

Lies My Teacher Told Me by James Loewen

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James Loewen wrote the book "Lies My Teacher Told ME" to help the students of the United States become aware of their true history. This book attempts to show how and why American history has been taught the way it has without regard for the truth. Mr. Loewen had compared twelve different history textbooks they are: The Great Republic, The American Way, Land of Promise, Rise of the American Nation, Challenge of Freedom, American Adventures, Discovering American History, The American Tradition, Life and Liberty, The United States ? A History of the Republic, Triumph of the American Nation and The American Pageant. Loewen has argued his cases for Heroification, Eurocentrism and the first settlers, and Racism in our history. He has done this knowing fully that most people do not want to know the harsh realities of our nations past. The United States has tried to maintain a positive image throughout history. Unfortunately, it has many skeletons in its closet that need to come out to heal this great nation on many levels. If the public at large knew the real role of racism in our nations infancy and how men tried to pursue their way of thinking as opposed to what is good for the country they would be ashamed at what the United States has stood for in the past. Heroification is a degenerative process that makes people into heroes regardless of any type of character flaw they may possess. It appears that Mr. Loewen's greatest concern about heroification does not revolve around who gets chosen for the history books but what actually happens to them after they do. He

cites two examples of people that had led colored lives but in our textbooks show them as people we should strive to become like. These two people are Helen Keller and President Woodrow Wilson. (Lies?19) Mr. Loewen feels that heroification has distorted the lives of Keller and Wilson and that we can no longer think straight about them. He does not just think this of these two but many other people throughout history. When it comes to Keller we think of someone who, throughout her entire life has struggled to overcome her disabilities. I feel that no one would dispute this but in reality Miss Keller was a radical Socialist for most of her life. This in itself is not so bad but her condemnation of the country into which she was born to and lived in could be considered treasonous. (Lies?20) President W..... middle of paperime of the author rather than accurate historical facts. (Lies?293) Textbooks are being written this way and history is being taught this way to show people how they should act and strive to be. This relays to the student what is deemed acceptable to everyone and what is not. When it comes to a student remembering historical lessons they normally do not remember what is being taught to them unless they are moved by it. (Lies?301) So what is the result to a society where our students are being taught this way? The number one result is that students do not know the true history of their country nor do they remember what they were taught in class. This is a sad conclusion but Mr. Loewen feels it is an accurate one given responses to questions he has asked his students throughout the years. What can we do to change this and reeducate the people out there? Sadly I feel nothing can be done for those of us out there who are not truly aware of this misinformed way of teaching. But, our children need not be sheltered from our true history, rather they should learn all that has happened so we can prevent the atrocities from reoccurring again.(Lies My Teacher Told Me ? James Loewen)

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