



by Tayo Stalaker

The Moon landing hoax is a hoax itself

Fact: On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong was the first person to ever walk on the Moon.

Just don't tell that to Bart Sibrel, who claims that Neil Armstrong never did walk on the Moon's surface. In fact, Mr. Sibrel believes that *nobody* has ever walked on the Moon and that the 1969 Moon landing was a hoax. Sibrel "proves" this in his "documentary" called "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Moon," which can be purchased for \$29 on DVD at his Web site, www.moon-movie.com.

On his Web site, Sibrel lists "10 Reasons Why No Man Has Ever Set Foot on the Moon." These reasons include things like, "Enlarged photographs underneath the lunar lander's 10,000 [pound] thrust engine show the soil completely undisturbed," and "We uncovered some mislabeled, unedited, behind-the-scenes footage from NASA that shows the crew of Apollo 11 clearly staging a shot of being half-way to the Moon."

Sibrel goes on to talk about how the Moon landing was faked because Russia accomplished many things in space before America. He also claims that it was used as a distraction from the Vietnam War. Of course, he mentions that the American flag waved in the video footage of the Moon landing.

Yes, Sibrel's theories are easily disproved. Such as, all those "rare" and "top-secret" photos and video footage he charges people to look at can be all found on NASA's Web site. He also neglects to mention that one of the "rare" photos he has, a picture of a rock with a "C" on it, is one out of a hundred other duplicate photos of the same rock *without* a "C" on it.

Oh, and that whole bit about the flag waving in the footage of the Moon landing? The reason it was waving is because the astronaut's arms were moving around when he was trying to plant the flag into the ground, as seen clearly in the video footage of the event.

When Sibrel's conspiracy theory became public (courtesy of, who else, Fox TV), scientists went crazy. Hundreds of sites and essays have been published by scientists refuting Sibrel's claims. NASA even went so far as to dedicate an entire section of its site to debunking the "Moon Hoax."

If anyone is wondering if justice has ever come to Bart Sibrel, it did a few years ago.

On Sept. 9, 2002, Bart Sibrel cornered Buzz Aldrin, shoved a Bible in his face, told him to swear on it that he actually went to the Moon and then proceeded to call him a liar and a thief. In response, Mr. Aldrin promptly socked Sibrel in the jaw and walked away. This, my friends, is what we call karma.

Face Off: Instructor-written texts

Instructors using own texts benefit students

David Stark
The Clackamas Print

Everyone loves it when an instructor has to interrupt class to check something in the book, right?

Dead wrong, actually. It's quite annoying when teachers are unsure of the facts in the textbooks for which students pay a great deal of money. Not to mention that often in classes a teacher says to ignore a sidebar, or even skip an entire chapter that won't be covered.

Now if only there were some way for teachers to know exactly what is in the books they teach out of, some way to eliminate extraneous information.

Some sort of teacher-written textbook, if you will.

Why not look at that as a solution and see if it meets the criteria that have been laid out. Teacher knowing what's in the book: check. Teacher not telling you to ignore things in the book: check. Book actually following the teacher's lesson plan without having the student reading chapters out of order: check. Well, it seems that teacher-written textbooks have everything that's needed.

While they don't have the clinical detachment of books written by people who are paid to put the maximum number of details into the minimum amount of space, they are a much easier read.

Just ask anyone who has taken a class where the teacher wrote the in-class textbook. He or she will tell you that the class

experience is superior to classes where the instructor didn't write the book.

While not all teachers have the necessary amount of time or skill it takes to tackle a task on the scale of writing a textbook, the rewards to completing a project like that are truly staggering.

In addition, a teacher who uses a self-written textbook will have confidence in the material. How often do teachers complain about the inadequacy of the text? Sadly, the answer is quite often.

Teacher-written textbooks may not be of a higher quality than those written by individuals or groups who are paid to churn out textbooks, but they are more useful, more applicable to classes and much more fun to read.

Instructors using own texts can inhibit learning

Frank Jordan
The Clackamas Print

As a fairly longtime student at Clackamas Community College (by necessity, not necessarily by choice), I have had the opportunity to take a wide variety of classes taught by some truly wonderful instructors. Those instructors have been forced to use textbooks written by some other academics in those chosen fields that sometimes have been really good and informative, while some other texts have been truly awful.

But the question is this: Should instructors who have published textbooks be able to use those texts in the teaching of their own classes? In the fields of math and science, where, in most cases, the answers are fairly cut-and-dried, this should be easy to answer. I personally do not have a problem with the question as far as those classes are concerned.

My problem is in the other classes, such as Literature, or Philosophy, or other English or Social Science classes. I had the

opportunity to take Literature (Fiction) from Craig Lesley, who is a wonderful instructor and an accomplished writer. Lesley's published works are really very good books and I encourage everyone to read them. But thank God that I took that class in fictional literature before those books were the required reading for those classes.

How would you feel if you were told to write an essay or a paper based on your interpretation of a piece of fiction, knowing that the instructor of your class wrote the piece of fiction? Just try to argue your point with the author, knowing that your grade depended on it. If you took the opposite road of what you thought the author was trying to say, would you offend the author/instructor and receive a bad grade because of it?

Granted, good instructors will be able to see both sides of any argument, and as long as a student makes a valid point, then the grade should be based on that alone. I just think that it is a bad idea for instructors to teach classes based on their own published works, where a lot of the grade may depend on interpretation of those works. Especially in those classes that are required for a degree. Elective classes are a little different, but a student's grade point average may be at stake.

If a student takes a class here at Clackamas and is uncomfortable with the textbooks or reading material, then he or she should go ahead and speak up. Many people will tell you that you don't have a choice, but someone will hear you. Textbooks are expensive to begin with, so hopefully students will be able to pick and choose what classes they have to take and deal with those accordingly. Good luck to you all out there.



Photo Illustration by Jeff Sorensen Clackamas Print

Classroom censorship: unacceptable, inexcusable

Matt Olson
The Clackamas Print

Gay marriage, evolution, historical atrocities and generally disagreeable material are a part of life. Why then, would parents and school systems want to censor them and keep students from preparing for a difficult aspect of adulthood?

Is censorship a valid practice? When is censorship appropriate? Who should censor what, and how?

In college, censorship is frowned upon, and is mostly inappropriate because the process of education is dependent upon challenging the mind. Still, administrations dictate policy involving subject matter, restricting discussion through intimidation or threat of punishment.

How then, should colleges and other schools deal with this problem that affects the past, present and future?

Firstly, society needs to advocate the ideal of free thought and discussion. With an open forum for individual thought, people will further their understanding of

humanity.

Secondly, tolerance of this freedom needs to be universal. The philosophy that every voice matters is important in the success of the democratic process, and if even a minority dissents then we need to respect their opinion. Thus universal acceptance is a must.

Finally, the process needs to start at every level of society, be it the home, school, workplace or government.

In a perfect world, these steps would be taken and the censorship wouldn't be a problem any more.

It's agreed though, that censorship is a problem. Some believe it shouldn't exist, some believe it should be very carefully administered and others swear by its power to "improve" life.

Colleges in Oregon seem to

have a good system of checks and balances regarding material covered in classrooms and on campus. The communities are not afraid to voice their opinions, and neither are the students.

In Writing 122, a required class for almost all of the degrees offered here at Clackamas, students are taught to think and read critically. Most often this is done by challenging students' perceptions and process of interpretation.

This process is repeated in many other classes, including Comparative Religions, Philosophy, Business Ethics and many more. Even a seemingly benign class such as an athletics course will utilize a story of cheating to inspire students to be honest about their performance.

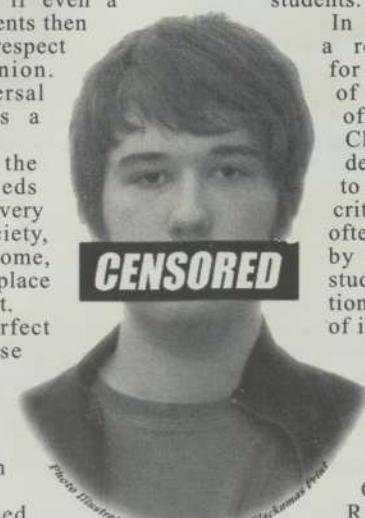


Photo Illustration by Adam J. Manley Clackamas Print

Utilizing books that were or are firebrands is a very useful tool. Controversy is food for debate and change. Whatever the change may be, it is dependent on the individual.

So the crux of the matter: censorship in the classroom. Historically, censorship is often designed to "protect" impressionable minds, but deprives them of their "food-for-thought." In the case of the college student, censorship is encountered abstractly through text selection and behind-the-scenes policies that omit certain subjects.

These actions are irresponsible and inappropriate. College students are adults and as the last stage in their preparation for the workforce and all aspects of culture, colleges should not be worried about protecting or restricting students' education.

Though it remains that censorship is a common practice in the US, colleges should be one arena where this process is nullified and people's minds are open to all possibilities and opinions. That is the true education that is required for the transition into adulthood.