

Michigan High School Class Angers Some Parents

[How do we introduce new ideas? How to recognize other ideas? Does recognition of one idea necessitate rejection of others? Is there danger in open debate? Philosophy of learning methods? Water Shed principle?] Ancient Greece



<http://www.dfamily.com/philosophy/teach/hswtl/journal.html>

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,95669,00.html>

Tuesday, August 26, 2003

Some parents in Farmington, Mich., are crying "anti-Americanism" over a **high school international affairs class**.

[What do you suppose would be covered in a high school International Affairs class? Not quite on topic, but a question immediately pops up to me.

Do you believe schools should be teaching International Affairs classes if they are under funded?

Do you believe schools should be teaching International Affairs classes if the students haven't learned the basics?

Do you have an initial, knee jerk reaction?

Does a knee jerk reaction make you a jerk? (*Is it valid to set up criteria from the onset which a writing must meet?*)

The course is offered to juniors and seniors in the Farmington School District and **focuses on America's role in the Middle East**.

But it's not the topic that's **angered some students' parents**. It's the class readings, many of which come from **left-wing Web sites** like Altnet.org, Indymedia.org, Progressive.org and War-times.org, that **vigorously attack the Bush administration**.

[To understand "America's role in the Middle East", is it appropriate to examine viewpoints of those who do NOT like "America's role in the Middle East"?

It is safe to say it that way? If the Bush administration is managing our Middle East policies then all other viewpoints are just that, "other viewpoints". Is this correct?

2 questions come out of this.

1) Do left wing organizations have more to do with a different point of view on what America's policies are, or are they just the opposition of whatever is America?

ie. If you say you like red, they do not like red. If you say you do not like red, they say red is a wonderful color?

Is this a bad characterization?

2) If the class has more to do with "What Wrong with America's role in the Middle East", then why stop with just the left-wing web sites?

Aren't there going to be as many opinions as there are cultures in the

world?]

"This belief that we have to show that every concept out of that society can be understood and excused is really a problem across the country," said Farmington father Don Cohen. "We are bending over backwards and by doing so, we're misrepresenting and misinforming our children and our society."

[Say, we already touched on this, just a little. 😊

By what has been written, I have made a presumption. My presumption is they are showing material predominately from left-wing web sites AND other viewpoints are not being shared (*Views from Russian, Chinese, and Mexican cultures, for example*). Is this presumption out of line?

How can this course be "misrepresenting and misinforming our children and our society"?

Does it seem to be true?

Does this statement suggest my two presumptions may be true?

Hypothetical:

Can there be more than one solution to a problem?

If yes, can more than one solution be implemented at the same time?

If a solution is implemented, and there are loud voices urging and working against the solution, can it still succeed?

If I tell you I'll pay you \$20 if you mow my lawn tomorrow and your best friend tells you all day "Don't bother to even try. His lawn is so rocky you could never get it mowed in one day. Besides, he's broke. He won't pay." and so on the next day you sleep in rather than go over and mow my lawn. ---

Question?

Was my solution to an overgrown lawn a poor solution?

Was the other point of view just another idea or was it working against my solution?

Was the 'opposition' correct in their assessment that I would not pay?]

Cohen and other parents banded together to press the school board to hold off on the *new elective*. But the school year has officially begun and the class is on the roster. The board approved it by a narrow four-to-three vote.

[Is a "international affairs class" required learning?

This is the first year? This suggest what answer to the preceding question?

Is anyone curious as to what passed for an "international affairs class" type learning in the past 200 years?

Is anyone curious as to where the funding came from, as the headlines are all crying for a lack of funding?]

Farmington superintendent of schools, Robert Maxfield, defended the course, saying *high school juniors and seniors should be critical thinkers* and should be *exposed to many points of view*.

09/01/2003

[What is a critical thinker?

Should students be critical thinkers?

Are you a critical thinker?

Are our exercise through these articles helpful in making you a critical thinker? (*I've got my grade book open and I'm listening closely for your answer.* 😊)

To be a critical speaker, must you be exposed to many points of view?

If Yes, explain.

If Yes, how many points of view will be required on each issue before the critical thinking kicks in?

If no*, give some examples of some things you might come to understand without having experienced other points of view?]

"You can never teach kids the facts about everything," Maxfield said. "What you can teach kids is how to recognize points of view, how to understand sources of conflict, how to understand that there are forces that have driven world affairs for hundreds of years."

[Does "never teach kids the facts about everything" seem true to you?

I got news for you, "never remember all the facts about everything" is also true. 😊

Is it the source of material, or how the material is presented which help one recognize "points of view"?

Can leftist, out of power material be helpful in understanding what "IS"?*

What are some of the flags which help you recognize "points of view"?

What are some of the flags which help you recognize "sources of conflict"?

In this document is a picture of Plato and Aristotle in "The School of Athens" painting. You will notice Plato is pointing upwards, as reality comes from above (*innate, mind, spirit, forms*), while Aristotle is pointing down, as reality comes from all the particulars. From the beginning we have had different points of view. How would you suppose the Greeks dealt with different points of view? This issue is from 2003, but here we have Plato and Aristotle dealing with issues like:

- "What is justice?"
- "How should I live my life?"
- "How can we know what is real and what is illusion?"
- "Can a perfect society ever be conceived or created?"
- "What is human excellence, and can it be taught?"

Does it not seem conflicts and other points of view were probably dealt with even then?

Do you suppose all points of view got a good hearing?

Do you suppose all issues were resolved to everyone's satisfaction?

Do you recollect the "Water Shed Principle" (<http://www.dfamily.com/philosophy/learn/journal.html#watershed>)?]

And he believes kids should know about how some people feel about the U.S.

"They need to understand that people hate Americans," Maxfield said. "They need to understand that sometimes there are reasons for that."

[How many hours of study do you believe you need to learn there are some people who hate America?

Do you believe a class whose objective is to teach "America's role in the Middle East" needs to spend much time on those within the America (*and far away from the Middle East*) who hate America?

Does this not seem like another lesson plan, "Why People Hate America", perhaps?

"Reasons for Americans who hate Americans"? What questions come to mind?

Will studying material from someone who hates you tell you why they hate you?

Would they not choose material which will be effective in gathering more to their side and suppress what will not be helpful?

Suppose I don't like you because you like the color red. I think this is stupid. However, I'm not so stupid as to guess no one is going to not like you because you like red. However, I could complain you talk too fast and you interrupt people. Now, perhaps I can get some people to agree with me on that.]

Pro-Bush materials, such as government Web sites like WhiteHouse.gov, were added to the class' reading list -- only after parents complained that the course was an exercise in political correctness. The extra sources help balance the course's curriculum and offer support to President Bush's policies and America's role in the Middle East.

[Does this paragraph not seem to make it clear there was little or no material having to do with what "IS", but almost exclusively to what someone wishes it would be?

If Yes, why?

If NO, why?

There is an accusation the class was an exercise in "Political Correctness". Does this seem likely?

If we have a class such as "America's role in the Middle East" and funnel the class through all the rules of "Political Correctness", what seems possible to be the results?

Let's say I am going to teach a class on Math. One of the requirements for Math is, I will use no numbers. Now, we can hold class and we can do things, but what comes out of the Math class using the filter of "no numbers"?

Well, for one, those children who claim "I'm not any good at numbers", will be very pleased, yes?

In the same sense, we have made those who have certain "sensitivities" unruffled but at what cost?]

"That's on the media every day," said parent Susan Kahn, referring to the defense of Bush administration policies. "We hear that all the time and I think that's perfectly OK for them to hear as long as we balance it."

[In the media every day. Teenagers. Alright.

Tell me what are the Bush administrative policies?

Who is the Secretary of State?*

What organization is the most outspoken opposition to the Department of State in the summer of 2003?*

What person is the most outspoken proponent for Department of State reform in the summer of 2003?*

Where on the political spectrum do journalists consider this person to hail from?*

Why bring the State Department into a class concerning "America's role in the Middle East"?

Does it seem reasonable to expect students who do not know how to think critically yet (*that was an objective of something to learn in this class*), would know all these things from outside class material? Teenagers?

If yes, then why have the class since the students already know all the material?

Do any flags go up when there is a class to learn what "IS" and it must be balanced?

In my math class, $2+2$ is 4, but, no, wait, there are some other points of view on this. Yes, I see it, it's coming to me... 4.13544564 We just round it down to 4. 🤔

If opposing points of view are mandatory, then would not neoconservatives get a hearing?]

Still, the school board stopped short of removing author Noam Chomsky's controversial book "9-11" -- in which he writes about *why he thinks the U.S. is a terrorist state* -- from the list of course materials.

[In a class which is referencing a host of leftist web site material and a book, how much material would you suppose will be available as to what "IS" (*I'm recollecting the class emphasis is "America's role in the Middle East"*)?]

Looking at your own experience as a student. How many books do you normally read for a single class?

If the course is long enough, and the objective of the class is taught somewhere along the line, would (*could*) the "9-11" book be appropriate?

How would "The School of Athens" deal with such a class?

Think of the "Water Shed Principle" (<http://www.dfamily.com/philosophy/learn/journal.html#watershed>) and frame your answer in both directions.]

"That's the bias inbred into this curriculum," Cohen fumed.

-
- * You can be a Christian without having an understanding of all other world languages.
You can know how to make your bed without having understood all the different methods for making a bed.
You can understand the value of respect without understanding all the consequences of no respect.
You can appreciate what a loss means to someone without having lost the same thing yourself.
We do not come to know what we regard as TRUTH by testing and exploring every false concept -- it is not by a process of elimination.
 - * Out of power material can be usable in understanding what "IS" if examined as "political forces which are being countered or which are casting an influence or if there are some in the State Department which hold to these view points contrary to their boss' policy".



- * Colin Powell
- * Heritage Foundation
- * Newt Gingrich
- * Neoconservative



<http://www.dfamily.com/philosophy/teach/hswtl/journal.html>