman
Chairman Emeritus, Freedom House

Amy Kass
Senior Lecturer in Humanities, University of Chicago

Thomas H. Kean
President, Drew University

Penn Kemble
Senior Fellow, Freedom House

Senator Bob Kerrey
President, New School University

Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick
Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute

Diane L. Knippers
President, The Institute on Religion and Democracy

Alan Charles Kors
Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania and President, Foundation for Individual Rights in Education

David Kusnet
Visiting Fellow, Economic Policy Institute

Nat LaCour
Executive Vice President, American Federation of Teachers

Robert R. LaGamma
Executive Director, Council for a Community of Democracies

Irena Lasota
President, Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe

Gail M. Leftwich
President, Federation of State Humanities Councils

John Lewis
U.S. Representative, Georgia

Seymour Martin Lipset
Senior Scholar, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Tom Loveless
Director, Brown Center on Education Policy, The Brookings Institution

Martin Maddaloni
General President, United Association of Journeyman and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry of the U.S. and Canada

Herb Magidson
Chair, Democracy Committee, American Federation of Teachers

Harvey C. Mansfield
William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Government, Harvard University

Ray Marshall
Professor Emeritus and Audre and Bernard Rapoport Centennial Chair in Economics and Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin

Will Marshall
President, Progressive Policy Institute

Radwan Masmoudi
President, Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy

Wilfred M. McClay
SunTrust Chair of Excellence in Humanities and Professor of History, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

David McCullough
Historian and Author, *John Adams* and *Truman*

Edward J. McElroy
Secretary-Treasurer, American Federation of Teachers

Gerald W. McEntee
President, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

Kweisi Mfume
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

John Norton Moore
Director, School of Law & National Security, University of Virginia and Board Member, Freedom House

Marc H. Morial
President and CEO, National Urban League

Joshua Muravchik
Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute

Ralph G. Neas
President, People for the American Way

Diana Villiers Negroponte
Freedom House, Fordham University

Michael Novak
George Frederick Jewett Scholar in Religion, Philosophy, and Public Policy, American Enterprise Institute

Terence M. O'Sullivan
General President, Laborers' International Union of North America

John J. Patrick
Professor of Education, Indiana University

Norman Podhoretz
Editor at Large, *Commentary* Magazine

Robert Pickus
President, World Without War Council, Inc.

Arch Puddington
Director of Research, Freedom House

Dr. Susan Kaufman Purcell
Vice President, Americas Society/Council of the Americas

Wendy Puriefoy
President, Public Education Network

Charles Quigley
Executive Director, Center for Civic Education

Diane Ravitch
Research Professor of Education, New York University and Author, *The Language Police*

Christopher Reeve
Chairman, The Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation

Bill Richardson
Governor of New Mexico

Richard W. Riley
Former U.S. Secretary of Education

Arturo Rodriguez
President, United Farm Workers of America

Richard Rodriguez
Author

Andrew J. Rotherham
Director, 21st Century Schools Project, Progressive Policy Institute

Michael Sacco
President, Seafarers International Union of North America

Robert A. Scardelletti
International President, Transportation• Communications International Union

Harold H. Schaitberger
General President, International Association of Fire Fighters

Diana Schaub
Chair, Department of Political Science, Loyola College in Maryland

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.
Historian and Author

Gilbert T. Sewall
Director, American Textbook Council

Donna E. Shalala
President, University of Miami

Lee S. Shulman
President, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Edward C. Sullivan
President, AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department

John Sweeney
President, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend
President, Operation Respect

Susan L. Traiman
Director, Education Initiative, The Business Roundtable

Philip Uri Treisman
Professor of Mathematics, Director, Charles A. Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin

Michael E. Ward
Superintendent of Schools, North Carolina

Ben Wattenberg
Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute

Reg Weaver
President, National Education Association

Eddie N. Williams
President, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

Lynn R. Williams
President Emeritus, United Steelworkers of America

Jennifer Windsor
Executive Director, Freedom House

Jay Winik
Historian and Author, *April 1865*

Alan Wolfe
Professor of Political Science and Director, Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, Boston College

Harry Wu
Executive Director, Laogai Research Foundation

Tatiana Yankelevich
Assistant Director, Andrei Sakharov Archives and Human Rights Center, Brandeis University

Susan Tave Zelman
Superintendent of Public Instruction, Ohio

In Pursuit of a "Civic Core"

A Report on State Standards

By Paul Gagnon

Alexis de Tocqueville gave us a tall order a century and a half ago. He opened *Democracy in America* with his plea to American and French leaders alike: "First among the duties that are at this time imposed on those who direct our affairs is to educate democracy." He saw, as we now and then grasp, that democracy is a delicate political invention ever exposed to sickness and death from numberless toxins generated by the lower impulses of our human nature. As educators, our job is to draw off the particular toxin of political illiteracy that invites demagoguery, fanaticism, and impulsive leaders with well-meant, simple-minded answers.

But how to make good on this tall order? The task is so great and school time necessarily so limited. With the advent of the academic standards movement, it has been the job of standards writers in our 50 states to attempt good answers to this vital question. How are the states doing in this effort?

Paul Gagnon is senior research associate at Boston University's Center for School Improvement and emeritus professor of history at the University of Massachusetts. *This article is adapted with permission from* Educating Democracy: State Standards to Ensure a Civic Core, *a report published this spring by the Albert Shanker Institute. To read more of the report, go to* ***www.shankerinstitute.org/Downloads/gagnon/contents.html****. See the back cover for information on ordering the full report.*

Last year, the Albert Shanker Institute launched a study of state standards for secondary history/social studies to evaluate their worth for educating democratic citizens. This article offers a brief look at some of the key findings. Do these standards adequately convey and articulate the most important ideas that our students must know if we are to transmit our democratic inheritance to them? The report's findings were mixed, as the chart that follows *(see page 28)* demonstrates. But two major failings of the standards were clear. Not one of the 48 states (Iowa and Rhode Island allow local choice), nor the District of Columbia or Defense Department school system, wrote a document that had *both* a clear focus on civic/political education *and* was teachable in the limited time schools have to teach. Thus, the essential finding of this study: State standards have yet to articulate what can reasonably be called a "civic core." To be civic, the core must include a focus on government, political history, and the aspects of economics and geography that have shaped political choice and institutions, with significant human consequences. To deserve the word "core," it must leave ample room in each school year for other aspects of history and social studies.*

This solution is familiar in other countries, where national standards set limited cores of common study and leave substantial time for local community, school, and teacher choice. To apply this to the American scene could finally end the exhausting quarrels over "perfect" standards that mention every thing, every one, and every cause—but in the end, discredit the very idea of common standards in many states because they are so unteachable and certainly not testable in a fair and useful way.

The third requirement for a true civic core is, of course, that it be "core"—that is, required for all students regardless of background, school track, or likely future employment. A body of common learning for all? Yes, most surely for preparing citizens. Education for work or for private, personal cultivation may take many forms, shaped by the plans and preferences of students, their families, and their communities. The objection that common learning is wrong and oppressive in a diverse society does not hold. Quite the contrary. The more diverse the society, the more all of its citizens need a common body of knowledge giving them the power to debate each other as equals on their society's ends and means, regardless of their class, race, religion, work, or personal and family culture. A common political heritage frees us to differ from one another, and at the same time impels us to accept differences and live together in peace and liberty, with equal civil rights. History tells us that diversity is never safe, and rarely survives, except in a stable

*To help states refine their standards, the report includes two appendices, one that sets forth the essential topics for citizen education and another that explains how these topics can be taught in only a portion of the school time given to social studies.

democratic society. A common civic core of learning is the first step to that society.

In *Democracy in America,* Tocqueville cites three things citizens must learn. First, how politics works, by taking part in local and wider civic affairs, from jury duty to national elections. Second, how political ideas and choice worked in the past, by reading history. Third, the virtues citizens need, by reflecting on religion, ethics, and biography.

All this runs deeper than conventional civics training in school and community service outside. True, we need to know how government is supposed to work and how to help the needy in our communities. But we need much more: the sensible judgment gained from seeing what happened to real people in the past, what they tried to do about it, and what happened next. And, as Tocqueville insisted, the moral stamina to take responsible action in tough times when it would be safer to look the other way. What then should be in the civic core, how do state standards stack up to this tall order, and what are the obstacles in the way of doing an even better job?

I. What Should Be in a Civic Core?

Political education, of course, requires mastery of the fundamentals of civics—the principles and workings of federal, state, and local government, of the law and court systems, the rights and duties of citizens, and how the United States Constitution and its resulting institutions and practices are like and unlike those of other societies. But to sustain the principles, institutions, and practices of democracy, citizens need to understand why and how they came into being, the conditions that allowed them to be established, as well as the ideas and forces that have been supportive or destructive of them over time. What, then, should citizens know of United States and world history?

A Civic Core for the Secondary Grades: Vital Topics

Essential topics fall into two categories: those revealing dangers to democracy, and those teaching its foundations and sources of support. Neither can be taught in general, but should draw upon well-selected, true stories of men and women caught up in the suspense-filled, unending drama of democracy's adventure. To engage students, the core should highlight the episodes that capture unforgettably the conditions, impulses, and actions that have proven toxic to democracy (or to any society seeking a measure of decency). Among them are plutocracy and poverty, with their ensuing class fears and hatreds; slavery of any degree; exploitation, corruption, or the evasion of public service and taxes by the privileged; inflation or depression, both ruinous to the middle classes; ethnic, racial, and religious fanaticism; militarism and the appetite for empire; secret government; the malign effects of both victory and defeat in war; waste of resources; mass escapism in hard times; prominent evidence of cultural or moral decay; ill-prepared and impulsive leaders; imbalance of power groups within society; a subdued press; rigged elections; demagoguery and the political illiteracy it feeds upon.

Among such topics would be the self-imposed ruin and disappearance of Athenian democracy and the Roman Republic; the corruption and decline of the Roman Empire; Cromwell's dictatorship in 17th-century England; the failure of French liberal regimes in the 1790s and 1848; the United States' civil war in the 1860s; the crushing of Russia's reformist provisional government by the Bolsheviks in 1917; the Weimar Republic's collapse under Nazi assault in 1933, opening the way to World War II and the Holocaust; the failure of semi-paralyzed Western democracies to build collective security to halt aggression in the 1930s. These and other episodes are stories Americans need. Each has its own mix of toxins. But students should also see that, except for 1917 Russia, all happened in societies advanced for their time, not so hobbled as are new nations now struggling for democracy. Of them, England, France, and the United States had high literacy rates, ample resources, political and administrative experience, and relative security from outside enemies. Yet the average delay between the onset of revolution and final settlement was nearly 90 years: in England, 1603 to 1689; in France, 1789 to 1875; and in the U.S., 1775 to 1865, after a civil war that caused more death and havoc than all the European 19th-century revolutions combined.

On the other hand, and constantly interspersed, must be the ideas, people, conditions, and actions that nourished democracy and won its survival. First among them are the teachings of the major world religions and ethical systems: human dignity and equality; free will and the responsibility of the individual; fair dealing; charity; fortitude; the obligation to ameliorate earthly life now and for posterity. Then they must learn the origins and evolution of political democracy; the political ideas and innovations of Athenian democracy and Roman republicanism; the feudal balance of armed power among king, nobles, and clergy necessary to contracts such as the Magna Carta and to parliaments limiting royal power; the forces of geography, economics, personality, and tradition behind Parliament's victory in England's 17th-century revolution.

From the 18th century, there is the rarely cited mixture of religious principles and Enlightenment reason that animated American and French revolutionary leaders; the personalities and favorable conditions that helped the American colonies win their war for independence and allowed the new federal government to establish itself on the basis of the Constitution. In the 19th century, there are the early achievements of several British and European reform movements in adapting

To sustain the principles, institutions, and practices of democracy, citizens need to understand why and how they came into being.

Enlightenment ideas to the surging economic and social changes of the Industrial Revolution; the emergence in several Western societies of the three countervailing powers of business, labor, and representative government; the advances in science, technology, medicine and surgery, sanitation, housing and diet, and free public education that stirred optimism in the Western world before 1914. In the 20th century, there are the resources and leadership that helped Western democracies to overcome the corrosive effects of the Great Depression and to beat back totalitarian assaults. Overall the civic core needs to make clear that democracy's birth, growth, and survival have demanded great patience, vision, courage, sacrifice, brainwork, and some luck. These initial topics are further fleshed out in the full Shanker Institute report.

II. What Is in the State Standards?

A. Identifying Strong Standards

Having put forward the main ideas and content that should be included in a civic core—and having considered key problems—we turn to the technical questions: How is all this best translated into standards? And how are the states faring in this important work?

What are the "standards" or "essentials" and what are not? In civics, economics, geography, and history, they are best conceived as specific topics. They are the ideas, forces or conditions, persons or places, stories, institutions, or turning-points that are significant to—and explanations of—larger, continuing themes. They are not textbook chapter headings, abstract concepts, or wholesome attitudes to be memorized. Nor do they fall to small detail. An "essential" may ask students to grasp the causes of World War II, with an eye to Axis aggression, to its leaders, to the political, geographical, economic, and ideological forces bringing them to power, together with Western passivity and the memories and conditions behind it. On one hand, they do not ask students to "analyze the character of 20th-century conflict." On the other, they do not ask them to recall every episode or player—though teachers may use such detail to open an essential topic with lively stories. Writers of standards (and tests—and they probably should be the same people) must ask themselves the question teachers, students, and parents will ask: "So what?" When a standard cannot be explained to the young, to teachers, or to an educated public, it is either too vague or too mired in detail.

B. State Standards Compared

For this report, we reviewed official state standards and framework documents listing the middle- and high-school topics and skills to be studied in social studies, civics, economics, geography, and history. All documents were evaluated according to five criteria.

These pages briefly sum up the criteria used for judgment and indicate how the states fared. Under each criterion, states are grouped at three levels: Largely Met, Partially Met, and Not Met.

Criterion #1, Content for a Civic Core, Specified Clearly: Do they contain the most important topics in specific terms, not merely implied by general headings, from civics, economics, geography, and U.S. and world history to create a common core of learning about democracy for the political education of citizens?

■ ***Group One. Largely Met:*** Thirteen standards documents carry all or nearly all critical topics, mostly in clear English and presented as essentials needing to be touched upon, not merely as examples or suggestions. Among these, Arizona is typical of many states. Its civics and U.S. history items are fuller and more specific, and thus more helpful to teachers in designing their courses, than those for world history. The same imbalance is true of most states, including others of the 12 "largely met" states and states having insufficient, or almost no, specific topics.

■ ***Group Two. Partially Met:*** Thirteen have a fair number of ostensibly required topics, but not enough to build adequate civic cores. Some, including Colorado, leave many important topics to lists of optional examples or activities. Others, including Nevada and South Dakota, have numerous civics and U.S. history topics, but are nearly empty of world history items. A good many, including Delaware and New Hampshire, have general headings much like textbook tables of contents or chapter titles, most of them too broad—especially in world history—and lacking chosen particulars to help teachers open their study.

■ ***Group Three. Not Met:*** The remaining documents contain none or nearly none of the needed topics. Many, but not all, of these build upon the 1994 standards of the National Council for the Social Studies. Common in them are sweeping topics or "benchmarks" that would require numberless topics and weeks to study. In Wyoming, for example, one of only four benchmarks for 11th-grade history (called "Time, Continuity, and Change") asks students to "explain how history, governments, cultures, and economics have contributed to the interpretation of the past and present, and assist in planning for the future." Minnesota asks students to know "the significance of key people, events, places, concepts, and themes in the historical development of one or more world cultures by: a survey of world history including early civilizations, classical traditions, major empires, institutions; expansions of trade and encounter; intensified hemispheric interactions; the first global age; the age of revolutions; and the 20th century; or a comprehensive, in-depth focus on a single culture, nation, movement, or time period."

Criterion #2, Teachability: Can the required or suggested topics be taught, in effective ways, within the fewer than 180 days that typically are available for classroom instruction each year?

■ ***Not Met:*** To date, none of the sets of standards reviewed satisfies this criterion. In no detailed document are the topics listed for history, economics, and geography teachable in any but hurried, superficial ways in the school time available. In nonspecific documents, as already noted, the many unnamed topics needed to explore their broad questions would also overflow the teaching hours at hand. As in the

The Civic Core: State Standards at a Glance

	Are the essentials of a civic core specified clearly?	Are the topics teachable within the allotted timeframe?	Do the documents provide a scope and sequence?	Is the essential content required of all students?	Are the important facts and ideas presented coherently across subjects?
ALABAMA	★	☆	★	★	★
ALASKA	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
ARIZONA	★	☆	✭	☆	☆
ARKANSAS	☆	☆	✭	☆	☆
CALIFORNIA	★	☆	★	✭	★
COLORADO	✭	☆	★	☆	✭
CONNECTICUT	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
DELAWARE	✭	☆	✭	✭	☆
D.C.	✭	☆	★	★	☆
D.O.D.	☆	☆	★	✭	☆
FLORIDA	☆	☆	✭	☆	☆
GEORGIA	✭	☆	★	✭	✭
HAWAII	☆	☆	✭	☆	☆
IDAHO	☆	☆	★	✭	☆
ILLINOIS	☆	☆	☆	✭	☆
INDIANA	★	☆	★	✭	★
IOWA	☆*	☆*	☆*	☆*	☆*
KANSAS	★	☆	★	✭	☆
KENTUCKY	☆	☆	✭	✭	☆
LOUISIANA	☆	☆	✭	✭	☆
MAINE	✭	☆	✭	☆	☆
MARYLAND	★	☆	✭	✭	☆
MASSACHUSETTS	★	☆	★	☆	★
MICHIGAN	☆	☆	☆	✭	☆
MINNESOTA	☆	☆	✭	☆	☆
MISSISSIPPI	☆	☆	★	✭	★
MISSOURI	✭	☆	✭	✭	☆
MONTANA	☆	☆	✭	☆	☆
NEBRASKA	★	☆	✭	✭	★
NEVADA	✭	☆	☆	☆	☆
NEW HAMPSHIRE	✭	☆	✭	✭	✭
NEW JERSEY	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
NEW MEXICO	★	☆	★	✭	✭
NEW YORK	★	☆	★	✭	★
NORTH CAROLINA	☆	☆	★	✭	☆
NORTH DAKOTA	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
OHIO	✭	☆	★	✭	☆
OKLAHOMA	★	☆	✭	✭	✭
OREGON	☆	☆	☆	✭	☆
PENNSYLVANIA	☆	☆	✭	☆	☆
RHODE ISLAND	☆*	☆*	☆*	☆*	☆*
SOUTH CAROLINA	✭	☆	★	✭	☆
SOUTH DAKOTA	✭	☆	★	✭	✭
TENNESSEE	✭	☆	★	✭	✭
TEXAS	★	☆	★	✭	★
UTAH	☆	☆	★	✭	☆
VERMONT	☆	☆	✭	☆	☆
VIRGINIA	★	☆	✭	✭	✭
WASHINGTON	☆	☆	✭	☆	☆
WEST VIRGINIA	☆	☆	★	✭	✭
WISCONSIN	☆	☆	☆	✭	☆
WYOMING	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

Standards that largely meet the criteria are designated with a full star (★); standards that partially meet the criteria are designated with a half star (✭); and standards that do not meet the criteria with an empty star (☆). Standards that have not been developed are designated with an empty star and an asterisk (☆*).

case of the national civics standards, civics topics are a partial exception. In state documents, they tend to be less pretentious and the least vague. And it helps that many of their salient points can be taught in the context of U.S. and world history, provided these courses are segmented by era across the grades to allow for sufficient instructional time. One-year surveys will necessarily desiccate all of the four central subjects.

World history is a serious problem. Even when dividing it across grades, states try to squeeze too much into one year of high school. The Alabama standards, which come closest to satisfying all criteria, begin at c. 1500, as do the documents from Arizona, Delaware, Maryland, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and others. Five-century sweeps do not allow close teaching of core civics topics in world and Western history, and they make almost certain that the high school course will not come close to present times. Starting with 18th-century Enlightenment ideas and the American and French Revolutions is difficult enough, as Mississippi and California are finding. Worst, of course, are states that claim to cover all of world history since human origins in only one year.

Criterion #3, Scope and Sequence: Do the standards mandate or suggest an order and scope for courses across the middle- and high-school grades by which to convey a civic core?

- ***Group One. Largely Met:*** Fourteen standards set a specific grade-by-grade sequence; seven others do so for middle school (usually grades five through eight), but not for high school. Of these states, most test achievement at the end of various grade clusters, though there is a trend toward end-of-course tests, particularly at the high school level where scores may wholly or partly determine students' eligibility for graduation.

- ***Group Two. Partially Met:*** Nineteen states vaguely suggest a sequence or arrange their topics into grade clusters, such as kindergarten to fourth grade, grades five through eight, and grades nine through twelve.

- ***Group Three. Not Met:*** Ten states set no clear sequence for teaching the content of standards. Many of these states, however, do indicate that early U.S. history (usually to 1877) and early world history (the end date varies) belong in middle school, with later eras to be taught in high school.

Criterion #4, Courses Required: Are the courses carrying the essential content for a civic core required of *all* students, not just those on a college track, ensuring an equal opportunity to learn?

- ***Unclear:*** Whether or not their standards include essential content, states are hard to pin down on what is or is not a requirement. Very few plainly say that their schools are required to teach, and all students required to study, the specific content listed. More candor is needed here. Most states avoid the "requirement" word, but already do, or plan to do, statewide testing, while still claiming to honor local control of what is taught. The evasive documents do not help; testing is the only, but far from dependable, guide to what is required. States vary, and often change, policies on testing students in vocational schools, charter schools, or private schools. They vary and waver on whether their tests determine promotion or graduation. Some with respectable standards then leave certain courses optional, or untested, even at the high school level, such as world history in Indiana, Massachusetts, and Texas. On the critical matter of requirements—at the heart of equal opportunity to learn—the picture is almost too fuzzy to apply the terms Largely Met, Partially Met, and Not Met. And many states do not yet test high school social studies.

Examples of strong and weak standards

Strong standards

- Examine the differing conditions behind the differing outcomes of the American and French Revolutions.
- How did the Great Depression bring about new government agencies?

Weak standards

- Explain the historical development of forms of government.
- Describe how governments and their institutions change.

Criterion #5, Context and Connections: Are the facts, ideas, and significant questions from civics, economics, geography, and history explicitly linked, when appropriate, so that students can grasp the many forces affecting political debates and decisions, thus making clear the complexity of human life and politics?

- ***Group One. Largely Met:*** Only eight state documents consistently connect the four main subjects.

- ***Group Two. Partially Met:*** Nine other states make explicit connections part of the time. Links are usually between civics and history on major political topics: Athens's democracy; Rome's Republic and Empire; the English, American, and French Revolutions; the Civil War and Reconstruction; the New Deal; 20th-century totalitarianism.

- ***Group Three. Not Met:*** The rest scatter content into strands or "themes" (under which one might expect, but rarely finds, intersubject connections). The strands often repeat each other's topics in different words. Many states waste the sixth and seventh grades by dividing them into all geography and all history, or into Eastern and Western hemisphere "cultures" courses. In both cases, the historical narrative is weak—often forcing a yearlong world history course in high school to be overloaded with topics that could be treated in middle school with two years of integrated history and geography courses divided into two eras.

Problems of overload and disconnect are worsened by state documents that pile needless additional strands onto the basic four. Some cut religion and ethics, racial and ethnic groups, immigration, even rural and urban affairs, away from the four strands' basic disciplines, creating separate

bundles called "culture" or "culture and diversity" or "individuals and institutions," as though these could be studied apart from the rest of human life and change. Isolation dilutes all subjects. Interactions among the many spheres of life are critical to student engagement. It makes little sense, for example, for a "global connections" strand to be cut apart from history, geography, economics, and politics. Or for Hawaii's "cultural anthropology" strand, with topics and language appropriate for a university major's courses, to be imposed on middle- or high-school students who have little prior knowledge of geography, economics, or social, political, cultural, and intellectual history—not to speak of arts and letters.

III. Recurrent Issues in State Standards

The Place of World History

Our review shows clearly that the greatest weakness of state standards is in world history. Civics and U.S. history fare better. Both have long been required, and taught by most social studies teachers; they are familiar to teachers and administrators from their own years in school. Newspapers and television often allude to American history and politics. Civics courses stress well-known documents, the workings of government, and public issues. U.S. history is the story of half a continent over only 500 years, and all states give it at least two years of study, some three.

World history, including Western civilization, is different. It was not much required until recently. Before 1990, probably no more than one-third of middle- and high-school students studied it. Two-thirds of social studies teachers had not taught it, and most had taken little of it in college. Like the rest of us, teachers and school officials hear few allusions to it in daily life. Media coverage of world events tends to be spasmodic, hopping from crisis to crisis with little background or context. And world history ranges over millennia and all the continents. Many standards writers—commonly not teachers or scholars of world history—are unequipped to be selective and lose themselves in numberless topics.

Another difficulty for world history is that understanding democracy's struggles requires that political history take center stage. That is, political history taught with economic, social, and intellectual history, as good teachers have always done, but focused on the drama of political choice and its consequences. Unhappily, for 30 years the social studies and historical fields have played down political history on a notion wholly contrary to democracy; namely, that it is only about the elites, not the people. U.S. history standards also suffer from this confusion, but the damage is worse in world history, where limited time demands rigorous selection of topics. Political ideas and actions—and their effects—are hard to find amid countless items and abstract concepts in most world history standards.

Writers of world history standards also play down Western civilization in documents already weak on politics. It is an old habit. The College Board's 1985 booklet for teachers of college-bound students, titled *Academic Preparation in the Social Studies,* urged that ancient and Western civilization be left to electives "since only some of the topics treated in them bear the test of worldwide import." Among the topics thus dismissed as lacking import were: Judaism; Greco-Roman history and political ideas; Christianity; feudalism; Islam; Renaissance Humanism; the Enlightenment; the English, American, and French Revolutions; liberalism; capitalism old and new; industrialism; democracy; socialism; imperialism; communism; fascism; Nazism; two world wars; and modern science and technology. For the education of young citizens, there are rather few topics of greater import.

> Understanding democracy's struggles requires that political history take center stage.

The Balance Between Western and Non-Western Studies

Setting the right balance between Western and non-Western studies in the education of American citizens requires more than wearisome assaults on "rootless multi-culturism" or "elitist Eurocentrism." At stake here is only a part of learning, a core to prepare students for political democracy, some of which non-Western students study in their own countries. Advocates for "global studies," asking equal time for all world civilizations, forget that the story of democratic institutions—and of their most virulent enemies—until recently has been a largely Western story, and not always pretty or elitist. Advocates for western study alone forget that a great many non-Westerners have treasured and fought for human dignity, freedom, and justice since ancient times. Failing to tell the two stories misprepares Americans of all backgrounds. But how to combine them in the time schools have? Few standards writers, national or state, ask how much of each story needs to be told, can be told, and at what cost to other stories.

To begin with, not much of any story can be told in states holding to one-year surveys of the world's past. But even three years is not enough to teach everything. The case for relative stress on Western history is that America's democratic ideas and practices are rooted in the Judeo-Christian, Greco-Roman, and Anglo-European past. The significance of Western civilization to Americans of any origin is not that it is "ours" and we "see ourselves" in it. In fact, the peasant ancestors of European-Americans were no closer to high Western thought, culture, or politics than their African, Asian, and pre-Columbian counterparts. Nor can Western civilization be honestly taught as treasure alone, a saga of

progress, superior in all ways to the legacies of other civilizations. It has given birth to some of the very best and worst in politics, economics, culture, class, and race relations. It is the legacy we live with every day, genes of the mind inherited just as the body inherits immunity or vulnerability to certain diseases. The West has never had a single "canon," but rather a ceaseless warfare of ideas and ambitions across ethnic, religious, linguistic, social, and cultural divides and limitless economic and political appetites. We study it to know who we are and what to expect from each other, given such a conflicted heritage.

But it is not all we need to know. Global educators rightly warn us to study other peoples. Good standards pay attention to each major civilization. The question for teachers is how much attention. What should Americans of any origin know of "others" abroad and arriving? What should Chinese-Americans, African-Americans, and Franco-Americans know, in common, beyond American society and each other's experiences of it? None needs the detail of ancient Chinese dynasties, or African kingdoms, or Merovingians and Carolingians. But they should know the main ideas and experiences of each other's ancestors. They should have an idea of the beauty each people created, as well as the oppression they suffered or imposed on others, and their lasting traditions and memories—in short, what we should want other peoples to know of us.

Alongside a civic core, state standards should include a deeper immersion in one or more of history's great civilizations, and note—as we must do for the Western past—what in them could promote or obstruct democracy. For example, a focus on India would include the following premodern topics: the beliefs and spiritual and moral teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism; the spread of Buddhism to Southeast Asia, China, Korea, and Japan; successive waves of nomadic and Muslim invasion, turmoil, and recovery; and art and architecture.

In the early modern era, the significant turning-points and cultural works of these civilizations should not be pushed aside by the "rise of the West," Europe's explorations, conquests, and colonizing. The same is true of the 19th century's era of "new imperialism" fired by European nationalism and the Industrial Revolution. In both eras, the arts, ideas, and literature of non-Europeans stirred Western artists and scholars to new directions. In turn, the varied patterns of African, Asian, and Middle Eastern adaptation and resistance to Western ideas and power help to raise the political sophistication of American students. Most important, they need acute awareness of today's conditions and anxieties in each other's ancestral lands. Three years of secondary world history and geography can teach much of this. It will not end debate on a "right" balance, but it will make room for livable compromise.

The fact is: All world history cannot be told. For our time, the first lesson to be learned from it is the never-ending struggle of people inside each society to limit greed and aggression, to apply morality and law, to keep peace and render justice. Students can see both the glory and the agony in this struggle and how often it has been lost. And since human evil is real, good intent has never been enough. Against the twin follies of wishful thinking and cynicism, history proves that tragedy is real and that civilization has a high price, but that it, too, is real and has triumphed from time to time. As they select "essentials," standards writers should focus on stories that students cannot help but see are true to life and worth remembering.

IV. Where Does the Civic Core Now Stand?

The most recent campaign for a common core of challenging studies for all American citizens-to-be had its start in the 1980s from disparate initiatives such as the *Nation at Risk* report in 1984, the AFT's *Education for Democracy: A Statement of Principles* (now revised and reprinted in this issue of *American Educator*), California's *History-Social Science Framework* in 1987, and the Charlottesville summit of governors in 1989. In spite of the problems described in the preceding pages, the country has made progress in the intervening years toward democratizing its public schools and wrestling with standards for citizen education. The same process took 25 years in Western Europe after World War II. Now, based on common academic standards, but varying local methods, several European and Asian nations graduate a higher percentage of high school students than we do, from more demanding academic programs. We have been at work for some 15 years. We, too, should hope to succeed in another ten.

But to do so we must admit that history and social studies teachers, and their allies—university scholars who know schools and are ready to work with school teachers as equals—still confront many obstacles.

One is that veteran teachers and scholars—entrusted in other countries to decide upon the core curriculum and the tests to go with them—are still denied that role in most U.S. states. Two, as a consequence, most state standards for history/civics/social studies are not teachable and flawed or premature testing threatens to discredit the move toward common standards. Three, too many states have failed to decide the question of what common learning is required for opportunity and equity, trying to preserve a look of local control, which logically should apply mainly to methods. Four, universities often fail to provide prospective teachers with adequate preparation, both in regard to a strong foundation in the liberal arts and to imparting a deep knowledge of content and effective teaching methods of their specialties. Five, states fail to provide intensive in-service professional development, so that teachers may teach with the confidence and joy that draws student respect and effort.

To overcome these obstacles, those in charge of American schools and universities could learn much by looking at how advanced democracies abroad dealt with similar problems and the time and resources that were required. To date, they have not pursued this avenue. We may expect added progress when they do and when they are able to convince state policymakers of the needed changes yet to be made. □

Leaving Reality Out

How Textbooks (Don't) Teach About Tyranny

By Diane Ravitch

In the summer of 2003, I turned 65. I was born in 1938. I have seen a lot of history in my lifetime. I remember World War II. I remember rationing books, blackouts, my family's "victory garden," German prisoners-of-war behind a barbed-wire fence in Galveston, Tx., President Roosevelt's death, and V-J day. In the 1950s and 1960s, I met survivors of the Holocaust who had blue numbers tattooed on their forearms. I remember racial segregation: The Houston schools were segregated, and so were drinking fountains, public buses, movie theaters, and every other public facility.

When I went to college in the fall of 1956, I met Hungarian students whose families had fled to the United States after the failed revolution there. I vividly remember Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech at the March on Washington in 1963 because I participated in the march. I have firsthand recollections of President Kennedy's assassination, demonstrations against the Vietnam war, President Nixon's resignation, and the fall of the Berlin Wall. I remember Franklin D. Roosevelt as a distant figure but have clear memories of Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush.

The same is true for others my age. The longer you live, the more history you witness. Experience, it is said, is a great teacher, and it is true. Experience gives you a personal fund of knowledge of events and people. And, it gives you a sense of context to which one can relate new events.

By virtue of their age, students have little direct knowledge of history. A typical 15-year-old student in 2003 was born in 1988. He or she is likely to remember only two presidents: Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Youngsters of this age cannot recall a world in which the Soviet Union existed. For most, September 11 was the only historic event they have personally known in their young lives. Because of their age and inexperience, whatever they know about the history of the past century—and the centuries that preceded it—will largely depend on what they learn in school. As our nation faces a period of continuing peril from threats of terrorism, as concern grows about how to find the right balance between security and civil liberties, students need a historical context to understand today's issues. Certainly they need to learn about the system of government that has made possible the freedoms they enjoy. They need to know where those freedoms originated and how they were established. But to fully appreciate and understand freedom, students need to know what it means to live in a society that does not have the rights and freedoms that we take for granted.

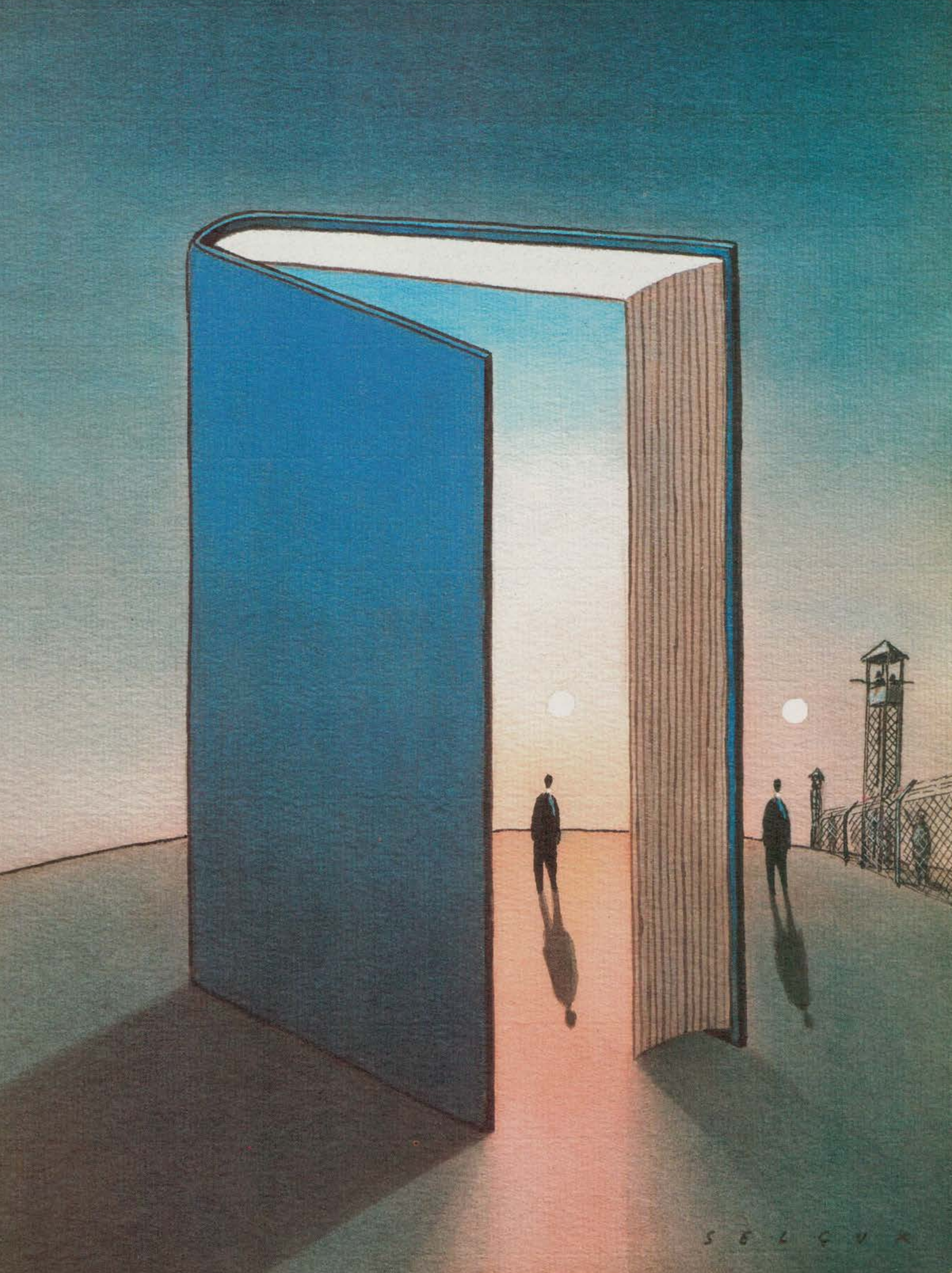
Our students know that our democracy has many flaws; they learn about them in school. They can also read about them on any given day in the newspaper or see them described on television. We regularly hear critics enumerate the errors of our foreign policy, our energy policy, our tax policy, our environmental policy, even the character of top officials in national, state, and local governments. We know that there are injustices in our society, and we expect the press to expose them and teachers to discuss them in their classes.

Living in a free society, it would be easy to imagine that people in other societies enjoy the same rights and freedoms as we do. Some do, most do not. According to the most re-

---

Diane Ravitch is research professor of education at New York University and nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. A leading education historian, she has written and edited many books including Left Back: A Century of Battles Over School Reform *and* The American Reader: Words That Moved a Nation. *This article builds on the research she began while writing her most recent book,* The Language Police: How Pressure Groups Restrict What Students Learn.

ILLUSTRATED BY SELCUK DEMIREL


SELÇUK

cent annual Freedom House survey, 35 percent of the world's population live in nations that are "not free" and another 21 percent live in "partly free" nations. As children grow to maturity, as they study history and civics, it is important for them to understand the differences between living in a democratic society and living where freedom is limited or nonexistent. It is important not because we want to congratulate ourselves, but because we want the younger generation to be prepared both to defend and improve democratic institutions.

In order to understand our rights and freedoms, young Americans need to learn about their absence. They need to know what it means to live in a world where one lives in fear of the rulers. What does it mean to live in a society where one expects the telephone line to be tapped, where one expects personal mail to be opened, where one cannot publish one's views or criticize the leaders without punishment, where critics of the regime disappear without a trace, where one dreads a knock on the door in the middle of the night? For almost all young Americans, such knowledge is remote from their personal experience.

Few American students have ever lived in a society where there were no elections or where elections were a sham; where criticism of the leader was a crime punishable by years in prison; where the press and all other media served the government; where there was no independent judiciary to limit the powers of the government; where individuals were arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned; where individuals were not free to travel abroad or to join organizations (like labor unions) with others; and where individuals had few or no rights.

If students don't study the reality of tyranny in school, they're unlikely to learn of it anywhere else. And their potential for political judgment will be limited by their political naiveté.

There have been tyrants throughout human history, people who wanted to exercise complete control of their subjects, but only in the 20th century did dictators like Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Pol Pot, and Mao have the bureaucratic and technological tools to achieve their fearsome ends on a grand scale. These men killed tens of millions of people. How they took power, how they controlled huge numbers of people, and how they stamped out individual freedom should be an important part of history studies. Students should also know tyranny is not merely a historical phenomenon. They should be prepared to recognize its earmarks today in societies like North Korea, Zimbabwe, and Cuba, where dictators hold a monopoly on power and ban free expression, and in Iran, where an iron-willed theocracy squelches dissident voices.

But schools are not well-prepared to teach about tyranny. I assign much of the responsibility for this failure to history textbooks, upon which most teachers of history depend for accurate information about far-flung societies. Even when teachers are well-educated in history (and many are not—thanks to teacher-education programs and teacher-assignment policies that are dismissive of content knowledge), it is unrealistic to expect teachers to know everything about the history of the entire world, and this elevates the power of the messages in the textbooks.

In my view, based on a careful reading of widely used textbooks in world history, these texts do a poor job of explaining what it means to live under tyranny. I think there are three main reasons for this.

First, some of today's world history texts exhibit a deeply ingrained cultural relativism. They are reluctant to make the judgment that a democratic system of government is superior to nondemocratic ones. They express a neutral tone of voice in which some people prefer democracy and respect human rights, and other people prefer local traditions that are different. This studied tone of neutrality implies that a preference for democratic institutions reflects Western values that should not be "imposed" on those who have other values.

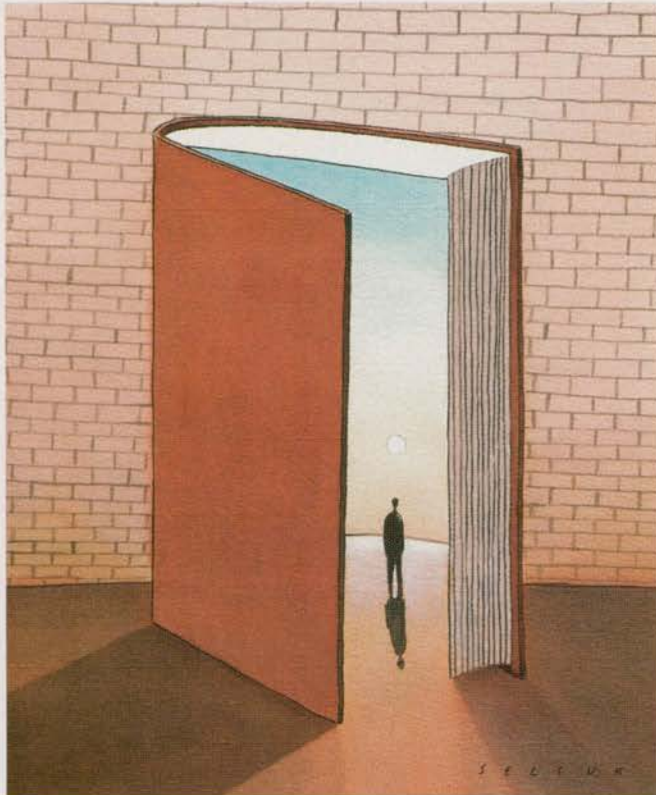
Second, world history textbooks seem quite willing to condemn dictatorships that are extinct, like that of Hitler and Stalin, but in general are remarkably deferential to regimes that are still in power, like those of Iran, Cuba, and China. Mao—who was responsible for the deaths of more people than any other world leader, including Stalin and Hitler—is treated with great deference in almost every textbook.

Third, and most important, the textbooks give scant attention to the realities of living in a tyranny or to abuses of human rights because they must compress major events to bare details. It is not merely that judgment is not rendered, but that factual details about life in a dictatorship are so scant and so abbreviated that students get no sense of reality or context, thus limiting their ability to make their own judgments. A single book that attempts to tell the history of all the world's civilizations, from ancient times to the present, cannot afford to spend much time on any one of them. Students cannot possibly understand what it was like to live in fascist Europe or the Ba'athist Middle East or Idi Amin's Uganda when the textbooks barely mention the political character of most regimes or sum them up in a few sentences or short paragraphs. Even in the rare case when the excesses of a brutal regime merit three or four pages, the treatment is so superficial that it lacks the narrative power to kindle students' desire to learn more on their own.

Nazi Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union get more attention than other tyrannies. Each receives a number of pages detailing how these regimes came to power; facts about their brutal use of power; and even one or two vivid firsthand accounts of individuals who suffered under their rule. Even for study of these two countries, however, teachers would do well to supplement the textbook with outside readings that would give students a more sustained exposure to the workings of the regime and its effect on real people, to the daily routine of the Nazi concentration camps or the medical experiments performed by Nazi doctors, life in the *gulag*, or Stalin's purges and show trials.

But after Stalin and Hitler, the facts and vignettes that would convey the texture of life under tyranny are few. The 20th-century's string of Latin-American dictators (and sometimes its guerrilla movements) elicit harsh words and phrases, but usually only in the context of one or two sentences and rarely with the facts, faces, or numbers that make

Students cannot possibly imagine what life was like for an ordinary citizen in any country that was ruled by a tyrant, whether fascist, communist, or a garden-variety dictator.



the harsh words meaningful. In Prentice Hall's *Connections to Today*, the Somoza regime of Nicaragua "looted" the population; in McDougal Littell's *Modern World History*, Somoza's regime is referred to as a dictatorship, without further elaboration. *Connections* has a strong paragraph about human rights abuses in El Salvador, explaining that "right-wing death squads slaughtered church workers, student and labor leaders, and anyone else thought to sympathize with leftists," and that the Archbishop of El Salvador was "gunned down as he celebrated mass in a chapel." (It fails, however, to even mention the murders committed by the country's Marxist guerrillas.) But *Modern World History* dismisses El Salvador with no more than a brief, nonjudgmental paragraph. *Connections* reports that Papa Doc Duvalier of Haiti "used his brutal secret police, the Tonton Macoutes, to crush opposition and terrorize the people," but neither *Modern World History* nor Holt, Rinehart & Winston's *World History: Continuity and Change* mentions Papa Doc or modern Haiti.

None of these texts is wholly unworthy or inadequate, but they can't possibly "cover" everything in sufficient detail to evoke a sense of reality or even mention everything that might be important for students to know. Typically, the textbooks provide superficial coverage of no more than a few sentences or paragraphs, or they give passing mention to events, names, and terms that are added so that the textbook complies with every state's checklist of topics and names.

Even when a textbook gives a relatively ample treatment to a single nation, as Holt, Rinehart & Winston's *People & Nations* gives to modern Argentina, it is still quite brief—a little over two pages, including three paragraphs about the criminal outrages perpetrated by the military junta. Sometimes the references are even shorter. For example, Glencoe's *World History: The Human Experience* (hereafter referred to as *The Human Experience* to avoid confusion with Glencoe's text titled *World History)* allots eight short paragraphs to modern Argentina. One of these paragraphs sums up the military dictatorship of this era: "Argentina's military leaders sparked an economic recovery, but ruled brutally. Death squads roamed the country, torturing and killing those who dissented. About 20,000 people simply disappeared. Mothers of missing children brought these human rights abuses to the world's attention through their weekly silent protest in Buenos Aires." It is an editorial feat to boil down this frightening period in the history of modern Argentina to four compact sentences.

Another region that is usually neglected in the textbooks is Eastern Europe, whose nations were trapped in the Soviet orbit for half a century. They receive scant attention, a few pages at best, and they are usually lumped together as a single unit. Based on the typical treatment of this historically important region, it is nearly impossible for students to learn much about the unique experiences of Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Albania, or Romania.

Most textbooks provide accurate, if bare, factual details about Eastern Europe as part of the Soviet bloc, briefly mentioning the Berlin airlift, the Hungarian revolution of 1956, and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. But no textbook adequately conveys the political history of any of these countries, the events that caused them to lose their independence, or the oppressive conditions that prompted dissidents to risk their lives to escape or protest.

The books have so little space to devote to each topic that students cannot possibly imagine what life was like for an ordinary citizen in any country that was ruled by a tyrant, whether fascist, communist, or a garden-variety dictator.

In today's textbooks, cultural relativism, deference to existing regimes, and the imperative of textual compression are interchangeable elements. As a consequence, world history textbooks today send a confusing signal about tyranny. The textbooks point out the bad features of tyrannous regimes, but when writing about modern-day tyrants like Mao and Castro, they seem to feel compelled to show their accomplishments as well as their flaws. Textbook publishers must believe this approach to contemporary dictatorships shows that their books are "balanced." But of course these books do not write about Hitler in terms of his "success" in reduc-

ing unemployment, building new highways, launching the popular Volkswagon, and controlling inflation.

Surely a text must consider, when teaching about democracy and undemocratic alternatives, whether egregious brutality may ever be justified: Can one accept human rights abuses, liquidation of opponents, rigged elections, censorship, and repression if the ruling authorities are able to produce gains in education, health care, and economic growth? Those who believe that good ends never justify evil means would surely answer 'no.' Which of us would want to live in a utopia of fear? Classroom discussion about the issue of means and ends is important and must occur. That discussion never happens in today's textbooks. This explains why the books are unable to speak unequivocally against regimes that are cruel, racist, anti-Semitic, oppressive to women, and indifferent to human life.

This article presents a close review of how recent textbooks from major publishers* handle four cases of tyranny: Cuba, the longest-running dictatorship in this hemisphere; China, the largest unfree country in today's world and (cumulatively) the most murderous totalitarian regime of the last century; fundamentalist Islam, in which theocracies have created a new model of tyranny, especially for dissidents and women; and some of the most notorious dictatorial African regimes.

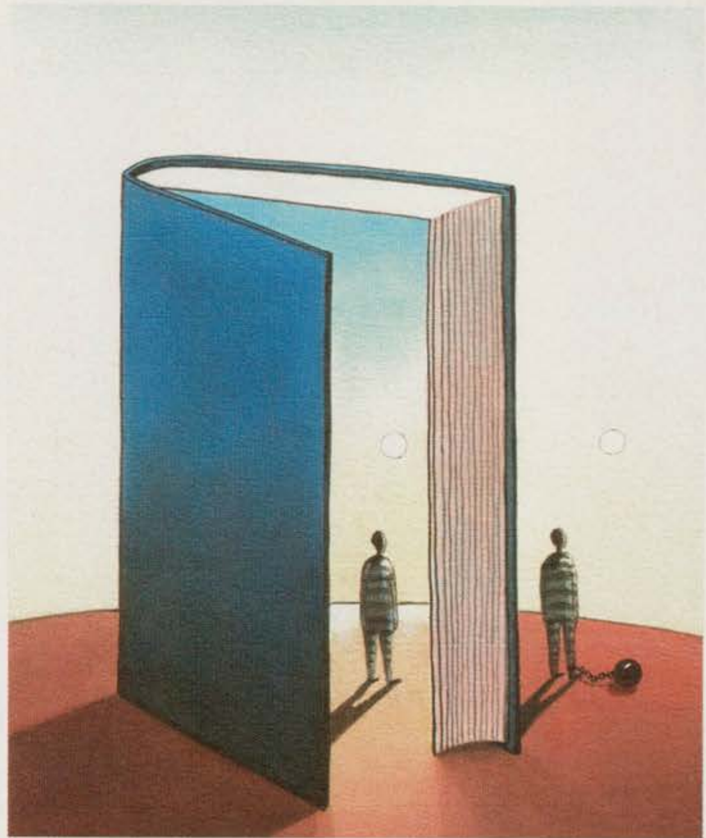
Cuba

The textbooks acknowledge that Fidel Castro is a dictator, but most (an honorable exception being *World History: Continuity and Change*) feel compelled to point out the benefits of his repressive rule. *Connections* says, "While Castro imposed harsh authoritarian rule, he did improve conditions for the poor. During the 1960s, Cuba provided basic health care for all, promoted equality for women, and increased the nation's literacy rate." On the other hand, the book notes that the "communist dictatorship angered middle-class Cubans. Critics were jailed or silenced, and hundreds of thousands fled to the United States." An accompanying photograph shows six people on a little raft and asks why people were willing to risk the voyage from Cuba to Florida. Why indeed would so many flee from a society where health, welfare, education, and other basic needs were allegedly achieved? A student would have a difficult time answering the question if the only information available were the material in the text, which says little about the brutality of Castro's regime.

In its very brief treatment of Castro's Cuba, Glencoe's *The Human Experience* offers two heroic quotations about him. One quotes him on the nature of a true revolutionary: "one acts to move the masses, the other waits for the masses to

*This review discusses: *World History: People & Nations; World History: Connections to Today; Modern World History: Patterns of Interaction; World History: The Human Experience; World History: Continuity & Change;* and *World History.* The first five are among the most widely used high school world history books, according to the American Textbook Council's survey of 1999 and 2000 textbook adoptions by selected states and large districts. The sixth is a brand new text, just entering the market. See references at the end of the article for authors, publishers, editions, and page citations.

This explains why the books are unable to speak unequivocally against regimes that are cruel, racist, anti-Semitic, oppressive to women, and indifferent to human life.



have a conscience already before starting to act." The other quote describes January 1, 1959, the day he overthrew dictator Batista: "Along the road to Santiago, crowds of people waved and cheered as Castro's ragtag troops passed by in battered jeeps and trucks. 'Viva, Fidel! Viva la revolucion!' they cried. So delirious were the throngs, so swept away by the power of the moment, that a friend of Castro's later recalled, 'It was like a messiah arriving. We were walking on a cloud.'" The text does not mention that some of Castro's revolutionary colleagues were subsequently jailed or executed. We learn that Castro suspended elections, but "he did improve wages, health care, and basic education." A student who knew nothing about Castro other than what was in this textbook would have a one-sided portrait.

Glencoe's *World History* begins its chapter on modern-day Latin America with an heroic account of the revolution led by the Castro brothers. We learn that the two brothers received a 15-year jail sentence because of their failed military attack in 1953, but were released after only 11 months. We do not learn that prison conditions under Castro are more squalid than they were under dictator Batista or that Castro

today metes out lengthier sentences to writers, doctors, lawyers, economists, teachers, peasants, and human rights activists than he received under Batista for leading a military attack. We read of the Castro regime's success in providing free medical services and education to all, but we also see a photo of an elderly black Cuban woman being carried ashore by a U.S. marine in 1975. In this account, no reason is suggested why anyone would flee Cuba.

The entire story of the Cuban revolution is told in two short paragraphs in *Patterns of Interaction.* Batista was unpopular, and he was corrupt, and he was overthrown by a popular revolution led by Fidel Castro. The text says: "At first, many people praised Castro for bringing reforms to Cuba and improving the economy, literacy, health care, and conditions for women. Yet Castro was a harsh dictator. He suspended elections, jailed or executed his opponents, and strangled the press with tight government controls." That's the whole story. According to the text, he achieved great things, he did some bad things. Based on this scanty text (which does not note that any economic improvements were a result of decades of Soviet subsidy, not Castro's economic "achievements"), students might conclude that dictators deliver impressive social gains, despite some errant abuses. The text does not give enough information, however, to evaluate the evidence or debate the question.

People & Nations gives a page to the Cuban Revolution, in which it balances the good works of Castro (a literacy rate that was "the highest in Latin America") against censorship and suppression of dissent. The text suggests that Castro was popular among the poor, but lost the support of intellectuals and of the middle- and upper-classes. The implication is that Castro's worst crime was to stifle differences of opinion, rather than the kinds of crimes against individuals (spying on personal behavior, torture, summary trials, and executions, etc.) that are associated with a police state. The most remarkable statement in this text is about the Mariel exodus of 1980: "When the Castro government realized how many dissidents, or people who disagreed with the government, were among its citizens, it allowed anyone to emigrate, as long as he or she informed the authorities." This wrongly suggests that anyone who wanted to leave Cuba needed only to ask for permission from the proper authorities and it would have been graciously granted.

China

The current world history texts do not call Mao a dictator, despite his leadership of a totalitarian regime in China that was directly responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of Chinese. They readily acknowledge that Hitler practiced religious and ethnic genocide, but do not explain that Mao practiced class genocide. Glencoe's *World History,* for example, contains simple one-paragraph thumbnail sketches of Mussolini, Stalin, and Mao. Mussolini, it says, was the "Italian dictator"; Stalin was the "Soviet dictator." But Mao is referred to as the "Chinese leader." The same book describes Chiang Kai-shek as a "Chinese general" who established a "dictatorship" in Taiwan but does not attach the same opprobrious label to Mao's rule.

In most of today's texts, Mao and his Communist troops receive what sometimes seems to be adulatory treatment. Most textbooks describe the Red Army's "Long March" in glowing terms. McDougal Littell's *Patterns of Interaction* describes the flight of Mao and his troops with breathless admiration. The fleeing Communists "crossed many rivers and climbed over mountain ranges. They fought several major battles and faced minor skirmishes almost every day. They also crossed miles of swampland. They had to sleep sitting up, leaning back-to-back in pairs, to keep from sinking into the mud and drowning."

Glencoe's *The Human Experience* quotes a romantic first-person account of the Long March: "If it was a black night and the enemy far away, we made torches from pine branches or frayed bamboo, and then it was truly beautiful. At the foot of a mountain, we could look up and see a long column of lights coiling like a fiery dragon up the mountainside. From the summit we could look in both directions and see miles of torches moving forward like a wave of fire. A rosy glow hung over the whole route of the march." Glencoe's *World History* also contains a quotation from a survivor of the Long March, praising the endurance of the Red Army; students are asked to "Describe the difficulties Mao Zedong's forces had to overcome to reach safety in North China." The text invites students to consider what would have happened if Mao—described by the text as China's "greatest leader"—had died on the Long March, if he "had not survived this ordeal." One would think that the nonsurvival of a tyrant would not be such a terrible thing to contemplate. One guesses, however, that this is not the answer the text envisions. As a matter of fact, the students have not been offered enough information to debate the "what if" question. Nor does the text suggest the possibility that with a humane, democratic leadership, perhaps China might have been spared decades of totalitarianism, mass murders, indoctrination, and government-created famine.

Connections calls the Long March "an epic retreat" that is a "symbol of heroism" to those who opposed the Kuomintang. It notes that the Red Army imposed "strict discipline" and required its soldiers to follow three rules: "Obey orders, 'do not take a single needle or a piece of thread from the people,' and turn in everything you capture." This background is used to explain that the Red Army was welcomed by the peasants, a view repeated in most textbooks. In contrast to other texts, *Continuity and Change* writes critically about China under Mao, eschewing romantic images about the Long March and collectivization.

What the textbooks neglect to explain, except for brief mentions, is how Mao crushed opposition in his "anti-rightist" campaign; purged scientists and intellectuals; murdered landlords and land-owning peasants; imposed a disastrous collectivization of agriculture (known as the "Great Leap Forward") that created a famine in which tens of millions of Chinese starved to death; imposed a harebrained scheme of backyard furnaces that diverted agricultural workers from the fields, thus worsening the famine; and launched the Cultural Revolution, which caused millions of teachers and professionals to be hounded as "enemies of the people."

According to the respected *Black Book of Communism,*

some six to 10 million people were killed by Mao's forces; another 20 million counter-revolutionaries died in prison; 20 to 43 million died between 1959 and 1961 because of the Great Leap Forward. This was one of the most disastrous regimes in human history; why should our children read about their military exploits with a sense of admiration for their courage and daring? Why do they not read about the hypocrisy of Communist leaders who preached asceticism, but lived in luxury or about the individuals and families whose lives were destroyed by men who held unchecked power?

Teachers will have to look beyond the textbooks if they want their students to understand the reign of this fascinating and powerful dictator.

Islamism

World history textbooks become tongue-tied when the subject is the rise of militant, fundamentalist Islam. None of them explains why and how Islamic civilization declined from the heights of intellectual leadership in the middle ages to its current state of economic and cultural underdevelopment. Why now the turn to fundamentalism?

Connections maintains that various Muslim nations turned to the Qur'an and Sharia law because Westernization had failed to improve life for many people and so they became disillusioned. This is a perfect example of a textbook interpretation that explains very little. The text does not tell readers that Westernization would mean such practices as separation of church and state, public education, democratic institutions, and equal rights for women, which were not widely adopted by Muslim nations. The text says that many Muslim leaders concluded that "a renewed commitment to Islam was the only way out of their current problems." Now, it was true that many leaders said this, but the text does not offer any examples of theocratic states that had actually solved modern economic and political problems by returning to fundamentalist religious principles. The text is careful not to take sides between the "Western model" of secular democracy and the fundamentalists' call for a return to Sharia law and economics.

Were the Islamists right? Was Westernization really tried in all these nations that are now apparently disillusioned with it? Does the Qur'an hold the key to current economic and political problems? Can a modern economy function effectively on the basis of a seventh-century religious text? The textbook offers no judgment and few facts that would allow students to form their own judgments; it just says, in a characteristically encyclopedic tone, that "many devout Muslims...urged political restructuring to put power in the hands of religious leaders." It is left to the imagination of the reader to figure out whether a theocratic government might be more successful in solving the problems of Muslim societies today than the Western model of secularism and liberalism.

Some basic facts about life in theocratic Muslim nations would help students in thinking through the merits of the separation of church and state. Take Saudi Arabia for example, a nation ruled by a king who adheres to a strict interpretation of Sharia law called Wahhabi. According to Freedom House, Saudi Arabia is one of the nine most repressive regimes in the world today. Not only are church and state united, there is also no separation of powers among the executive and judicial branches of government—and there is no legislative branch at all. The king has the power to appoint (and remove) judges, no political parties are allowed, and no elections are held at any level of government. The government (controlled by the royal family) censors the press, fires editors, and prohibits foreign journalists from entering the country. The people may not form unions, hold demonstrations, or publicly express non-Islamic religious beliefs. Worse still, citizens are arbitrarily arrested and held for long periods of time without trials. Women, no matter what their age, never gain autonomy; responsibility for them is passed from one male relative to the next as they move through life's stages. They cannot drive, enter men's stores or restaurants, or study engineering, journalism, or law. Under Sharia law, they may be given in marriage as young as age nine.

Very few of these facts appear in today's world history textbooks. *Patterns of Interaction* says that Ibn Saud, who founded Saudi Arabia in 1932, "carried on Arab and Islamic traditions. Loyalty to the Saudi government was based on custom, religion, and family ties. Alcoholic drinks were illegal. Like Kemal and Reza Shah [the modernizers of Turkey and Iran], Ibn Saud brought some modern technology, such as telephones and radios, to his country. However, modernization in Saudi Arabia was limited to religiously acceptable areas." Consider how amazingly understated that last sentence is!

The textbooks are especially perplexed when they must explain the position of women in contemporary Islamic states. They prefer to put a positive spin on other societies, to accept whatever their practices may be without criticism.

People & Nations addresses the problem of women's rights by diving for the cover of cultural diversity, saying that, "The concept of human rights does not have a single, universal meaning. Different cultures have different perspectives." Here comes the familiar textbook dodge of putting words into the mouths of "many people say...." In this case, says the text, many people "criticize Western nations for trying to impose their ideals and values on other nations." The case in point is the issue of women's rights, which "has different meanings in different societies. In the Islamic world, for instance, women's rights are viewed within the concept of the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam." So all nations (and the readers of the textbook) "must try to understand cultures and values that are different from their own." Since the textbook never describes the differences between the rights of men and women in an Islamic nation, it is impossible for a student to try to understand them or for the class to discuss whether women should have equal rights only in Western societies.

Connections tries to carry out a political balancing act that ends up confusing rather than enlightening. It begins by noting that women in most Middle Eastern nations have made great strides in the past half century. Many urban Muslim women in some nations, the text says, have given up

(Continued on page 42)

Freedom's Opposite

Recommended Readings on Totalitarianism and Tyranny

By Arch Puddington

To understand and appreciate freedom, it is necessary to gain a familiarity with freedom's opposite. If the 20th century was democracy's century, a time when people in every region embraced liberty and rejected dictatorship, it was also a century of brutal and insidious tyranny. It was a century that gave birth to the totalitarian dictatorship, a unique form of despotism in which the tyrant seeks not only to secure his own power but also to exert near-total control over the individual—over what he thinks, what God he worships, the content of the news he reads, where he lives and works, what his children are taught, and even, in some cases, the size of his family.

Communism was the most successful—if that description can be applied to a form of brutal dictatorship—variant of totalitarianism. At its peak, it extended from the vast Soviet Union to the countries of Eastern Europe, to China, North Korea and Vietnam, to Cuba and then to various countries in Africa and the Middle East—and this reading list reflects that fact. But its methods were adapted by totalitarians and tyrants of many ideological stripes, from many countries—and the list reflects that fact also.

This list assumes that teachers are familiar with the classics like *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* and Elie Wiesel's *Night*, both about the Holocaust, and *1984* and *Animal Farm*, George Orwell's works on the terror and hypocrisy of communism.

These suggested readings are aimed chiefly at teachers. They will provide an enhanced background for teaching about tyranny, its origins and methods, and its immense human costs. The list includes a few lengthy, though still readable, histories. But the slant is toward very accessible books, mainly memoirs and journalistic accounts.

These books give voice and face to the horrors inflicted by the regime and a feel for the means with which those regimes sustained themselves. Others tell the stories of those who have found the courage and means to resist tyranny and in this way have demonstrated that the desire for freedom is not exclusive to the West, but is human and universal.

Most of these books are accessible to late secondary school students. But given the length of several and the often harrowing subjects, teachers may find it most appropriate to assign excerpts.

Arch Puddington is director of research at Freedom House. He is the author of Failed Utopias, *a study of the techniques of Communist control, and* Freedom's Voice: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. *He has just completed a biography of the trade union leader Lane Kirkland.*

ARGENTINA

Jacobo Timerman. *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number.* University of Wisconsin Press, 2002. 176 pp.

Although democracy prevails in most Latin American countries today, during the 1970s the region was a vast human-rights wasteland. In country after country, military juntas held sway, and political opponents were routinely jailed, tortured, or murdered. Complicating the situation was the existence of violent Marxist opposition movements, who used kidnapping, assassination, and acts of terror in a futile attempt to gain power and refashion society along the lines of Castro's Cuba. One of the most brutal dictatorships held power in Argentina, where thousands were killed—some by being dropped into the sea from helicopters—by elite security forces during the country's "dirty war" against the revolutionary Left. Timerman was the publisher of an influential liberal newspaper and helped save people who had been unjustly arrested. Then, in the late 1970s, he himself was arrested and held for three years, during which he was subjected to a regime of systematic torture (described in a vivid, if somewhat detached, manner in this memoir). That Timerman was a Jew and a committed Zionist gave his tormentors, men with fascist instincts, additional satisfaction. This is a gripping, albeit disturbing, book about a chapter in hemispheric history that has hopefully been closed forever.

CAMBODIA

Molyda Szymusiak. *The Stones Cry Out: A Cambodian Childhood 1975-1980.* Hill and Wang, 1986. 245 pp.

This is one of the most gripping of a number of fine memoirs of Cambodians who survived the Khmer Rouge period, which lasted roughly from 1975 to the early 1980s, when Vietnam invaded and overthrew the regime of Pol Pot. In that brief period, the Khmer Rouge established a regime of terror that in many respects eclipsed in infamy those of Stalin, Mao, and Hitler. Over one million Cambodians were believed to have died; some estimates run

as high as two million. A Cambodian could be executed for wearing spectacles, a sign, the Khmer rouge believed, of an intellectual and thus unworthy of life. Molyda was a 12-year-old girl when the Khmer Rouge came to power. Her book is particularly illuminating for what it tells about the Communists' determination to control even the most intimate details of personal relations. Young boys and girls were executed for holding hands or for planning to marry without the party's permission. Children were carefully interrogated in an attempt to obtain evidence against their parents. The Khmer Rouge persecuted children; they also empowered them. Sixteen-year-old Khmer Rouge peasant soldiers tortured ordinary Cambodians for petty infractions or for not fulfilling work norms. This dreadful chapter in the history of modern totalitarianism was also depicted in the brilliant film, *The Killing Fields*, available on VHS.

CHINA

Chen Jo-his. *The Execution of Mayor Yin and Other Stories from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*. Indiana University Press, 1979. 220 pp.

In one story, a family is thrown into terror because its young child has blurted out, "Chairman Mao is a rotten egg." Will they be arrested, jailed, or sent to the countryside to do farm labor? Such were the apprehensions of daily life during the Cultural Revolution. These stories tell of family members betraying family members, of the younger generation imposing a dictatorship based on age over their parents, of human relations destroyed by a crazed search for ideological purity. This is a first-rate introduction to a chapter in the history of totalitarianism that even today remains shrouded in a fog of mystery.

Jung Chang. *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China*. Anchor World Views, 1992. 528 pp.

Jung Chang's saga begins in the dying years of the last Chinese Emperor, with the painful story of her grandmother's foot-binding and forced marriage as a concubine. Next is the story of her mother and father, ardent mid-level communists whose stories are also the story of Mao's takeover, the purges, the catastrophic Great Leap Forward, and the horrendous human toll of the Cultural Revolution, when both parents were endlessly paraded on the backs of pick-up trucks wearing dunce caps and the father was sent first to a psychiatric institute and then a labor camp for punishment. Finally, it's the story of Jung Chang herself and how she, and many in her generation, moved from loving Mao "like a father" to realizing that he was the source of her family's and her country's great horrors.

CUBA

Armando Valladares. *Against All Hope: The Prison Memoirs of Armando Valladares*. Alfred Knopf Publishing, 1986. 381 pp.

This prison memoir serves as a powerful antidote for those who still harbor illusions about the nature of Fidel Castro's Communist dictatorship in Cuba. Valladares spent 23 years in Cuban prisons for what amounts to "thought crime"—that is, he objected to certain oppressive features of the Castro regime. As progressives from the United States and Europe traveled to Havana to witness the revolution's achievements, Valladares and his fellow political prisoners endured the most horrible conditions or faced the firing squads that were kept busy on a daily basis. Among Valladares' fellow inmates were a number of Castro's former friends and allies, men who had broken with the system because the dictator had reneged on the promise of democratic freedoms. This is an accessible and powerful book about a totalitarian system that, even today, has its admirers.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Artur London. *The Confession*. Ballantine Books, 1973. 441 pp.

For anyone under the age of 30, it is difficult to comprehend that for some 40 years, the Czech people were ruled by a Communist dictatorship that executed dissidents, controlled the press, persecuted religious believers, prevented travel abroad, banned books, and packed writers off to lengthy jail terms. This book tells of the early years of Czechoslovak Communism. London was a party official who believed the slogans about a radiant future. Purged in the early 1950s, he was sent to prison. The charges were ludicrous—plotting against the state, spying for the West. He confessed after months of psychological torture. In his memoir, London tells of the absolute low point in his ordeal, when his beloved wife, with whom he shared both a marriage and a devotion to the party, renounced him. This story is a cautionary reminder to those who believe that terrible things never happen in civilized Western nations. There is a fine French language film version of *The Confession*, directed by Costa-Gavros and starring Yves Montand. It is available on VHS.

IRAN

Azar Nafisi. *Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books*. Random House, 2003. 368 pp.

In 1979, as the Islamic Revolution swept Iran, Azar Nafisi began her first class at the University of Tehran. This compelling memoir recounts Nafisi's time teaching literature and the frustration that led her to create a secret class in her home. This book is especially good for literature teachers; Nafisi moves easily between analyzing the freeing nature of great works of fiction and the freedoms that Iranians were losing under the Ayatollah Khomeini. (See sidebar, p. 47.)

IRAQ

Kenan Makiya. *The Republic of Fear: The Politics of Modern Iraq*. University of California Press, 1989. 323 pp.

This is the best account of life under Saddam Hussein. The author paints a frightening portrait of a society gripped by dread and subject to a never-ending stream of propaganda that extols the virtues of the leader, his family, and the ruling Ba'ath Party. Under Saddam and the Ba'athists, Iraq suffered from some of the worst features of both fascism and Communism: confession rituals, public hangings, the display of corpses, executions, torture, all toward the goal of instilling fear in the people.

NAZI GERMANY

William Shirer. *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich.* Simon and Schuster, 1990. 1,264 pp.

The extraordinary research that went into this classic account of Hitler's plan to dominate the world makes this the definitive study of the Third Reich. It's a single book that gives readers the background to begin to comprehend Hitler, his intention to create a 1,000-year regime, and the reality of the regime that survived for 12 years. Though the length of the book is intimidating, it reads like the work of a top journalist, which it is.

Wladyslaw Szpilman. *The Pianist: The Extraordinary True Story of One Man's Survival in Warsaw, 1939-1945.* Picador USA, 2003. 224 pp.

There are dozens of painful informative memoirs from the Holocaust by Jews who survived the concentration camps and by others who defied the Nazi regime and paid a terrible price. Among the most recently published is *The Pianist,* which was released earlier this year as a movie.

NORTH KOREA

Kang Chol-hwan and Pierre Rigoulot. *Aquariums of Pyongyang: Ten Years in the North Korean Gulag.* Basic Books, 2001. 238 pp.

In North Korea, negative remarks about the government are a crime—and the perpetrator's entire family is punished. This is how Kang Chol-hwan ended up in a labor camp at the age of nine. Just a few weeks after his outspoken grandfather "disappeared," Kang's family was sent to a camp for re-education in the thoughts of Kim Il-sung, North Korea's "Great Leader." Kang's heart-wrenching tale of surviving 10 years in the gulag and escaping to South Korea reveals the brutality of modern-day North Korea.

POLAND

Michael T. Kaufman. *Mad Dreams, Saving Graces: Poland: A Nation in Conspiracy.* Random House, 1989. 270 pp.

Timothy Garton Ash. *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity.* Vintage Books, 1985. 402 pp.

These two books are excellent starting places for an understanding of the rise and eventual triumph of Solidarity, the Polish independent trade union that brought Communism down in Poland and set in motion a process that led to the collapse of the entire East European Communist edifice. Both authors are skilled journalists: Kaufman covered Poland for the *New York Times* while Garton Ash wrote for a number of journals in the U.S. and Great Britain. Both are particularly good at illuminating the workings of the underground society that existed during the period when martial law prevailed and Solidarity had been declared an illegal organization.

RWANDA

Philip Gourevitch. *We Wish To Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda.* Picador USA, 1998. 355 pp.

The author, an American journalist, covered the civil conflict in Rwanda in which some 800,000 Tutsis were massacred by the Hutus. With first person accounts, Gourevitch provides the historical context, a picture of how the increasingly horrific Rwandan government incited genocide—and a view of the utter failure of the U.S., or the world to do anything useful to stop it. (See sidebar, p. 43.)

SOUTH AFRICA

Joseph Lelyveld. *Move Your Shadow: South Africa, Black and White.* Times Books, 1985. 390 pp.

In the mid 1960s, Lelyveld served as the *New York Times* South Africa correspondent, but he was expelled from the country after just 11 months because of his open hatred of apartheid. Returning in the early 1980s, he undertook an extensive search for the true impact of the racial policy "reforms" being imposed—and he found that blacks' freedoms were actually being taken away. For example, all blacks lost their citizenship, many were forced to move into "tribal homelands," and, despite the end of miscegenation laws, blacks could not live in white areas. This fascinating account reveals both the injustices suffered by blacks and the fears that led so many whites to support apartheid.

THE SOVIET UNION

Anne Applebaum. *Gulag: A History.* Doubleday, 2003. 720 pp.

For a history of the Soviet camp system, this fine book is the best place to begin your study. The author, an American journalist and scholar, was given access to the archives of the camp system in Moscow and interviewed survivors, camp guards, and other officials from the Soviet period. Applebaum stresses the economic role of the camps; they amounted to a vast source of slave labor for the benefit of the regime's grandiose schemes. Among the most heartbreaking segments are those dealing with children, many of whom were sent to the camp system along with their parents or dispatched to orphanages, never to see their parents again.

Robert Conquest. *Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine.* Oxford University Press, 1986. 412 pages.

Conquest is the preeminent historian of the Stalin era in the Soviet Union. *Harvest of Sorrow* is the masterpiece that takes up Stalin's war against the Soviet peasantry. Determined to break rural resistance to collectivized agriculture, Stalin killed upward of 15 million peasants, mostly through a government induced famine, during the 1930s. An added dimension was Stalin's fear of Ukrainian nationalism, and Conquest makes a strong case that Stalin starved the republic's peasants in an effort to destroy a crucial source of Ukrainian patriotism. Conquest writes brilliantly, his narratives are compelling and often gripping, all of which enhances his moral argument that Stalinism was the greatest evil of the century.

The Black Book of Communism (Harvard University Press, 1999). This 850-page book is the definitive work on the human and cultural toll of Communism. Based on newly opened archives, it details Communism's responsibility for between 85 and 100 million deaths. Its documentation of this "most colossal case of political carnage in history" made it an international bestseller.

(Continued from page 38)

wearing the *hejab*, that is, covering their head and body; but some countries, like Saudi Arabia and Iran, oppose Western secular influences, which, translated from textbook-speak, means that women in those countries are compelled by law to wear the *hejab*. Then follows a lively paragraph to demonstrate that some educated women want to wear the *hejab* to show their sincere loyalty to Muslim values. To make things even more confusing, the book asserts both that Sharia law allows women to play "important economic roles" while at the same time, it is interpreted by some nations to forbid women from voting, working, or driving cars.

The reader gets a conflicting mélange of positive and negative assessments, but no clear picture of the role of women in an Islamic society today. Nowhere does the text suggest a critical view, for example, that Muslim women should be free to wear the *hejab* or not wear the *hejab*, without legal compulsion either way. The textbook, deferring to cultural diversity, is nonjudgmental.

Continuity and Change attempts to confront the issues with honesty, but quickly backtracks into a posture of cultural relativism. It points out that the Shah of Iran had abolished polygamy, child marriage, and death by stoning for adultery, but the resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism "often forced [women] to accept a return to the traditions of the past." The authors suggest that this was a step backward, especially for Westernized women who were professionals. But the next paragraph insists that many women "embraced" these religious traditions because they provided a "sense of security and stability" and had "stood the test of time." Furthermore, the reversion to Islamic traditions (presumably like polygamy, being stoned to death for adultery, and being required to cover their head) "became a symbol of their pride in their Islamic heritage and their rejection of Western values." The book does not say which "Western value" was rejected, but presumably it is the right of women to equal treatment in society.

Certainly there are women who voluntarily renounce any claim to equal treatment and who choose to hide their face and to forego education. But just as surely, there are women who do not wish to be subject to the whims of the religious police and their male relatives.

One would expect a thoughtful discussion of the social and economic consequences of denying equal rights to women. One would expect the books to inform their readers that half the women in the Middle East are illiterate, a point recently made by Arab intellectuals in a report for the United Nations Human Development Fund. But this discussion does not occur in the textbooks.

Africa

The textbooks become incoherent when the subject turns to modern-day African nations. The compression problem becomes especially severe because the texts do not have space to mention every African nation, and the history of even a few nations cannot be adequately told in the text's typical abbreviated format. There is seldom enough detail to allow the reader to tell one nation from another. Glencoe's *World History* allots seven pages to the story of modern Africa, but more than half of that limited space is devoted to graphics. The text dispenses with Zimbabwe and Rwanda in three sentences: "Conflicts also broke out among ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. In central Africa, fighting between the Hutu and Tutsi created unstable governments in both Burundi and Rwanda. In 1994, a Hutu rampage left some 500,000 Tutsi dead in Rwanda." The terrible Rwandan genocide is thus dispatched in two sentences. Can any student learn anything from such skimpy sentences? (For a glimpse of the genocide, and the tyranny that made it possible, see page 43.)

Connections is frank enough to acknowledge that the United Nations failed to intervene during the Rwandan massacre (it claims one million massacred, in contrast to the figure of half a million dead in most other textbooks and 200,000 dead cited in *People & Nations*), but about the only explanation for such slaughter is "ethnic conflict," which seems to be a tautology (ethnic conflict causes ethnic conflict). The same textbook says in a tight nine sentences that in Nigeria, military dictators cracked down on critics, imposed censorship, and sometimes executed dissidents. In only five sentences, this text tells readers that Mobutu Sese Seko created a "brutal dictatorship" in Congo, and that he bilked the treasury of billions, slaughtered rivals, and ran the economy into the ground." Two candid sentences is all the editors can muster in their discussion of Robert Mugabe's dictatorship in Zimbabwe. When they describe his one-man rule of the past 20 years, they say, "He called for a one-party system to promote national unity and tolerated little opposition. In 2000, tensions over land ownership led to renewed violence." Perhaps with more space, they might have explained that Mugabe in recent years has jailed his opponents, muzzled the press, expelled white farmers and given their land to his cronies, destroyed the nation's agricultural economy, and plunged Zimbabwe into a famine that threatens the lives of millions of Zimbabweans.

Unlike most of the other world history texts, *Patterns of Interaction* attempts to focus on the importance of achieving democratic institutions. It doesn't attempt to provide the usual thumbnail sketch of a variety of African nations; instead, it gives short (very short, two-page) histories of contemporary Nigeria and South Africa, with particular attention to the struggle for democracy. The text rightly shows how colonial powers distorted the economies of their colonies, disrupted family and community life, and failed to develop good education systems, all of which reduced the prospects for democratic stability. Although it does not mention the misrule of dictators such as Mugabe and Idi Amin, it does provide a reasonable context for understanding the political and economic problems of former colonies.

Continuity and Change devotes only five pages of text to "Independent Africa." That is far too little to provide a con-

(Continued on page 51)

Glimpses of Tyranny and Resistance

Alan Charles Kors writes in *Education for Democracy* (p. 16) that justice, freedom, peace, and mutual forbearance are not "the normal state of things in human affairs"; they are the exception. What has the more common lot of humanity been? What understanding of the "normal state of things" has driven generations of democrats in the U.S. and elsewhere to build, strengthen, and defend free society?

Students should have answers to these questions. As Diane Ravitch has shown, textbooks don't supply them. We don't want to drown our children in the grim realities of tyranny, but the subject deserves their serious study. They should know, for example, that tyrannical regimes often strengthen their power by stirring latent resentments—whether against Jews and Gypsies in Hitler's Germany, teachers and intellectuals in Mao's China, or recently Tutsis in Rwanda.

And where there's tyranny, there's also heroic, creative resistance. The stories are inspiring—and constitute a vital piece of students' civic development.

In the "Glimpses" that follow, we witness the terrible genocide of Rwanda's minority Tutsis, and the resilience of Iranian women who find freedom in literature.

—EDITOR

Genocide in Rwanda

For over three decades prior to the genocide of 1994, the Tutsis of Rwanda were subject to periodic massacres by the majority Hutu population. Author Philip Gourevitch explains, "This is how Rwandan Tutsis count the years of their lives: in hopscotch fashion—'59, '60, '61, '63, and so on, through '94—sometimes skipping several years, when they knew no terror, sometimes slowing down to name the months and the days."

By the late 1980s, the Rwandan government, led by President Habyarimana and his wife Madame Agathe Habyarimana's influential family, was increasingly totalitarian—in control of the media, most jobs, the country's one political party and much more. The government's power to induce the population to carry out its will was immense. Like other tyrants in other times and places, Rwanda's Hutu Power government played on ethnic hatreds to build its own power and then systematically unleashed those hatreds in the most horrific of ways.

Following his Prologue, we pick up Gourevitch's devastating story as the massacres of 1992, a prelude to the genocide of 1994, were just beginning. —EDITOR

By Philip Gourevitch

Decimation means the killing of every tenth person in a population, and in the spring and early summer of 1994 a program of massacres decimated the Republic of Rwanda. Although the killing was low-tech—performed largely by machete—it was carried out at dazzling speed: Of an original population of about seven and a half million, at least 800,000 people were killed in just a hundred days. Rwandans often speak of a million deaths, and they may be right. The dead of Rwanda accumulated at nearly three times the rate of Jewish dead during the Holocaust. It was the most efficient mass killing since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

* * *

So it went—an attack here, a massacre there—as the increasingly well-organized Hutu extremists stockpiled weapons, and Hutu youth militias were recruited and trained for "civil defense." First among these militias was the *interhamwe*—"those who attack together"—which had its genesis in soccer fan clubs sponsored by leaders of the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), the president's political party which, by law, every citizen was a member of for life, and the *akazu.*[1] The economic collapse of the late 1980s had left tens of thousands of young men without any prospect of a job, wasting in idleness and its attendant resentments, and ripe for recruitment. The *interhamwe*, and the various copycat groups that were eventually subsumed into it, promoted genocide as a carnival romp. Hutu Power youth leaders, jetting around on motorbikes and sporting pop hairstyles, dark glasses, and flamboyantly colored pajama suits and robes, preached ethnic solidarity and civil defense to increasingly packed rallies, where alcohol usually flowed freely, giant banners splashed with hagiographic portraits of [President] Habyarimana flapped in the breeze, and paramilitary drills were conducted like the latest hot dance moves. The President and his wife [Madame Agathe Habyarimana] often turned out to be cheered at these spectacles, while in private the members of the *interhamwe* were organized into small neighborhood bands, drew up lists of Tutsis, and went on retreats to practice burning houses, tossing grenades, and hacking dummies up with machetes.

Play first turned to work for the *interhamwe* in early March of 1992, when the state-owned Radio Rwanda announced the "discovery" of a Tutsi plan to massacre Hutus. This was pure misinformation, but in preemptive "self-defense," militia members and villagers in the Bugesera region, south of Kigali, slaughtered 300 Tutsis in three days. Similar killings occurred at the same time in Gisenyi, and in August, shortly after Habyarimana—under intense pressure from in-

ternational donors—signed a cease-fire with the RPF,[2] Tutsis were massacred in Kibuye. That October, the cease-fire was expanded to embrace plans for a new, transitional government that would include the RPF; one week later, Habyarimana delivered a speech dismissing the truce as "nothing but a scrap of paper."

Still, the foreign-aid money poured into Habyarimana's coffers, and weapons kept arriving—from France, from Egypt, from apartheid South Africa.[3] Occasionally, when donors expressed concern about the killings of Tutsis, there were arrests, but releases followed swiftly; nobody was brought to trial, much less prosecuted for the massacres. To soothe foreign nerves, the government portrayed the killings as "spontaneous" and "popular" acts of "anger" or "self-protection." The villagers knew better: Massacres were invariably preceded by political "consciousness-raising" meetings at which local leaders, usually with a higher officer of the provincial or national government at their side, described Tutsis as devils—horns, hoofs, tails, and all—and gave the order to kill them, according to the old revolutionary lingo, as a "work assignment." The local authorities consistently profited from massacres, seizing slain Tutsis' land and possessions, and sometimes enjoying promotions if they showed special enthusiasm, and the civilian killers, too, were usually rewarded with petty spoils.

In retrospect, the massacres of the early 1990s can be seen as dress rehearsals for what proponents of Hutuness themselves called the "final solution" in 1994. Yet there was nothing inevitable about the horror. With the advent of multipartyism [which had been pressed on the Habyarimana government by the international community], the President had been compelled by popular pressure to make substantial concessions to reform-minded oppositionists, and it required a dogged uphill effort for Habyarimana's extremist entourage to prevent Rwanda from slipping toward moderation. Violence was the key to that effort. The *interhamwe* was bankrolled and supervised by a consortium of *akazu* leaders, who also ran their own death squads, with names like the Zero Network and the Bullets group. Madame Habyarimana's three brothers, along with a bevy of colonels and leaders of the northwestern business mafia, were founding members of these outfits, which first rolled into action alongside the *interhamwe* during the Bugesera massacre in March of 1992. But the most crucial innovation at Bugesera was the use of the national radio to prepare the ground for slaughter, and the ratcheting up of the suggestive message of us against them to the categorically compelling kill or be killed.

Genocide, after all, is an exercise in community building. A vigorous totalitarian order requires that the people be invested in the leaders' scheme, and while genocide may be the most perverse and ambitious means to this end, it is also the most comprehensive. In 1994, Rwanda was regarded in much of the rest of the world as the exemplary instance of the chaos and anarchy associated with collapsed states. In fact, the genocide was the product of order, authoritarianism, decades of modern political theorizing and indoctrination, and one of the most meticulously administered states in history. And strange as it may sound, the ideology—or what Rwandans call "the logic"—of genocide was promoted as a way not to create suffering but to alleviate it. The specter of an absolute menace that requires absolute eradication binds leader and people in a hermetic utopian embrace, and the individual—always an annoyance to totality—ceases to exist.

The mass of participants in the practice massacres of the early 1990s may have taken little pleasure in obediently murdering their neighbors. Still, few refused, and assertive resistance was extremely rare. Killing Tutsis was a political tradition in postcolonial Rwanda; it brought people together.

It has become a commonplace in the past 50 years to say that the industrialized killings of the Holocaust calls into question the notion of human progress, since art and science can lead straight through the famous gate—stamped with the words "Work Makes You Free"—to Auschwitz. Without all that technology, the argument goes, the Germans couldn't have killed all those Jews. Yet it was the Germans, not the machinery, who did the killing. Rwanda's Hutu Power leaders understood this perfectly. If you could swing the people who would swing the machetes, technological underdevelopment was no obstacle to genocide. The people were the weapon, and that meant everybody: The entire Hutu population had to kill the entire Tutsi population. In addition to ensuring obvious numerical advantages, this arrangement eliminated any questions of accountability that might arise. If everybody is implicated, then implication becomes meaningless. Implication in what? A Hutu who thought there was anything to be implicated in would have to be an accomplice of the enemy.

"We the people are obliged to take responsibility ourselves and wipe out this scum," explained Leon Mugesera, in November of 1992, during the same speech in which he urged Hutus to return the Tutsis to Ethiopia by way of the Nyabarongo River. Mugesera was a doctor, a vice president of the MRND, and a close friend and adviser of Habyarimana. His voice was the voice of power, and most Rwandans can still quote from his famous speech quite accurately; members of the *interhamwe* often recited favorite phrases as they went forth to kill. The law, Mugesera claimed, mandated death to "accomplices" of the "cockroaches," and he asked, "What are we waiting for to execute the sentence?" Members of opposition parties, he said, "have no right to live among us," and as a leader of "the Party," he invoked his duty to spread the

---

Philip Gourevitch is a staff writer at the New Yorker *and has reported from Africa, Asia, and Europe for magazines such as* Harper's *and* Granta. *Between May 1995 and April 1998, Philip Gourevitch spent nine months in Rwanda collecting stories from the survivors of the 1994 genocide. The result is a compelling book*—We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda—*that takes its name from a letter by seven Tutsi pastors who were asking their colleague, a Hutu pastor, to intervene on their behalf. This article is excerpted with permission of Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, LLC, New York, ©1998.*

Thomas...had heard that large-scale massacres of Tutsis were being prepared nationwide by the President's extremist entourage and that lists of Hutu oppositionists had been drawn up for the first wave of killings.

alarm and to instruct the people to "defend themselves." As for the "cockroaches" themselves, he wondered, "What are we waiting for to decimate these families?" He called on those who had prospered under Habyarimana to "finance operations to eliminate these people." He spoke of 1959 [one of the early massacres of Tutsis], saying it had been a terrible mistake to allow Tutsis to survive. "Destroy them," he said. "No matter what you do, do not let them get away," and he said, "Remember that the person whose life you save will certainly not save yours." He finished with the words "Drive them out. Long live President Habyarimana."

On the evening of April 6, 1994, Thomas Kamilindi was in high spirits. His wife, Jacqueline, had baked a cake for a festive dinner at their home in Kigali. It was Thomas's 33rd birthday, and that afternoon he had completed his last day of work as a reporter for Radio Rwanda. After 10 years at the state-owned station, Thomas, who was a Hutu, had resigned in protest against the lack of political balance in news programming. He was taking a shower when Jacqueline began pounding on the bathroom door. "Hurry up!" she shouted. "The President has been attacked!" Thomas locked the doors of his house and sat by the radio listening to Radio Television Libres des Milles Collines (RTLM), a radio station created by the *akazu*. He disliked the Hutu Power station's violent propaganda, but the way things were going in Rwanda, that propaganda often served as a highly accurate political weather forecast. On April 3, RTLM had announced that during the next three days "there will be a little something here in Kigali, and also on April 7 and 8 you will hear the sounds of bullets or grenades exploding." Now the station was saying that President Habyarimana's plane, returning from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, had been shot down over Kigali and had crashed into the grounds of his own palace. The new Hutu President of Burundi and several of Habyarimana's top advisers had also been on board. There were no survivors.

Thomas, who had well-placed friends, had heard that large-scale massacres of Tutsis were being prepared nationwide by the President's extremist entourage and that lists of Hutu oppositionists had been drawn up for the first wave of killings. But he had never imagined that Habyarimana himself might be targeted. If Hutu Power had sacrificed him, who was safe?

...Nobody, at that moment, was entirely sure who was in charge of the decapitated government, but the roadblocks, the confident tone of the RTLM announcers, and the reports of killing in the streets left little doubt that Hutu Power was conducting a coup d'état. And it was. Although Habyarimana's assassins have never been positively identified, suspicion has focused on the extremists in his own entourage—notably the semi-retired Colonel Théoneste Bagasora, an intimate of President Habyarimana's wife Madame Agathe Habyarimana, and a charter member of the *akazu* and its death squads, who had said in January of 1993 that he was preparing the apocalypse. But regardless of who killed Habyarimana, the fact remains that the organizers of the genocide were primed to exploit his death instantaneously. (While Rwanda's Hutu Power elite spent the night cranking up the genocidal engines, in Burundi, whose President had also been killed, the army and the United Nations broadcast calls for calm, and this time Burundi did not explode.)

In the early evening of April 6, Colonel Bagasora had taken dinner as the guest of the Bangladeshi battalion of UNAMIR.[4] An hour after the President's death, he was presiding over a meeting of a self-anointed "crisis committee," a mostly military gathering at which Hutu Power ratified its own coup and, because General Dallaire[5] and the special representative of the U.N. Secretary-General were in attendance, paid lip service to continuing the Arusha[6] process. The meeting broke up around midnight. By then the capital was already crawling with soldiers, *interhamwe*, and members of the elite Presidential Guard, equipped with lists of people to kill. The assassins' first priority was to eliminate Hutu opposition leaders, including the Hutu Prime Minis-

[1] Gourevitch writes, "The *akazu* was the core of the concentric webs of political, economic, and military muscle that came to be known as Hutu Power." It emanated from the influential family of President Habyarimana's wife, Agathe Kanzinga.

[2] The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) was an army aimed at putting military pressure on the Habyarimana regime. It was composed of Tutsis and anti-Hutu Power Hutus who had taken refuge in neighboring Uganda. The existence of the RPF was used by the Hutu Power government as one more excuse to stir suspicion and hatred against the Tutsi population.

[3] Among the tragedies of Rwanda detailed in Gourevitch's book, is the extent to which foreign governments and the United Nations acted in ways, intentional or not, that strengthened and sustained the Hutu government and its war on the Tutsis.

[4] The United Nations' Assistance Mission in Rwanda, a peacekeeping mission deployed six months earlier.

[5] Major General Romeo Dallaire, a Canadian, who was in charge of U.N. forces in Rwanda.

[6] Negotiations for peace with the Rawandese Patriotic Front are often referred to as the Arusha process because they took place in Arusha, Tanzania.

ter, Agathe Uwilingiyimana, whose house was one of many that were surrounded at daybreak on April 7. A contingent of 10 Belgian UNAMIR soldiers arrived on the scene, but the Prime Minister fled over her garden wall and was killed nearby. Before the Belgians could leave, a Rwandan officer drove up and ordered them to surrender their arms and to come with him. The Belgians, outnumbered, were taken to Camp Kigali, the military base in the center of town, where they were held for several hours, then tortured, murdered, and mutilated.

After that, the wholesale extermination of Tutsis got underway, and the U.N. troops offered little resistance to the killers. Foreign governments rushed to shut down their embassies and evacuate their nationals. Rwandans who pleaded for rescue were abandoned, except for a few special cases like Madame Agathe Habyarimana, who was spirited to Paris on a French military transport. The RPF, which had remained prepared for combat throughout the stalled peace-implementation period, resumed its war less than 24 hours after Habyarimana's death, simultaneously moving its troops out of their Kigali barracks to secure an area of high ground around the parliament, and launching a major offensive from the "demilitarized zone" in the northeast. The government army fought back fiercely, allowing the people to get on with their murderous work. "You cockroaches must know you are made of flesh," a broadcaster gloated over RTLM. "We won't let you kill. We will kill you."

With the encouragement of such messages and leaders at every level of society, the slaughter of Tutsis and the assassination of Hutu oppositionists spread from region to region. Following the militias' example, Hutus, young and old, rose to the task. Neighbors hacked neighbors to death in their homes, and colleagues hacked colleagues to death in their workplaces. Doctors killed their patients, and schoolteachers killed their pupils. Within days, the Tutsi populations of many villages were all but eliminated, and in Kigali, prisoners were released in work gangs to collect the corpses that lined the roadsides. Throughout Rwanda, mass rape and looting accompanied the slaughter. Drunken militia bands, fortified with assorted drugs from ransacked pharmacies, were bused from massacre to massacre. Radio announcers reminded listeners not to take pity on women and children. As an added incentive to the killers, Tutsis' belongings were parceled out in advance—the radio, the couch, the goat, the opportunity to rape a young girl. A council woman in one Kigali neighborhood was reported to have offered 50 Rwandan francs apiece (about 30 cents at the time) for severed Tutsi heads, a practice known as "selling cabbages."

* * *

In May of 1994, I happened to be in Washington to visit the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, an immensely popular tourist attraction adjacent to the National Mall. The ticket line formed two hours before opening time. Waiting amid the crowd, I tried to read a local newspaper. But I couldn't get past a photograph on the front page: bodies swirling in water, dead bodies, bloated and colorless, bodies so numerous that they jammed against each other and clogged the stream. The caption explained that these were the corpses of genocide victims in Rwanda. Looking up from the paper, I saw a group of museum staffers arriving for work. On their maroon blazers, several wore the lapel buttons that sold for a dollar each in the museum shop, inscribed with the slogans "Remember" and "Never Again." The museum was just a year old; at its inaugural ceremony, President Clinton had described it as "an investment in a secure future against whatever insanity lurks ahead." Apparently, all he meant was that the victims of future exterminations could now die knowing that a shrine already existed in Washington D.C., where their suffering might be commemorated, but at the time, his meaning seemed to carry a bolder promise.

By early June, the Secretary-General of the U.N.—and even, in an odd moment, the French Foreign Minister—had taken to describing the slaughter in Rwanda as "genocide." But the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights still favored the phrase "possible genocide," while the Clinton administration actually forbade unqualified use of the g-word. The official formulation approved by the White House was: "acts of genocide may have occurred." When Christine Shelley, a State Department spokeswoman, tried to defend this semantic squirm at a press briefing on June 10, she was asked how many acts of genocide it takes to make a genocide. She said she wasn't in "a position to answer," adding dimly, "There are formulations that we are using that we are trying to be consistent in our use of." Pressed to define an act of genocide, Shelley recited the definition of the crime from the Genocide Convention of 1948, which the U.S. only got around to signing in 1989, 14 years after Rwanda itself had done so. A State Department transcript of the briefing records the ensuing exchange:

Question: So you say genocide happens when certain acts happen, and you say that those acts have happened in Rwanda. So why can't you say that genocide has happened?

Ms. Shelley: Because, Alan, there is a reason for the selection of words that we have made, and I have—perhaps I have—I'm not a lawyer. I don't approach this from the international legal and scholarly point of view. We try, best as we can, to accurately reflect a description in particularly addressing that issue. It's—the issue is out there. People have obviously been looking at it.

Shelley was a bit more to the point when she rejected the denomination of genocide, because, she said, "there are obligations which arise in connection with the use of the term." She meant that if it was a genocide, the Convention of 1948 required the contracting parties to act. Washington didn't want to act. So Washington pretended that is wasn't a genocide—an evasive posture that was in different ways shared by other major powers and even members of the United Nations Secretariat, as well. Still, assuming that the above exchange took about two minutes, an average of 11 Tutsis were exterminated in Rwanda while it transpired. □

Reading Lolita in Tehran

In 1979, Azar Nafisi returned to her native Iran to teach literature at the prestigious University of Tehran. Engrossed in her love of literature and teaching, she slowly came to understand the Islamic revolution that was gripping her homeland. In the mid-1980s, Nafisi was expelled from the University of Tehran for refusing to wear the veil. She then taught at the Free Islamic University and Allameh Tabatabai University, but grew increasingly frustrated with the restrictions they imposed. While her rights were being taken away bit-by-bit, Nafisi realized that, "Every great work of art...is a celebration, an act of insubordination against the betrayals, horrors, and infidelities of life." In 1995 she resigned her faculty position to hold secret literature classes in her home with just a handful of her top female students. She tells the story of the revolution, her classes, and her students in Reading Lolita in Tehran, *which Nafisi wrote after fleeing to the United States in 1997.*

Publishers Weekly *said her book "transcends categorization as memoir, literary criticism, or social history, though it is superb as all three." This excerpt hints at the political changes that forced Nafisi under the veil and explores the subversive side of great literature.*

—Editor

By Azar Nafisi

One day in the spring of 1981—I can still feel the sun and the morning breeze on my cheeks—I became irrelevant. Just over a year after I had returned to my country, my city, my home, I discovered that the same decree that had transformed the single word *Iran* into the *Islamic Republic of Iran* had made me—and all that I had been—irrelevant. The fact that I shared this fate with many others did not help much.

In fact, I had become irrelevant sometime before then. After the so-called cultural revolution that led to the closing down of universities, I was essentially out of a job. We went to the university, but we had nothing much to do. I took to writing a diary and reading Agatha Christie. Instead of classes, we were summoned to endless meetings. The administration wanted us to stop working and at the same time to pretend that nothing had changed. Although the universities were closed, the faculty was required to be present and to offer projects to the Committee on the Cultural Revolution.

These were idle days, whose only enduring feature was the lasting friendships we formed with colleagues in our own and other departments. I was the youngest and newest addition to the group and had a great deal to learn. They told me about the prerevolutionary days, about excitement and hope; they talked about some of their colleagues who had never returned.

The newly elected committee for the implementation of the cultural revolution visited the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences and the Faculty of Persian and Foreign Languages and Literature at the auditorium in the School of Law. Despite the formal and informal instructions to the female faculty and staff on the issue of the veil, until that day most women at our university had not obeyed the new rules. That meeting was the first I had attended at which all the female participants wore head scarves. All, that is, except three: Farideh, Laleh, and me. We were independent and considered eccentric, so the three of us went to that meeting unveiled.

The three members of the Committee on the Cultural Revolution sat rather uncomfortably on the very high stage. Their expressions were by turns haughty, nervous, and defiant. That meeting was the last at the University of Tehran in which the faculty openly criticized the government and its policies regarding higher education. Most were rewarded for their impertinence by being expelled.

Farideh, Laleh, and I sat together conspicuously, like naughty children. We whispered, we consulted one another, we kept thrusting our hands up to talk. Farideh took the committee to task for using the university grounds to torture and intimidate the students. I told the Revolutionary Committee that my integrity as a teacher and a woman was being compromised by its insistence that I wear the veil under false pretenses for a few thousand tumans a month. The issue was not so much the veil itself as freedom of choice. My grandmother had refused to leave the house for three months when she was forced to unveil. I would be similarly adamant in my own refusal. Little did I know that I would soon be given the choice of either veiling or being jailed, flogged, and perhaps killed if I disobeyed.

After that meeting, one of my more pragmatic colleagues, a "modern" woman, who decided to take up the veil and stayed there for another 17 years after I was gone, told me with a hint of sarcasm in her voice, "You are fighting a losing battle. Why lose your job over an issue like this? In another couple of weeks you will be forced to wear the veil in the grocery stores."

The simplest answer, of course, was that the university was not a grocery store. But she was right. Soon we would be forced to wear it everywhere. And the morality squads, with their guns and Toyota patrols would guard the streets to ensure our adherence. On that sunny day, however, when my colleagues and I made our protest known, these incidents did not seem to be preordained. So much of the faculty protested, we thought we might yet win.

In the fall of 1995, after resigning from my last academic post, I decided to indulge myself and fulfill a dream. I chose seven of my best and most committed students and invited them to come to my home every Thursday morning to discuss literature. They were all women—to teach a mixed class in the privacy of my home was too risky, even if we were discussing harmless works of fiction.

For nearly two years, almost every Thursday morning, rain or shine, they came to my house, and almost every time, I could not get over the shock of seeing them shed

Tyranny and Resistance

their mandatory veils and robes and burst into color. When my students came into that room, they took off more than their scarves and robes. Gradually, each one gained an outline and a shape, becoming her own inimitable self. Our world in that living room with its window framing my beloved Elburz Mountains became our sanctuary, our self-contained universe, mocking the reality of black-scarved, timid faces in the city that sprawled below.

The theme of the class was the relation between fiction and reality. We read Persian classical literature, such as the tales of our own lady of fiction, Scheherazade, from *A Thousand and One Nights,* along with Western classics—*Pride and Prejudice, Madame Bovary, Daisy Miller, The Dean's December* and, yes, *Lolita.* As I write the title of each book, memories whirl in with the wind to disturb the quiet of this fall day in another room in another country.

Here and now in that other world that cropped up so many times in our discussions, I sit and reimagine myself and my students, my girls as I came to call them, reading *Lolita* in a deceptively sunny room in Tehran. But to steal the words from Humbert, the poet/criminal of *Lolita,* I need you, the reader, to imagine us, for we won't really exist if you don't. Against the tyranny of time and politics, imagine us the way we sometimes didn't dare to imagine ourselves: in our most private and secret moments, in the most extraordinarily ordinary instances of life, listening to music, falling in love, walking down the shady streets, or reading *Lolita* in Tehran. And then imagine us again with all this confiscated, driven underground, taken away from us.

We lived in a culture that denied any merit to literary works, considering them important only when they were handmaidens to something seemingly more urgent—namely ideology. This was a country where all gestures, even the most private, were interpreted in political terms. The colors of my head scarf or my father's tie were symbols of Western decadence and imperialist tendencies. Not wearing a beard, shaking hands with members of the opposite sex, clapping or whistling in public meetings, were likewise considered Western and therefore decadent—part of the plot by imperialists to bring down our culture.

Our class was shaped within this context, in an attempt to escape the gaze of the blind censor for a few hours each week. There, in that living room, we rediscovered that we were also living, breathing human beings; and no matter how repressive the state became, no matter how intimidated and frightened we were, like Lolita we tried to escape and to create our own little pockets of freedom. And like Lolita, we took every opportunity to flaunt our insubordination: by showing a little hair from under our scarves, insinuating a little color into the drab uniformity of our appearances, growing our nails, falling in love, and listening to forbidden music.

An absurd fictionality ruled our lives. We tried to live in the open spaces, in the chinks created between that room—our protective cocoon—and the censor's world of witches and goblins outside. Which of these two worlds was more real, and to which did we really belong? We no longer knew the answers. Perhaps one way of finding out the truth was to do what we did: to try to imaginatively articulate these two worlds and, through that process, give shape to our vision and identity.

How can I create this other world outside the room? I have no choice but to appeal to your imagination. Let's imagine one of the girls, say Sanaz, leaving my house and let us follow her from there to her final destination. She says her good-byes and puts on her black robe and scarf over her orange shirt and jeans, coiling her scarf around her neck to cover her huge gold earrings. She directs wayward strands of hair under the scarf, puts her notes into her large bag, straps it on over her shoulder and walks out into the hall. She pauses a moment on top of the stairs to put on thin lacy black gloves to hide her nail polish.

We follow Sanaz down the stairs, out the door, and into the street. You might notice that her gait and her gestures have changed. It is in her best interest not to be seen, not be heard or noticed. She doesn't walk upright, but bends her head towards the ground and doesn't look at passersby. She walks quickly and with a sense of determination. The streets of Tehran and other Iranian cities are patrolled by militia who ride in white Toyota patrols, four gun-carrying men and women, sometimes followed by a minibus. They are called the Blood of God. They patrol the streets to make sure that women like Sanaz wear their veils properly, do not wear makeup, do not walk in public with men who are not their fathers, brothers, or husbands. She will pass slogans on the walls, quotations from Khomeini and a group called the Party of God: MEN WHO WEAR TIES ARE U.S. LACKEYS. VEILING IS A WOMAN'S PROTECTION. Beside the slogan is a charcoal drawing of a woman: Her face is featureless and framed by a dark chador. MY SISTER, GUARD YOUR VEIL. MY BROTHER, GUARD YOUR EYES.

If she gets on a bus, the seating is segregated. She must enter through the rear door and sit in the back seats, allocated to women. Yet in taxis, which accept as many as five passengers, men and women are squeezed together like sardines, as the saying goes, and the same goes with minibuses, where so many of my students complain of being harassed by bearded and God-fearing men.

You might well ask, 'What is Sanaz thinking as she walks

Azar Nafisi is visiting fellow, professorial lecturer, and director of The Dialogue Project: The Culture of Democracy in Muslim Societies at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. She has lectured and written extensively in English and Persian on the political implications of literature and culture as well as on the human rights of Iranian women. Her writings include Anti-Terra: A Critical Study of Vladimir Nabakov's Novels *and* Religious Fundamentalisms and the Human Rights of Women. *Her op-eds and other articles have been published in the* New York Times, *the* Washington Post, *and the* Wall Street Journal. *Her cover story, "The Veiled Threat: The Iranian Revolution's Woman Problem" published in* The New Republic, *has been reprinted in several languages. Sidebar excerpted with permission from* Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books, *Random House, N.Y., 2003.*

the streets of Tehran? How much does this experience affect her?' Most probably, she tries to distance her mind as much as possible from her surroundings. Perhaps she is thinking of her brother or of her distant boyfriend and the time when she will meet him in Turkey. Does she compare her own situation with her mother's when she was the same age? Is she angry that women of her mother's generation could walk the streets freely, enjoy the company of the opposite sex, join the police force, become pilots, live under laws that were among the most progressive in the world regarding women? Does she feel humiliated by the new laws, by the fact that after the revolution, the age of marriage was lowered from 18 to nine, that stoning became once more the punishment for adultery and prostitution?

After our first discussion of *Lolita* I went to bed excited, thinking about Mitra's question. Why did *Lolita* or *Madame Bovary* fill us with so much joy? Was there something wrong with these novels, or with us? Were Flaubert and Nabokov unfeeling brutes? By the next Thursday, I had formulated my thoughts and could not wait to share them with the class.

Nabokov calls every great novel a fairy tale, I said. Well, I would agree. First, let me remind you that fairy tales abound with frightening witches who eat children and wicked stepmothers who poison their beautiful stepdaughters and weak fathers who leave their children behind in forests. But the magic comes from the power of good, that force which tells us we need not give in to the limitations and restrictions imposed on us by McFate, as Nabokov called it.

Every fairy tale offers the potential to surpass present limits, so in a sense the fairy tale offers you freedoms that reality denies. In all great works of fiction, regardless of the grim reality they present, there is an affirmation of life against the transience of that life, an essential defiance. This affirmation lies in the way the author takes control of reality by retelling it in his own way, thus creating a new world. Every great work of art, I would declare pompously, is a celebration, an act of insubordination against the betrayals, horrors, and infidelities of life. The perfection and beauty of form rebels against the ugliness and shabbiness of the subject matter. This is why we love *Madame Bovary* and cry for Emma, why we greedily read *Lolita* as our heart breaks for its small, vulgar, poetic, and defiant orphaned heroine.

Manna, a student who made poetry out of things most people cast aside, had once written about a pair of pink socks for which she was reprimanded by the Muslim Student's Association. When she complained to her favorite professor, he started teasing her about how she had already ensnared and trapped her man, Nima, and did not need the pink socks to entrap him further.

These students, like the rest of their generation, were different from my generation in one fundamental aspect. My generation complained of a loss, the void in our lives that was created when our past was stolen from us, making us exiles in our own country. Yet we had a past to compare with the present; we had memories and images of what had been taken away. But my girls spoke constantly of stolen kisses, films they had never seen and the wind they had never felt on their skin. This generation had no past. Their memory was of a half-articulated desire, something they had never had. It was this lack, their sense of longing for the ordinary, taken-for-granted aspects of life, that gave their words a certain luminous quality akin to poetry.

I wonder if right now, at this moment, I were to turn to the people sitting next to me in this café in a country that is not Iran and talk to them about life in Tehran, how they would react. Would they condemn the tortures, the executions, and the extreme acts of aggression? I think they would. But what about the acts of transgression on our ordinary lives, like the desire to wear pink socks?

I had asked my students if they remember the dance scene in *Invitation to a Beheading:** The jailer invites Cincinnatus to a dance. They begin a waltz and move out into the hall. In a corner they run into a guard: "They described a circle near him and glided back into the cell, and now Cincinnatus regretted that the swoon's friendly embrace had been so brief." This movement in circles is the main movement of the novel. As long as he accepts the sham world the jailers impose upon him, Cincinnatus will remain their prisoner and will move within the circles of their creation. The worst crime committed by totalitarian mindsets is that they force their citizens, including their victims, to become complicit in their crimes. Dancing with your jailer, participating in your own execution—that is an act of utmost brutality. My students witnessed it in show trials on television and enacted it every time they went out into the streets dressed as they were told to dress. They had not become part of the crowd who watched the executions, but they did not have the power to protest them either.

The only way to leave the circle, to stop dancing with the jailer, is to find a way to preserve one's individuality, that unique quality that evades description but differentiates one human being from the other. That is why, in their world, rituals—empty rituals—become so central. There was not much difference between our jailers and Cincinnatus's executioners. They invaded all private spaces and tried to shape every gesture, to force us to become one of them, and that in itself was another form of execution.

In the end, when Cincinnatus is led to the scaffold, and as he lays his head on the scaffold in preparation for his execution, he repeats the magic mantra: "by myself." This constant reminder of his uniqueness, and his attempts to write, to articulate and create a language different from the one imposed upon him by his jailers, saves him at the last moment when he takes his head in his hands and walks away toward voices that beckon him from that other world, while the scaffold and all the sham world around him, along with his executioner, disintegrate. □

---

*Nafisi describes this novel by Vladimir Nabokov as creating "not the actual physical pain and torture of a totalitarian regime, but the nightmarish quality of living in an atmosphere of perpetual dread. Cincinnatus C. is frail, he is passive, he is a hero without knowing or acknowledging it: He fights with his instincts, and his acts of writing are his means of escape. He is a hero because he refuses to become like all the rest."

Education for Democracy

(Continued from page 21)

References

[1] See, for example, Michael Novak, "A Reckoning." Remarks to Conference: Higher Education and Democracy in Peace and War. National Association of Scholars: Washington, D.C., June 2002.

[2] Peter H. Gibbon, *A Call to Heroism*. Atlantic Monthly Press: N.Y., 2002, p. 21.

[3] *The Education Gadfly.* A Weekly Bulletin of News and Analysis from the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, Vol. 2, No. 21, May 23, 2002 (www.edexcellence.net).

[4] *Losing America's Memory.* A Report by the Council of Trustees and Alumni, Washington, D.C.: February, 2000.

[5] As quoted in Wilfred M. McClay, "Knowledge for a Foxhole: Thoughts on the Reform of History Education in the United States." Presentation to Conference: Why Is U.S. History Still a Mystery to Our Children? American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C.: October 1, 2002.

[6] *The Civic Mission of Schools.* A Report from Carnegie Corporation of New York and The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), 2003, p. 19.

[7] David Brooks, "War and Man at Yale," *The Daily Standard* online, October 29, 2001.

[8] William Damon, "To Not Fade Away: Restoring Civic Identity Among the Young." In *Making Good Citizens*, edited by Diane Ravitch and Joseph P. Viteritti. Yale University Press: New Haven, Conn., 2001, p. 124-125.

[9] Lake Snell Perry and Associates and The Tarrance Group, Inc., "Short-Term Impacts, Long-Term Opportunities: The Political and Civic Engagement of Young Adults in America." Analysis and Report prepared for CIRCLE, March, 2002.

[10] Albert Shanker, "Education and Democratic Citizenship." Speech delivered in Prague, Czech Republic, June 3, 1995.

[11] Victor Davis Hanson, "The Civic Education America Needs." *City Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 3, Summer 2002.

[12] Theodore Dalrymple, "What We Have To Lose." *City Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Autumn 2001.

[13] For more information about the Core Knowledge curriculum, go to www.coreknowledge.org.

[14] Diana Schaub, Personal communication to author, January 2003.

[15] McClay, *op. cit.*

[16] Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, "Nothing Wrong with Teaching What's Right About U.S." The *Los Angeles Times*, December 30, 2001.

[17] Gibbon, *op. cit.* p. xxiii, 137.

[18] Peter H. Gibbon, transcript of panel discussion, "Why Is U.S. History Still a Mystery to Our Children?" sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C.: October 1, 2002, p. 9.

[19] Gilbert T. Sewall, *History Textbooks at the New Century.* A Report of the American Textbook Council, N.Y.: 2000.

[20] Diane Ravitch, *The Language Police.* Alfred Knopf: N.Y., 2003, p. 150, 152, 154-155.

[21] *A Lot To Be Thankful For: What Parents Want Children To Learn About America.* A Report from Public Agenda, 1998.

[22] Alan Charles Kors, "Did Western Civilization Survive the 20th Century?" *The National Interest*, Winter 1999/2000.

[23] Robert Conquest, *Reflections on a Ravaged Century.* N.Y.: W.W. Norton & Co., 2000, p. 20.

[24] Martin Gilbert and Richard Gott, *The Appeasers.* London, England: Phoenix Press, 2000, p. 73.

[25] Victor Davis Hanson, "Preserving America, Man's Greatest Hope," in *September 11: What Our Children Need To Know.* Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, September 2002.

[26] Ravitch, *op. cit.*, p. 141, 142-43, 144.

[27] Amnesty International: *Saudi Arabia: End Secrecy, End Suffering.* Report MDE, March 2000.

[28] Conquest, *op. cit.*, p. xiv.

[29] Malcolm Muggeridge, as quoted in *Political Pilgrims* by Paul Hollander. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, Fourth edition, 1998.

[30] Vaclav Havel, "Politics, Morality, and Civility," in *Summer Meditations*, translated by Paul Wilson. Reprinted in *The Essential Civil Society Reader*, Don E. Eberly, ed. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000, p. 391, 401.

[31] Gibbon, *A Call to Heroism*, p. 178-179, 183.

[32] Diana Schaub, "Can Liberal Education Survive Liberal Democracy?" *The Public Interest*, No. 147, Spring, 2002.

A Union of Professionals

AFT Supports the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride

On the Road to Citizenship

RIDE FOR CITIZENSHIP

- Immigrant workers who live in the United States and pay taxes want and deserve the right to apply for citizenship, which often is denied because of outdated laws.
- Recognizing the contributions immigrants make to our society, the American Federation of Teachers is proud to be an endorser of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride.

RIDE FOR FREEDOM

- Inspired by the Freedom Riders of the Civil Rights Movement, immigrant workers and their allies will set out from 10 major cities and cross the country in buses in late September to shine a spotlight on the plight of immigrant families and to advocate for sound and compassionate policies that guarantee their rights.
- The cross-country journey will culminate in meetings with congressional representatives in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 1 and 2, and a mass rally in New York City on Oct. 4.

RIDE FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS

- The AFT strongly supports the right of all workers to earn fair wages, receive benefits, and work in a safe environment free of exploitation and abuse.
- The AFT always has been an advocate for high quality public education and social and health care services for immigrant families.
- The AFT encourages all workers to form free trade unions, a pillar of progressive democracy.

GET ON BOARD!

- The AFT urges members to participate. For more information, visit the Freedom Ride's Web site at **www.iwfr.org**.

RIGHTS FOR ALL WORKERS
DECENT WAGES
BENEFITS
FAIR WORKING CONDITIONS

TEXTBOOKS AND TYRANNY

(Continued from page 42)

text for understanding the political problems of the continent. The text refers generically to leaders who "resorted to the same kind of autocratic methods used by earlier colonial rulers," but provides meager information about those autocrats, dictators, and tyrants. A one-paragraph summary of Rhodesia-Zimbabwe's history fails even to mention Mugabe. In its favor, this text, like others, devotes more than the usual attention to South Africa (in this case, a relatively generous four paragraphs), which is a great success story for democracy in sub-Saharan Africa. *Continuity and Change* has an editorial board of distinguished historians who surely know that it is not possible to summarize the complex history of modern Africa in five pages.

The editors and authors of world history textbooks mean well. They earnestly want students to know about the world and about other civilizations. But sadly, the very format of the textbook defeats their purposes. The books demonstrate the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of cramming a reasonably interesting history of the entire world into a single volume, even one that is usually about 1,000 pages. This difficulty becomes even more pronounced when such a large proportion of the textbooks is devoted to flashy graphics. Despite the visual glitter, the textbooks suffer from terminal dullness. Their accounts never touch the wellsprings of emotion that make a topic genuinely engaging to the reader. They skim across the surface of events, summarizing factual tidbits and trends without regard to whether there is a thread that makes a coherent story. There seldom is. Stuff happens. The young person trying to see how the events connect to one another, looking for an explanation that will help make sense of the world today, will all too often be disappointed.

Sadly, the textbooks waste an opportunity to expose young minds to the reality of life in tyrannical regimes and the valiant efforts to overthrow them; to help them understand how such regimes come to be and how they sustain themselves; and to instill in them a clear knowledge that such inhumane regimes don't belong only to the past, but are, in fact, a current reality.

But of course the problem with the textbooks begins with the courses they're designed for: world history or world cultures courses. These courses, in which students gallop through time and across the globe, usually in one or two years (and rarely, three), are now seen by administrators and curriculum-developers as a way to instill cultural pride and build the self-esteem of students from diverse backgrounds. Based on this approach, it is hard to exclude any region or nation since Americans come from every continent and nation in the world. Thus, the necessity to "cover" everything.

No nation can be left out, no civilization can be ignored, everything must be "covered." That is a recipe for superficiality, and superficiality guarantees loss of context, which is critical to student com-

(continued)

Teach Your Students Life's Most Valuable Lesson.

The Smile Train's Smiles-Across-Miles program can give your students the extraordinary experience of helping to change a child's life, half a world away.

By raising money for The Smile Train, your students will help provide free cleft surgery for poor children in developing countries. This surgery costs as little as $250 and takes as little as 45 minutes yet it can give a child not just a new smile, but a second chance at life.

Enroll today and receive our free fundraising kit that contains everything you'll need to get started. When you complete the project, each student will receive a **Certificate of Altruism**. You'll receive the satisfaction of helping your students learn to help others in a real-life, interactive, emotional experience.

YES, I want to involve my students in helping to change a child's life.

❒ Please send me a free fundraising kit.

Name ____________

Address ____________

City ____________ State ____ Zip ____________

Email ____________

Phone ____________

School ____________ Grade ______

Return this coupon to:

The Smile Train, 245 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2201, New York, NY 10016

or register on our website

www.SmileTrain.org

100% of your donation goes towards programs — 0% goes towards overhead.

TheSmileTrain

Changing The World One Smile At A Time.

1-877-KID-SMILE www.smiletrain.org

Our Board of Trustees pays for all non-program expenses, such as overhead, administration and fundraising. The Smile Train is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit recognized by the IRS, and all donations to The Smile Train are tax-deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. ©2003 The Smile Train.

prehension—and lack of gripping details, which is necessary for high interest.

In short, the world cultures approach that now dominates the paradigm for world history textbooks virtually assures that the books will be boring. Students don't learn when they are bored. They learn and remember when there are great stories, vivid biographies, amazing anecdotes. Students would be awed by the stories of life in apartheid South Africa, Mao's China, Stalin's Soviet Union, Somoza's Nicaragua, Idi Amin's Uganda, or Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Students would understand and identify with fighters for freedom who defied Ceausescu in Romania or Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe. They could connect with those who courageously built the Goddess of Democracy in Tiananmen Square or demonstrated for freedom in Budapest, Warsaw, and Prague. In those instances, and in many others, men and women put their lives at risk to demand freedom and democracy. These are exciting and inspiring stories. Our students should learn them.

Students learn when there is a coherent and well-written narrative rather than a parade of disconnected factoids and assertions. Bowing to the gods of coverage assures that students won't remember what they were taught.

And there is a further price to be paid for using history courses to teach ancestral pride. If that is the goal, it is extremely difficult to encourage critical thinking. Critical thinking and ancestral pride do not really go together well. Ancestral pride requires that we emphasize the good and neglect the bad, but good history teaching demands honesty and accuracy, not deference to the readers' sensitivities.

The world history program cannot be—as it is now—just a meaningless, forgettable tour through every civilization from ancient times to the present. What our students need to understand is that human beings have within them the capacity for unspeakable cruelty to one another. We have ample examples in history—and at the present time—of people slaughtering other people; almost any reason may be invoked as justification: race, religion, ethnicity, culture, appearance. Whites killing whites; blacks killing blacks; Mesoamericans killing other Mesoamericans; group against group; brother against brother. There is a beast within us, one might say, and it must be tamed by civilization. It can be tamed, as some dictators have done, by compulsion, by fear, by brute force. And it can be tamed, as democracies attempt to do, by building a stable institutional framework of law, coupled with educational and religious organizations that teach the rules of civilized behavior and the bedrock principles of a just society.

What students are not learning today from their world history courses are the lessons of history. They are getting a superficial canoe ride across the oceans of experience that many people and nations have accumulated. They are racing across centuries, not sure why they are studying this or that civilization other than to learn that people everywhere are creative and have wonderful traditions. Maybe that is all they will remember when they have forgotten which civilizations they studied.

We should aim higher. If our intention is to alert the younger generation to what has been learned about humankind's striving for a just and humane society, if we hope to inspire in them a lifelong interest in studying about other worlds, then what we are doing now is a failure. We must devise a far better way to introduce them to studies of the world. □

THE GILDER LEHRMAN
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY

announces a series of one-week seminars for high school and middle school teachers in summer 2004.
Seminars on major topics in American history are led by eminent historians such as Eric Foner, Gordon Wood, and Drew Faust, at prestigious institutions including Harvard, Stanford, Princeton, Columbia, and Cambridge.

Seminars provide a $500 stipend, books, room and board.
In-service and new teacher credit is available.

Candidates should sumbit an application.
Applications will be available on-line in fall 2003 at www.gilderlehrman.org or call 646.366.9666.
Deadline for Applications: March 26, 2004

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History promotes the study and love of American history.

www.gilderlehrman.org

References

World History: People & Nations (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 2000)
Argentina: 863-866; Cuba: 857-861; Islam: 917; Rwanda: 824.

Elisabeth Gaynor Ellis and Anthony Esler, *World History: Connections To Today* (Prentice-Hall, 2001)
Nicaragua: 946-947; El Salvador, 948-949; Haiti: 949; China: 736-737, 862-867; Cuba: 940-941; Islam: 892-893; Africa: 811, 919, 921-924.

Roger B. Beck, et al., *Modern World History: Patterns of Interaction* (McDougal Littell, 1999)
Nicaragua: 493; El Salvador: 493; China: 402-404, 482-485; Cuba: 492-493; Saudi Arabia: 408; Nigeria: 537-538; South Africa: 538-540.

Mounir A. Farah and Andrea Berens Karls, *World History: The Human Experience* (Glencoe, 2001)
Argentina: 990-991; Cuba: 972, 979, 982-984; China: 805-806, 901-905.

William Travis Hanes III, et al., *World History: Continuity & Change* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1999)
Cuba: 808-810, 814, 845; China: 673-675, 750-754; Iran: 790; Africa: 772-777, 791-796.

Jackson J. Spielvogel, *World History* (Glencoe/McGraw Hill, 2003)
Cuba: 900, 907-908; China: 795-797, 940-944; Mussolini: 760; Stalin: 761; Mao: 797; Chiang Kai-shek: 797; Africa: 921-927.

Just For You!

These and Several Hundred others. For Friends and Family too!

1-800-774-9162

www.buymags.com/aft

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery	33.97	25.97
Allure	15.00	11.97 *
American Baby	23.94	13.97
American Civil War	23.95	17.95
American History Illustrated	23.95	17.95
American Photo	21.00	12.95
Aquarium Fish	27.97	15.97
Architectural Digest	39.95	24.00 *
Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel	14.95	11.97
Artist's Magazine	26.00	18.97
Asimov's Science Fiction	39.97	29.97
The Atlantic	19.95	14.95
Aviation History	23.95	17.95
Backpacker	29.98	23.94 *
Baseball Digest	29.95	19.96
Basketball Digest	29.95	15.97
Better Homes & Gardens 1 yr	22.00	14.97
2 yrs		22.00
Bicycling	24.98	16.94 *
Biography	21.97	15.00

Reader's Digest Perfect for you or as a gift! One year only $13.96

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Bird Talk	27.97	15.97
Black Enterprise	22.00	17.95
Boating	28.00	17.97
Bon Appetit	28.00	15.00 *
British Heritage	29.95	17.95
Business Week	59.97	39.97 *
Car & Driver	21.94	11.97
Car Stereo Review	17.94	11.97
Cat Fancy	25.97	15.97
Chicago	19.90	9.95
Child [12 issues]	15.56	12.00
Civil War Times	27.95	17.95
Coach, Scholastic	23.95	14.95
Columbia Journalism Review	20.00	11.95
Computer Shopper	25.00	14.99
Conde Nast Traveler	19.97	12.00 *
Consumer Reports 1 yr	26.00	26.00
2 yrs		44.00

Financial advice & performance reviews from the experts. 13 issues - just $19.95!

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Cosmopolitan	29.97	18.00 *
Country Living	24.00	12.00
Country Living Gardener	19.97	14.97
Cruise Travel	23.94	11.97
Details	15.00	7.97
Discover	29.95	14.98
Disney Adventures (ages 7-14)	14.95	11.97
Dog Fancy	27.97	15.97
Ebony	20.00	14.97
Elle	28.00	14.00
Elle Decor	29.00	14.97
Ellery Queen's Mystery	33.97	25.97
Entrepreneur	20.00	14.97
Esquire	15.94	7.97

* These rates for teachers and college students only.

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Essence	22.00	18.96
Family Circle [12 iss]	15.98	12.00
Family Fun	16.95	9.97
Family Handyman	24.00	15.00
Fast Company [15 iss]	29.94	19.75
Field & Stream	15.97	11.97
Fitness	19.98	11.97
Flying	26.00	14.97
Forbes *reduced!*	59.95	24.95

The latest ideas, events, trends and issues of the day. Full year - just $28.00

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Foreign Affairs	44.00	32.00
Foreign Policy	24.95	19.95
Fortune [26 iss]	59.95	29.98 *
Girls Life	19.95	14.95
Glamour	16.00	11.97 *
Golf	19.95	15.97
Golf Digest	27.94	16.77
Golf World	53.97	29.97
Good Housekeeping 1 yr	19.97	10.00
2 yrs		19.00
Gourmet	20.00	15.00
GQ	20.00	15.00 *
Harper's Bazaar	15.00	8.00
Harper's Magazine	21.00	11.97
Hawaii	20.00	15.97
Health Magazine	19.97	11.97
Heart & Soul	16.97	9.97
Hispanic Magazine	24.00	18.00
Home	24.00	12.00
Horticulture	28.00	15.97
House Beautiful 1 yr	19.97	12.00
2 yrs		23.00
Humpty Dumpty (ages 4-6)	24.00	17.29

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
New York 1 yr	29.90	14.97
2 yrs		29.90
New Yorker 1 yr	49.95	28.00 *
2 yrs		55.00 *
Newsweek [55 iss]	43.45	24.99 *
[108 iss]		48.99 *
Old House Journal	27.00	13.97
Oprah	24.00	15.00 *
Organic Style	19.96	14.96 *
Outdoor Photographer	19.94	10.98
Parenting	17.97	8.97
Parents	15.98	8.97
PC Magazine [25 iss]	45.45	25.00
PC World	24.95	17.97
Photographic	23.94	11.97
Popular Mechanics	21.97	12.00
Popular Photography	19.94	11.97

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Technology & Learning	24.00	14.00
Teen Vogue [10 iss]	15.00	10.00
Tennis	18.00	12.00
Texas Monthly	18.00	14.97
This Old House	19.95	15.96

55 weekly issues at a special member rate. A best buy $24.99!!

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Time [56 issues]	59.95	29.95 *
Town & Country	28.00	15.00
TravelAmerica	23.94	11.97

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES aft plus

LOWEST PRICES — NO GIMMICKS - Just the lowest rates!

1-800-774-9162

Box 258 • Greenvale, NY 11548

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Popular Science	19.95	15.97
Premiere	21.94	11.97
Prevention	21.97	16.94 *
The Progressive	30.00	19.97
Psychology Today	21.00	15.97
Reader's Digest	24.96	13.96
large print edition	27.96	21.95
Selecciones (*spanish*)	27.46	19.97
Real Simple [10 iss]	19.95	14.95 *
Redbook	15.00	8.00

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
TV Guide	56.68	39.52
U.S. News 1 yr	44.75	24.97
2 yrs		44.75
Unique Homes	31.00	21.97
US Magazine	65.00	52.00
Vanity Fair	24.00	18.00 *

3 SPECIAL RATES FOR MEMBERS

$29.95 $24.97 $24.95!

ENJOY THEM ALL YEAR LONG!

• Best Titles • LOWEST Rates • Easy Ordering

Extended Office Hours Mon.-Thur. 9am-7pm & Fri. til 5pm ET

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Inc.	19.00	14.00
Inside Stuff (NBA)	19.95	12.95
Instructor (K-8)	19.95	9.95
Jet	38.00	24.00
Kiplinger's Personal Finance	23.95	14.97
Kiplinger's Retirement Report	59.95	29.95
Ladies Home Journal	16.97	9.99
Latina	20.00	14.97
Lucky	15.00	12.00
Marie Claire	17.97	12.00
Men's Journal	19.94	9.97
Metropolitan Home	19.94	9.97
Midwest Living	19.97	11.65
Modern Bride	17.97	9.95
Money [13 issues]	39.89	19.95 *
More Magazine	18.00	11.97
Mother Jones	18.00	12.00
Motor Trend	18.00	10.00
The Nation	52.00	26.00
National Review	59.00	39.00

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Reptiles	27.97	15.97
Road & Track	21.94	11.97
Rolling Stone	23.94	11.97
Runner's World	24.00	19.88 *
Salt Water Sportsman	24.97	19.97
Saturday Evening Post	14.97	12.97
Scuba Diving (Rodale's)	21.98	11.97 *
Self	16.00	12.00 *
Seventeen	19.95	9.98
Ski [8 Iss] or Skiing [7 iss]	14.97	9.97
Smart Money	24.00	15.00
Smithsonian	32.00	16.00
Sound & Vision	24.00	12.00
Sport Fishing [9 iss]	19.97	14.97
Sporting News [1 year]	78.00	39.60
Sports Illustrated [53 iss]	78.97	39.75 *
The Weekly Standard	79.96	47.96
Stereophile	19.94	11.97
Sunset	24.00	16.00
Teaching Pre K-8	23.97	16.97

Publication	Usual Price	Your Price
Vietnam	23.95	17.95
Vogue	28.00	17.97
W Magazine	29.90	14.95
Weight Watchers	17.70	13.97
WildBird	19.97	15.97
Wine Enthusiast	32.95	19.95
Wired	24.00	12.00
Woman's Day	17.97	8.99
Working Mother	12.97	9.97
World Press Review	26.97	16.97
World War II	27.95	17.95
Writer's Digest	26.00	17.97
YM	16.60	9.97

Visit our website at *www.buymags.com/aft*

Hundreds of Others Just Ask!

For renewals include a mailing label, if available. Subscriptions usually begin within 45 - 60 days.

AFT SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
Box 258 • Greenvale, NY 11548

Name ______

Address ______

City, State, Zip ______

Your School ______

Home Phone (____) ______

e-mail address ______ @ ______

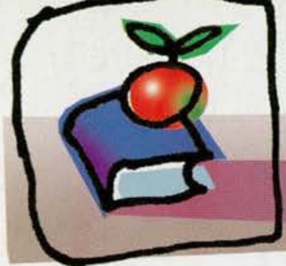
Publication Name	Years	Price
	Total	

❑ Check enclosed payable to: **AFTSS**
❑ Charge to my credit card
❑ Visa ❑ MasterCard ❑ Discover ❑ Amex

Acct: ______ Exp. Date: ______

❑ Please bill me (phone # required)

S2309



The Albert Shanker Institute
The power of ideas in action

Created by AFT and named in honor of its late president, the Albert Shanker Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to the exploration of policies in three areas—educational excellence and opportunity in education, unions as the champions of quality, and promoting democracy around the world by fostering freedom of association and civic education.

Selected publications include:

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY
Endorsed by a broad array of education, academic, business, and labor leaders, this *statement of principles* highlights the civic mission of schools and calls for strengthening the teaching of democratic values (*$5 each or available online*).

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT
A policy paper arguing that standards-based reform will falter unless it provides educators with the professional development they need to help students succeed (*$10 each or available online*).

EDUCATING DEMOCRACY:
STATE STANDARDS TO ENSURE A CIVIC CORE
A nationwide study that evaluates the strength of state standards for preparing an informed citizenry (*$15 each or available online*).

FINDING THEIR VOICES:
PROFESSIONALS AND WORKFORCE REPRESENTATION
National poll data and case studies indicate that many unorganized professionals would like a union or similar employee organization to represent them in their workplaces and careers (*$10 each*).

BUILDING A NEW STRUCTURE FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
This influential paper explores the problems of school leadership and the reasons that public school systems have difficulty responding to the demands of standards-based reform (*$10 each or available online*).

HONG KONG, DEMOCRACY AND LABOR
Teacher union and democracy activist Szeto Wah describes Albert Shanker as a mentor who taught that professional issues can help build unions, and unionism can help build democracy (*online only*).

FORUM SERIES LINKING BEST EVIDENCE TO CLASSROOM PRACTICE
Online transcripts from Institute-sponsored forums highlight the best research on key educational issues, along with discussions about the practical steps that can improve student achievement (*online only*).

To order, write or e-mail the Institute at:
Albert Shanker Institute
555 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001 or info@ashankerinst.org.
Visit our Web site at www.ashankerinst.org.