

New Science Standards in the Works



Most states have already adopted common standards for language and math, and proponents of national curriculum standardization are trying to build on that momentum. As part of that plan, the congressionally chartered National Research Council (NRC) released a framework this summer to be used in developing national science standards.

Achieve, a nonprofit organization that pushes standards-based education reform across the states, is developing NRC's framework into what Achieve calls "Next Generation Science Standards." Achieve is managing the project with the assistance of 20 states and dozens of science teachers and state standards experts.

Carnegie Corporation of New York is funding the development of the framework and the standards. Their website states: "We have issued an urgent call for a national mobilization to transform mathematics and science education and deliver it equitably and with excellence to all students."

Stated goals for developing the science standards include creating a stronger emphasis on depth rather than breadth of science concepts and providing greater coherence across grades.

The new science standards are comparable to the Common Core Standards Initiative (CCSI), released in 2010, which Achieve also played a large part in creating. According to Achieve's website, "The goal of this process is to create excellent K-12 science standards. Whether individual states decide to adopt them or

whether they become 'common' state standards will ultimately be up to the states to decide."

Although the effect of standards and testing has been fiercely criticized under the No Child Left Behind Act, proponents still hope the new science standards will eventually be adopted by nearly all the states, just as the CCSI standards in language and math have been.

Francis Eberle, executive director of the National Science Teachers Association, acknowledged there are many steps required before implementation is possible, but he is hopeful that states will embrace the new science standards. "What's exciting about this effort is that these will be common science standards that will provide students access to the same information," he said.

Helen R. Quinn, chairwomen of the NRC, said that many of the states "are feeling, if we're doing common things in math and English/language arts, why not in other areas?"

No plan currently exists for the federal government to require states to adopt the new science standards or to award incentives for adopting them, as was the case for the CCSI. The new science standards are expected to be completed by the end of 2012.

(*Education Week*, 8-10-11; www.blogs.edweek.org 9-20-11)

Senate NCLB Changes Weaken Accountability

On October 20th U.S. Senators on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed a bill to reauthorize and reform the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which is the current version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Tom Harkin, the Democratic chairman of HELP, and Michael B. Enzi, the top ranking Republican on the committee, sponsored the bill, which passed by a 15-7 margin. The Harkin-Enzi bill, which would reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for the ninth time since 1965, is the first piece of legislation to pass in committee that attempts to correct the long standing problems with NCLB.

The bill did not get off to a good start though. It was released by Harkin and Enzi to fellow committee members late Thursday night with markup set for the following Wednesday. That timeframe left senators on the HELP committee little time to study the 1,000-page bill.

Senator Rand Paul, a member of the committee, commented on the short notice of the bill, "We have not had enough time to allow the teachers, superintendents, and principals in our states who specialize in educating our children to review this legislation. We have not had time

to thoroughly read and review this bill to determine whether it will actually help our children, or whether it will, in fact, make matters worse."

The Harkin-Enzi bill is, in part, a response to the Obama Administration's NCLB waiver plan, which was released in September. If the bill is passed, NCLB waivers will be unnecessary. The bill

would give relief from key NCLB provisions to all states instead of giving them only to states that qualify, as the waiver plan does.

One of the main provisions of the Harkin-Enzi bill eliminates Adequate Yearly Progress

(AYP), a foundational piece of NCLB accountability that teachers have protested for years. AYP would be replaced with an undefined requirement of "continuous improvement" in student results.

While the bill does not technically require states to join the Common Core State Standards Initiative, it does require schools to adopt "college-and-career-ready" standards in order to receive Title I funds. Since no other set of standards is guaranteed to be approved as "college-and-career-ready," adopting Common Core is the implicit prerequisite for receiving Title I funding. Though marketed as a state-led initiative, in reality Common Core standards give the federal government de facto control of the content taught in state schools.

Other federal accountability provisions of NCLB would be replaced with less restrictive policies. States would determine how schools are doing and control 95% of them while the federal government would only be able to intervene in the lowest scoring 5% of schools. The bill would, however, still require states to test all students in reading and math in the third to eighth grades every year and once in high school.

The Harkin-Enzi bill is being hailed as bipartisan, but there are members on both sides of the aisle who disapprove. While Republicans criticize the bill as still giving the federal government too much power, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan wrote on the Department of Education's website that it is "important that we maintain a strong commitment to accountability for the success of all students, and I am concerned that the Senate bill does not go far enough."

Although the bill gives some power back to states, it adds many programs and grants to aid schools in teaching financial



Tom Harkin and Michael Enzi

Public Schools Import Foreign Teachers

Since the late 1990s there has been a growing trend to import teachers from foreign countries to educate American students. During the 2010 fiscal year, the Department of Labor certified 13,157 foreign workers to teach grades K-12 in American schools.

Schools have been hiring these teachers on temporary work visas such as the H-1B visa and the J-1 visa to teach a diverse array of classes including math, science, foreign language, special education, and physical education.

According to a memorandum by the Center for Immigration Studies, these visas deprive U.S. citizens of thousands of jobs every year in favor of foreign workers from countries such as the Philippines, Mexico, India, Columbia, and Canada.

The H-1B visa is a renewable three-year work permit. According to the Department of Labor's website, the visa was intended "to help employers who cannot otherwise obtain needed business

skills and abilities from the U.S. workforce." Schools violate the intent of the H-1B and J-1 visas when they hire foreign teachers instead of qualified U.S. citizens.

Some schools have found that international recruitment is cheaper, especially if they fail to pay visa fees on behalf of the foreign teachers.

Maryland's massive Prince George's County Public School System, employing 1,044 foreign teachers, did just that. Under the H-1B program, the Maryland schools were legally responsible for over \$4 million in fees. In an investigation earlier this year, the Department of Labor found that "Instead of paying these fees, [Maryland schools] required the foreign teachers to pay them. As a result, the teachers' earnings were reduced below the amount

legally required to be paid."

The spokesman for the district, Briant Coleman said, "We hired temporary foreign national employees at a time when school systems across the country were facing shortages of highly qualified instructors in hard-to-fill subject areas such as math, science and special education, as mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind Act."

Now the district will be required to pay back millions in visa fees and will also be banned from participating in the H-1B program for two years as a penalty for the violation. Maryland County teachers who have not obtained a green card will lose their jobs when their current visas run out.

Schools in seven other states have also been found to be in "willful violation" of the H-1B program. (www.cis.org, 4-17-11 and 9-11; www.msnbc.com 9-29-11)



(See *NCLB Reform*, page 4)

EDUCATION BRIEFS

Just more than a third of 4th- and 8th-grade students are proficient in reading, based on the results of the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress, often called the nation's report card. Math results were slightly better, with 40% of 4th-graders and 35% of 8th-graders achieving a score of proficient on the exam. (*Associated Press*, 11-1-11)

Community college dropouts cost federal, state and local taxpayers nearly \$4 billion over a five-year period, according to a study by the American Institutes for Research. The study looked only at first-year, first-time, credential-seeking students; the cost of dropouts is even higher if part-time students and other sources of government funding are included. The amount of taxpayer money wasted on students who don't graduate increased by 35% over the five-year period from 2004 to 2009, according to the report. (www.air.org, 10-20-11)

The Portland, Oregon school board unanimously adopted a measure that will allow anti-war activists to staff recruiting tables right alongside military recruiters in high schools. Lt. Col. Cary Miller, head of Oregon Army National Guard recruiting, said the military has so little access to Portland high school students that concerns about over-the-top recruiting tactics are unfounded. He said his recruiters have been forced to reach teens indirectly by sponsoring basketball tournaments and staffing booths at local festivals. (www.OregonLive.com, 10-23-11)

Public school teachers receive 52% more compensation than their skills would garner in the private sector, according to a report from the American Enterprise Institute. Jason Richwine, study co-author and senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, said other studies that claim teachers are underpaid compared to workers with equivalent education don't take into account the lower average SAT and GRE scores of teachers or the fact that the education major itself is less rigorous than other degrees. (www.EdWeek.org, 11-2-11)

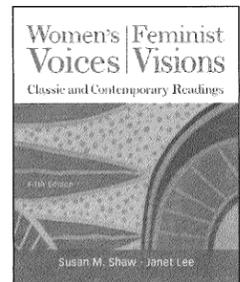
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College Textbook Reveals Radical Feminist Agenda

Has radical feminism permeated institutions of higher education to the point of unconditional acceptance? In some college courses the controversial social and political agendas of feminism are being unashamedly pushed, while opposing viewpoints are censored.

The University of Missouri-St. Louis has just such a course called "Women and Gender Studies." The university website reveals that the instructor of this course, Kathleen Nigro, Ph.D., also teaches a course called "Feminism and Witchcraft." The textbook that Dr. Nigro chose for



the women and gender studies course is called, *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, 5th Edition, by Susan M. Shaw and Janet Lee (McGraw-Hill, 2011).

This textbook is not an impartial discussion of women's issues, but a survey of the accomplishments of feminism and its future goals. The essays and readings the authors chose to include in the text show the extent of their bias against conservative family values.

Feminism

In an attempt to explain why feminism plays such a large role in a course on women's studies, the authors assert that women have feminism to thank for their modern way of life. They simplistically and inaccurately credit feminism with giving women the right to vote, the ability to work outside the home, go to college, and play sports.

"A Day Without Feminism," an essay by Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, sets forth a typical woman's life in 1970, in which familial norms and societal protections of women are presented as unacceptable horrors of inequality. The view that feminism saved women from unspeakable oppression remains unchallenged throughout the book.

Another article, "Still Needing the F Word," by Anna Quindlen, explains the work feminism has left to do in liberating women. Apparently, even though feminism has done so much for them, women today may feel pressure to perform to men's standards in the workplace even more than they did as housewives.

The authors claim that being male is a privileged status, just as being white or heterosexual. Students are encouraged to recognize that these "privileges" exist, understand how privileged classes suppress non-privileged people, and accept responsibility for the problem.

Sexuality

The authors assert that gender is much more complicated than was traditionally taught. In their worldview, the roles of male or female are merely learned behaviors people act out to conform to social constraints. True gender has more to do with the way you feel about yourself than your assigned gender at birth. The authors encourage students to take action on the issue by cross-dressing for a day, or by looking for ways masculinity is valued over femininity on their campus.

In "The Five Sexes Revisited," by Anne Fausto-Sterling, students learn that the oversimplified classification of male or female is out of touch with reality and that some people, like transsexuals, "have an emotional gender at odds with their physical sex." According to her, "A chromosomal, hormonal and genital male (or female) may emerge with a female (or male) gender identity."



Fausto-Sterling even suggests that gender should be removed from official documents such as driver's licenses to protect transgender rights. There is no suggestion that ignoring objective gender may be detrimental to society or to gender-confused individuals.

Bi-sexuality and trans-sexuality are
(See *College Textbook*, page 4)



Book of the Month



Smart Parenting, Smarter Kids, David Walsh, Ph.D., Free Press 2011, 292 pages, \$25.



Can parents really raise their kids' IQ? Scientists now estimate that the genetic, hard-wired component of IQ is only 50% at most, providing parents with a tremendous opportunity to help kids develop their intelligence to its greatest potential.

In *Smart Parenting, Smarter Kids*, licensed psychologist David Walsh translates the latest in brain science into practical advice parents can use to help their kids thrive from the prenatal stage to the teenage years.

There are two major things parents can do for children up to age three to give them the best possible start, according to Dr. Walsh. First, parents should nurture a warm, supportive, and caring relationship with their child. Second, parents should talk to young children as much as possible. Those interactions provide the connections between sounds and words that young brains need to form the building blocks necessary for speaking and reading. "It's parents and caregivers spending time interacting with kids in the real world that really helps kids grow better brains," explains Dr. Walsh.

As kids get older, one of most important things parents can do is teach them the importance of hard work, persistence, and patience. As it turns out, the skills of self-discipline and self-management are twice as important as intelligence in predicting school success.

Walsh also advises parents to praise their kids for working hard rather than telling them they are smart. Why? Studies have shown that kids who are told they are hard workers tend to choose more challenging tasks, which they learn and grow from. In contrast, kids who are told they are smart choose easier tasks to avoid possible failure and losing their status as a "smart" kid.

What about a kid who can spend hours playing a video game but can't stick with his math homework for 10 minutes? Playing video games requires only reactive attention, which responds to stimuli such as movement or emotion automatically and instinctively.

In contrast, "focused attention" is activated only when we *decide* to pay attention. This part of the brain is necessary to learn things that aren't naturally stimulating, like second-grade reading skills or college-level physics. Developing focused attention requires lots of practice, and Walsh suggests numerous ways parents can encourage that skill.

Each chapter includes a helpful list of parenting tips and strategies on matters including stress, play, exercise, technology and emotional intelligence.

FOCUS: Empower Parents: Restore the Constitution by Returning Educational Policy to the States

by Jane Robbins

Presidential candidates in the 2012 election must be prepared to protect the interests of parents and children nationwide by rolling back the progressive education agenda and returning to the states their constitutional power to make decisions about education.

The federal government's most extensive foray into control of education, No Child Left Behind, is a failure. Not only has it had little effect on educational outcomes, but it is widely despised by administrators, teachers, parents, and students. This general disgust with the status quo has created an opportunity for President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to push a "reform" agenda that pays lip service to the concept of local and parental control but that actually promotes classic "progressive" policies. To protect our constitutional values and the rights of parents to exercise final authority over their children's education, this progressive agenda must be stopped.

The Tenth Amendment to the Constitution reserves to the states all powers not delegated to the federal government. For most of our nation's history, education was considered preeminent among those reserved powers, and for good reason. Teaching and learning are quintessentially local activities — the thought never would have occurred to our founders that a bureaucrat in Washington is more capable than parents or teachers of creating an educational plan appropriate for an individual child.

But President Obama seems to reject America's founding principles and embraces instead the belief that people must be managed, for the good of the country, by elites in government and other institutions. This was the philosophy of the early-20th-century progressives, and it is pervasive in the Obama administration. A prime example is the complete transformation of the American health-care system in a manner that has proven to be ill-founded everywhere it has been tried.

The progressive view of health care — that the system should be managed by "experts" for the good of the economy and society in general — is identical to the progressive view of education: the education of children is simply too important to be left, as the Founders intended, to parents, localities, and the states. This view is far more entrenched than most people realize. The progressive agenda threatens our constitutional system and parents' right to transmit their values to their children through education. It is an ongoing effort that predates the Obama administration and has been infiltrating American culture for decades. With a renewed effort in the current administration, it is no exaggeration to say that we are now at a critical point in the battle for

the soul of America.

Progressive educators have long advocated sweeping national control of education. One prominent progressive reformist, Marc Tucker of the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE), fleshed out this view in a now-famous letter he wrote to Hillary Clinton (then a member of NCEE's Board of Trustees) shortly after the 1992 election. Tucker laid out his vision, which, to conservatives, describes a dystopia of authoritarian control: "remold the entire American system for human resources development . . . [into a] seamless system of unending skill development that begins in the home with the very young and continues through school, postsecondary education and the workplace." Beginning with the creation of national standards of curricula and assessment, and then solidifying control of education from preschool through the workforce, this vision is being implemented by the Obama Department of Education (DOE).

The first step in this process is the imposition on the states of common educational content standards, so that every child in every locality will be taught content decided upon by "experts" affiliated with the federal government and special interests. Presidential efforts to develop such "voluntary" national standards in the 1990s collapsed under scrutiny, so this time around, the "common standards" advocates have realized the political necessity of presenting standards as generated by the states, not the federal government.

The result is the Common Core Standards (CCS), created and propagated under the auspices of the National Governors Association, with tens of millions of dollars in funding from the Gates Foundation and other corporate interests. The Obama DOE is determined to force these standards on all the states — not by direct diktat, which is forbidden by federal statute, but by showering federal funds on states that adopt the standards and withholding, and threatening to withhold, funds from those that balk. Not surprisingly, most states have fallen in line. And because the deadline for deciding on the CCS was carefully timed by DOE to fall when most state legislatures were not in session, the decision had to be made, in most cases, by state education officials without input from the people's representatives in the legislature. So much for parental control, or even parental notification.

CCS currently encompasses only English language arts and mathematics but in time will include science, history, and other subjects. But even these current standards have been criticized as deeply flawed: the math standards would put U.S. students two years behind students in other high-performing countries, and the language-arts curriculum radically departs from traditional literature, steeped

in the classics, that equips young minds to appreciate and follow in the footsteps of the citizen-leaders who founded our country.

The DOE is also pumping money into developing assessments that will track the CCS. By the time these tests are finalized, probably in 2014, and the additional standards are imposed, states will find themselves locked into a rigid educational scheme that most legislatures never approved. Additionally, given the makeup and philosophy of the federal bureaucrats who will oversee the system, and their alliances with interest groups pushing radical agendas such as (to cite only one example) complete normalization of LGBT activity, the danger is very real that parents will see their children taught principles in conflict with their own. This is what inevitably happens when local control, as envisioned by the Founders, gives way to national control influenced by special interests.

Curriculum standards are only one aspect of the progressive effort to control education for the good of a managed national economy. Other activity by DOE reveals an intent to expand the concept of "education" to permit government oversight and tracking of a multitude of human endeavors, from cradle to grave, that might affect the national economy.

This intent is reflected in DOE's recently proposed amendments to the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), a statute that strictly limits the dissemination of a student's Personally Identifiable Information (PII). For example, the amendments would redefine "education program" under FERPA to include any program that could marginally be considered "educational," even if not conducted by an educational authority such as a public school or college. This radical change would allow nonconsensual access to PII compiled as part of practically any program, whether truly educational or otherwise.

It gets worse. DOE proposes to allow transmission of students' PII—without parental consent — to any governmental or private entity designated by DOE and others as an "authorized representative." If this amendment takes effect, DOE could share a student's PII with, for example, the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Labor (DOL). The student's parents would have no right to object; indeed, they would probably never know that such disclosure had occurred. HHS and DOL then would have access to all manner of personal data that would be invaluable in managing a planned economy.

What kinds of personal data might be included? According to the National Data Education Model, a myriad of information such as blood type, health-care history, birthmarks, family income range, and family voting status would be available. And DOE is encouraging and lavishly funding

the development of statewide longitudinal data systems intended "to capture, analyze, and use student data from preschool to high school, college, and the workforce." Imagine how a progressive statist, armed with such technology and information, could manage a society for the good of its grateful citizenry.

In its proposed rulemaking, DOE asserts that "there is no reason why a State health and human services or labor department . . . should be precluded from . . . receiving non-consensual disclosures of [PII] to link education, workforce, health, family services, and other data" for the purpose of auditing or evaluating education programs. But there is reason, not least that it runs counter to our founding principles that aimed to protect privacy, limit government intrusion, and allow for local autonomy. The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, which is expert on FERPA compliance, describes this proposal as "a very radical policy shift" that overturns decades of settled interpretation.

The DOE rejects even the basic requirement that it demonstrate legal authority for its data disclosure. The proposed changes would expand the government's right to disclose personal data for purposes of research studies, audits, or evaluations, *without having to identify express legal authority for that action.*

What to do? The obvious answer is to abolish the Department of Education. This is a worthy goal; there is no constitutional, and little practical, justification for DOE's existence. But given the deeply entrenched interests of the education bureaucracy, and the power of the special interests that created and continue to benefit from it, DOE may be impregnable for now. Even President Reagan, who campaigned on the issue, was unable to abolish it. Moreover, as illustrated by the willingness of leftist politicians and bureaucrats to evade the legislative process by stealth (see the attempted rewriting of FERPA by regulation), the objectionable functions of DOE might simply be transferred to a different department, where they can be exercised with even less transparency. (The discredited Head Start program, for example, is administered by HHS rather than DOE.)

Rather than stake everything on an immediate battle to abolish DOE, a more achievable and effective course would be to enervate the agency so that it can no longer impose its will on the states. The most pressing concern at this time is to roll back DOE's attempts to mandate acceptance of the Common Core Standards. The following steps could be taken to achieve this goal and prevent future mischief by DOE:

- 1) Pass federal legislation releasing states from their commitment to adopt the Common Core Standards.

(See *Restore the Constitution*, page 4)



NYC Mandates Shocking Sex-Ed

As part of Mayor Bloomberg's \$130 million initiative to cut down on the rate of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases in minority students, New York City will mandate explicit sex education for middle and high school students starting next year. All students, some as young as ten years old, will be required to take two semesters of sex education, one in middle school and one in high school.

Although the program claims to promote abstinence, the curriculum includes explicit content to describe sexually risky behaviors and how to avoid them. According to a *New York Post* review of the textbooks, the classes will likely include the following assignments: "High-school students go to stores and jot down condom brands, prices and features such as lubrication. Teens research a route from school to a clinic that provides birth control and STD tests, and write down its confidentiality policy. Kids ages 11 and 12 sort 'risk cards' to rate the safety of various activities, including intercourse using a condom and an oil-based lubricant, mutual masturbation, French kissing, oral sex and anal sex."

Health classes that were focused on nutrition and physical fitness will now include a good portion of instruction on how to use

condoms and other birth control methods. Parents will be able to opt their children out of the sessions on contraception, but not any of the other sex ed lessons.

Abortion provider Planned Parenthood and abortion advocacy group NARAL Pro-Choice New York are among the organizations supporting the supposedly abstinence-based program.

At least one New York parent is skeptical about the efficacy of the new program. Gloria Nunez-Pacheco, a mother of three, said of the school system, "They already have failed our kids in academics; you think they're going to do a good job teaching them about sex? I don't think so."

Republican Representatives Bob Turner and Michael Grimm, along with NYC Parent's Choice Coalition believe that the mandate violates parental authority. Turner stated, "Parents had no say in this mandate. The Archdiocese of New York, Orthodox Jewish groups, Muslims, many are saying this is a sensitive and delicate subject, and they want more say in what is taught."

(*The New York Times*, 8-9-11; *The Washington Times*, 10-30-11; www.rhrealitycheck.org, 10-25-11; *The Wall Street Journal*, 8-13-11; *New York Post*, 10-22-11)

NCLB Reform (Continued from page 1)

literacy, foreign languages, environmental education, and technology. Some of these programs are reinstatements of programs that lost funding in recent budget debates. These expensive programs may generate opposition from Senate Republicans who are looking for ways to cut the 2012 budget.

Democrats, on the other hand, fear that too much power is being handed back over to the states. They assert that the Department of Education should retain enough control to ensure accountability for schools.

Civil rights and business groups, who

oppose the bill as being too hands-off, believe that the lack of federal accountability will leave disabled and minority students behind. On the other hand, school board members, superintendents, principals, teachers, and the National Education Association, are hopeful that some of the strict standards of NCLB will be relaxed.

The bill has been sent to the full Senate for consideration. Proponents hope Congress will pass the bill before Christmas. (*Education Week*, 10-26-11 and 11-2-11; *New York Times*, 10-22-11; www.blog.heritage.org, 10-25-11)

Restore the Constitution (Continued from page 3)

In keeping with the Constitution and federal law, states should be free to devise and implement standards that satisfy the parents of the children they educate.

2) Pass federal legislation prohibiting DOE from conditioning the grant of federal funds on a state's commitment to certain actions. Instead, to the extent that federal funds are spent on education, they should be awarded in block grants on an equitable basis. This reform would end the sly tyranny of DOE, which uses its considerable power of the purse to evade the current federal prohibition on directing curriculum.

3) Withdraw the proposed amendments to FERPA, so that the statute will continue to protect students' Personally Identifiable Information from nonconsensual disclosure.

4) Reauthorize the provision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that prohibits the creation of a national database of student information.

5) End all federal funding of development of curricula and assessments.

Allow states to choose the curricula and assessment schemes that are best for them and acceptable to parents.

These proposals are designed to restore the vision of the Founders: that in all matters not properly delegated to the federal government, including education, the states should be free to craft and implement their own policies. Freedom works, in education as in most things. Allowed to choose what is best for their children, parents will gravitate to good public schools or private schools or charter schools or homeschooling: to whatever produces the best outcomes for their children. Competition among the states to maximize educational freedom — unencumbered by the federal government — will yield results far superior to those from top-down mandates imposed by "experts" in Washington. The best thing the federal government can do to facilitate this process is to get out of the way.

Jane Robbins is a Senior Fellow with *American Principles in Action*. This essay originally appeared in *Public Discourse: Ethics, Law, and the Common Good*, the online journal of the Witherspoon Institute of Princeton, NJ, and is reprinted here by permission.

College Textbook (Continued from page 2)

presented as normal and common through personal stories of adults who have changed their gender, and stories of parents whose child was born one gender but who wanted to be another. In the latter case, parents who sought help were advised by a therapist to allow the child to decide for him/herself.

Pure heterosexuality, the book explains, only exists because of socially imposed norms and homophobia. Neither nature nor morality come into play. Students are encouraged to organize a National Coming Out Day celebration on their campus to push back against social impositions.

A couple of articles discuss how common it is for women in particular to be bisexual. Limiting sexuality to simply gay or straight denies the true plasticity of human sexuality. "A World of Difference," by Leila Rupp, describes the way women overcome heterosexual "constraints" in diverse countries and have found many ways to express their nontraditional "love."

Abortion

A chapter on reproductive rights briefly states the pro-life argument but concentrates on women's right to choose. The chapter suggests a list of ten things students can do to protect choice, but no encouragement is given to a student who may want to protect life. A couple of articles describe the horror pregnant women experienced trying to get an abortion when it was illegal or socially unacceptable, promoting the idea that legalizing abortion was a great leap for women's health.

The authors expose the "deceptive tactics" of Crisis Pregnancy Centers who are accused of misleading women into thinking that abortion is unsafe. No credibility is given to the argument that a fetus may be a person with the right to life.

Family

Although the traditional model of the family is explained in the chapter on family systems, it is presented as only one of many forms a family can take. The authors state that "traditional myths about the normative family hide the reality of the wide diversity of family life." One reading argues that homosexual couples have just as much right as heterosexual couples to have and raise children and that no harm will come to the children as a result of being raised in a homosexual family.

Echoing the views of Betty Friedan in her book *The Feminine Mystique*, another reading claims that marriage is just an economic system in which women are made to be dependent on their husbands. One essay urges women to go to work every day even if they have young chil-

dren because they will need to support themselves in the event of divorce.

The authors applaud no-fault divorce for freeing women from the constraints of traditional marriage. Feminists have also succeeded in forcing other taxpayers to solve the problems that divorce creates. Women can now relegate the care and education of their children to the state so that they are free to work. Husbands are no longer necessary to provide the family with income.

Work

The chapter on women's work describes how unfair life has been for women in the past who have had to do all the housework and weren't allowed to work outside the home. That men and women traditionally hold different types of jobs is said to be a function of sexism.

The authors deny any difference in the priorities and interests of men and women. They also refuse to acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of the sexes when it comes to jobs such as law enforcement. They want government to force feminist ideology by requiring affirmative action to protect women from the commonsense and "unfair" consequences of the free market system.

In "The Strange Relationship Between Feminism and Sex Work," sex worker activist Carol Leigh explains that some feminists view prostitution and sex work as violence against women while others advocate labor rights for sex workers. The latter believe that any problems associated with prostitution are really just problems of poverty and violence, not sex work itself.

Religion

It comes as no surprise that this textbook doesn't have anything positive to say about Christianity, which is in opposition to many feminist ideas promulgated in the text, including abortion. Judaism is also presented unfavorably as having silenced women for generations.

Ironically, an article on Islam is the only article that gives religion a favorable review in light of feminism. The article claims that Islam's effect on women has been very positive. The author asserts that Islam in itself is actually good for women, and that it is only through misinterpretation of the teachings of Muhammad that women have been badly treated.

Women's Voices, Feminist Visions is a textbook that has a clear political agenda. As seen through the text, the suggested activities for students, and the carefully selected readings, there is no room for any idea that strays from radical feminist ideology.

MALLARD FILLMORE / by Bruce Tinsley

