

History college essay essay



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Reading, writing and arithmetic, these three subjects are the basic outline for American schools. In those subjects, where does history fit in? Some believe that teachers avoid history because of how corrupt America's has been. James W. Loewen, author of *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, says, "Parents may feel undermined when children get tools of information not available to adults and use them in ways that seem to threaten adult-held values." (Loewen 296.) The adults had to learn the same false history children are being taught today. By teaching children the truth about history, are adults risking the authority they hold along with adult-held values? "Learning social studies is to no small extent, learning to be stupid." (LMTTM 298.) What happens when history teachers and textbooks lie? Not only will the children grow up to be uneducated, but they'll continue to teach the same lies to their own children. The excuse most teachers use, according to Loewen, is they "feel they are supposed to defend and endorse America." (LMTTM 289.) If teachers told students about Woodrow Wilson being racist, Columbus forcing Indians into slavery, or how the FBI worked against the civil rights movement then children would be too aware of how the world works. Is this necessarily a bad thing? No, because the truth is always better than a lie, regardless of how ugly it may be. In order to be a truly good American, children must learn this country's true history. "History despite it's wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived, and if faced with courage, need not be lived again." (LMTTM 137.) If students are educated with our past, then they'll learn from the mistakes that were made. A great deal of my eighth grade year was spent on the Holocaust. Not only was it taught in history class, but also in my English and class. I even had the pleasure of meeting two survivors from Auschwitz, a Nazi concentration camp. The teachers

made it clear to us that the reason so much time was spent on the Holocaust was to prevent it from happening to our generation. They believed that if they showed us how wrong it was, we'd keep it from happening to us. This is why the truths of history should always be taught in American schools. If children never learn about the horrors that make up a great deal of America's history, then they are in danger of repeating those same horrors. Another thing bad about lying to students regarding America's history, is the hypocrisy of it all. " On one hand, they describe a country without repression, without real conflict. On the other hand, they obviously believe that we need to lie to students to instill in them love of country. But if the country is so wonderful, why must we lie?" (Loewen 296.) Just the fact that the teachers and textbooks are lying at all shows how truly corrupt America can be. How can adults be worried about losing authoritative power when the authority is having a negative influence on America's future leaders? As far as values go, what kinds of values include educating America's youth with lies? When it comes to worrying about losing adult-held values and authority, adults are selfishly thinking about the wrong thing. Whether it's math, English, literature, or even history, lies should never be part of the lesson plan. Teachers and parents must be honest with children, or there is the possibility of history repeating itself. If the lies regarding American history continue to be taught, then the truth will be lost. Even if America's history is full of corruption, it is still America's history. What's the point of having history class if the true history isn't being taught? Words/ Pages : 656 / 24