

Lies my teacher told me- james loewen

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Lies My Teacher Told Me by James Loewen The book, Lies My Teacher Told Me by James Loewen represents a critical analysis of the manner in which textbooks used to teach American history in high schools are a great disservice to the nation and students. After spending two years of analyzing twelve textbooks used to teach history in high schools, Loewen writes his book in order to explicate two essential tasks that his studies revealed. First, he aims at asking and answering the concept behind students disliking history classes. Secondly, he is out to substantiate that much of the information students acquire in history classes is wrong since there are lots of omissions. He says, “ Some books go way beyond omitting the actor and leaving out the act itself” (Loewen 25). This paper shall seek to explain the key reasons as to why Loewen think that history textbooks used in the high school curriculum are giving students a raw deal. It will also examine the reasons as to why students seem to dislike history classes.

Loewen asserts that much of American history isolates children of color in the manner they ignore that those who contributed greatly to the American history were not whites. He goes further to assert that the nature of history textbooks used in American high schools give insufficient information to students. This in turn affects the academic progress of students who join college to pursue History courses (J. W. Loewen). This is because most of the history classes in college are taken up fixing the information that the students acquired in the high school history lessons. He uses his book to analyze the textbook creation and adoption process, as well as explain causes that makes textbooks to turn out to be bad and of low quality. According to Loewen, history is a collection of stories and should not be

boring. However, textbook companies have tendencies of leaving out information that reflect badly on the national character. He also connects the boring nature of history to the fact that “ history textbooks do not use the present to illuminate the past” (Loewen). In this regard, students have difficulties comprehending the relevance and significance of history to their daily lives. Loewen also reveals that students dislike history since the subject is viewed as a morality play; thus, touchy areas in the society are not discussed or taught. He says, “ There are three taboos in textbook publishing...social class, religion and sex...” (Loewen 34).

Loewen asserts that textbooks ignore several historical realities due to many reasons. The main reason is that publishers have strong convictions that it is mandatory for students to develop a sense of patriotism (J. Loewen).

Therefore, they omit troubling areas that might make students to think otherwise of their country. A happy view of the country makes students believe that things are okay; hence they are not troubled. He also asserts that books are clones of other books. This implies that wrong facts are presented to the public over and over again.

In conclusion, Loewen has succeeded in outlining some of the lies that students acquire from the history textbooks. It is a wake-up call for all students and history scholars to take keen note when selecting textbooks for history courses.

Works Cited

Loewen, James. “ Debunking History.” U. S. History: Pre-Columbian to the New Millenium. Web. 28 Nov. 2012. Retrieved 28 Nov 2012.

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