

**Submission of Robert J Mears
to The Human Rights Sub-Committee,
Joint Standing Committee On Foreign Affairs, Defence And Trade Inquiry
into The Status Of The Human Right To Freedom Of Religion Or Belief.**

February 26, 2018

The Teaching of Anti-Catholicism in Australian Schools

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Introduction

I assert that the continuing anti-Catholic indoctrination of children in classrooms is Australia's most egregious example of religious intolerance and of the infringement of the human right to freedom of religion or belief.

I am a retired Primary and Secondary school teacher. For the past eleven years I have been particularly concerned that the teaching of Medieval History in Year 8 is biased against Catholicism. Overall, political correctness, substandard historical writing, fabrications and serious omissions distort some school textbooks. Evidently the authors of these textbooks have an agenda that supersedes historical facts; children are misinformed while Catholic children are subjected to a barrage of criticism of their spiritual ancestors and their beliefs. It is indisputable that these authors aim to foster contempt for the Catholic Church. I know of Catholic children who have been shocked and seriously embarrassed about the supposed misdeeds of medieval Catholics. These students have been subjected to a form of victimisation. Overall Catholic children should be proud of their spiritual ancestors.

In the State of Victoria the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006** states,

(a) Regulation 1.2.2

"All persons employed or engaged in the provision of Government education and training by the State or in the administration of Government education and training by the State must apply or have regard to the following principles—

(a) *Government schools—*

(i) will provide a secular education and will not promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect; and

(ii) are open to adherents of any philosophy, religion or faith".

(b) Regulation 2.2.10

Education in Government schools to be secular

(1) Except as provided in section 2.2.11, education in Government schools must be secular and not promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect.

My complaints to the "Department of Education and Training, Victoria" have been dismissed. Past Victorian governments were unconcerned that, by promoting Protestantism, Islam and atheism vis-a-vis Catholicism, "*Government schools (do not) provide a secular education*". Likewise these Governments were unconcerned about the distortion of their own school curricula and the victimisation of the Catholic children in their care.

Catholic children in Government schools do not have – in the words of the State of Victoria's ***Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*** – "*the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief*" or the right "*not be coerced or restrained in a way that limits his or her freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief in worship, observance, practice or teaching*" or "*the right to hold an opinion without interference*".

School children in Year 8 are required to study and be assessed on their understanding of Medieval History. The textbooks examined below present a misleading, critical and anti-Catholic view of Medieval History. In some cases Catholic children are required to analyse biased statements that challenge Catholic beliefs. For the sake of brevity many of my objections have not been detailed below.

**Part 1. An Analysis of the History of the Middle Ages
according to Jacaranda Press an imprint of John Wiley & Sons Australia Ltd.
“Humanities Alive 2”, “SOSE Alive History 1”, “SOSE Alive 2”,
“SOSE Medieval History” and accompanying C.Ds.**

These textbooks were used extensively throughout Australia. Some of the format has been adapted.

Requiring children to study Jacaranda Press’ Medieval History was a form of reprehensible indoctrination. Some extracts from these books follow (emphasis added) with my Comments:

1. “... **under the watchful eye of the Church ... Faith and Fear** ... People were terrified of going to hell. This would happen, they believed, if the church ever excommunicated them.



There was also the risk that one might be declared a heretic or witch. This meant the possibility of horrific torture or being burned alive. Old people who lived alone, especially women, and people who disagreed with the Church were at great risk. (“Humanities Alive 2”, p. 54-56)

“During the Middle Ages, punishment was the solution to every offence ... **Underlying (the brutal justice system) was the control of the Church.** It was very serious to break a church rule or religious law, such as one of the Bible’s Ten Commandments. Offenders were often killed after enduring the most revolting tortures ... There were also church courts, which heard trials related to people’s religious beliefs and

behaviour. The worst thing one could be charged with before a church court was heresy. The punishment was almost always torture and death ...

“Guilty until proven innocent. There were no lawyers, so people had to prove they were innocent. Nobles (or strong champions who fought for them) might fight with their accuser, with axes and shields. Less fortunate people had to endure trial by fire or water ...”

“ To be effective, torture had to be slow and extremely painful ... Lucky victims might be beheaded. Most victims suffered sickening deaths, such as being hung, drawn and quartered. Few escaped torture, which often provided great entertainment for the crowds . . . slowly smashed bones and teeth ... crushed the thumbs to a pulp ... pulling joints and bones apart ... victim’s agony was prolonged ... starved to death until their flesh and bones fell apart ...”

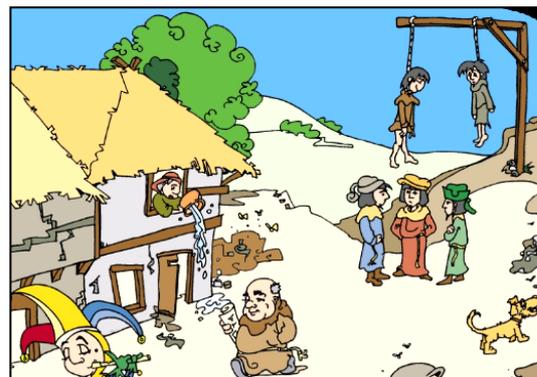


- a. This section, with its sensational text, graphic diagrams and objectionable C.D. presentation is vilification of the Catholic Religion par excellence. John Wiley and Sons Australia Ltd/ Jacaranda Press used well the indoctrination technique of the constant repetition of calumnies. The pernicious caricatures of the bishop (he is wearing a pectoral cross) and his companion are worthy of inclusion in a Nazi “Der Stürmer” magazine with the caption, “**Under the watchful eye of the Church**”.

Jacaranda Press enabled children to show contempt for this Catholic bishop; with a sweep of a computer mouse the bishop is lampooned by placing on his head a jester’s hat, the distinguishing attire of a buffoon. What would be the reaction

of Victoria's Ministry of Education and Training if the religious person was a Jewish Rabbi or a Moslem Sheik? Perhaps the Minister for Education and Training would quickly rediscover Victoria's statutory obligation to maintain "secular" education only. What we can see here is an extraordinary but unsurprising double standard.

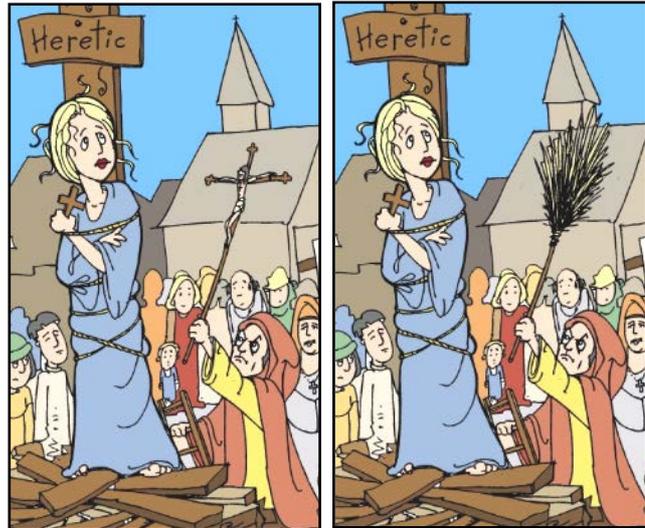
- b. On the C.D. there is a caricature of a monk (diminutive and well-fed) in a typical village scene. He is walking away from two executed 'criminals'. The malevolent implications are that this monk supervised these executions and that executions were a common occurrence. This diagram reinforces the text, **"It was very serious to break a church rule or religious law, such as one of the Bible's Ten Commandments. Offenders were often killed after enduring the most revolting tortures."**



- c. Jacaranda Press teaches children, "The worst thing one could be charged with before a church court was heresy. The punishment was almost always torture and death". On their C.D. Jacaranda Press says, "The punishment was ~~almost~~ almost always torture and death". If Jacaranda Press had just a modicum of knowledge of the medieval justice system it would know the Church's usual punishment for heresy was some form of penance and never torture. See Comment 32c.
- d. Jacaranda Press demonstrates well that the Catholic Church is "Guilty until proven innocent".
"There were no lawyers . . ." In 1542 the Roman Inquisition of the Catholic Church gave an accused person the right to have a defence lawyer. The Inquisition paid for a lawyer if the accused was unable to afford one. In 1836, nearly 300 years later, England permitted defence lawyers; were the pre-1836 accused "guilty until proven innocent"?
- e. Teachers, so that your pupils can understand the influence of the medieval Catholic Church, "draw some parallels with modern-day oppressive regimes, such as the political regimes in some existing, and former communist countries".
Ironically, it is the propaganda methods used by Jacaranda Press itself that well demonstrates "parallels with ... former communist countries".
- f. The Church did not control the brutal justice system.
St Avitus of Vienne in 518, St Agobard in 840 and the Council of Valence in 855 denounced trial by mortal combat. It was declared "*contrary to Christian peace and destructive of body and soul.*"
The Church never permitted trials by ordeal. Pope Stephen V (885-891) forbade the ordeals of hot iron and of boiling water. Pope Nicholas I (858-867) and Pope Honorius III (1216-1227) characterised trials by ordeal as a sinful "*tempting of God*". Pope Alexander II (1061-1073) said, "*ordeals are not sanctioned by the canons of the Church*"; Pope Alexander III (1159-1181) denounced them as detestable; Pope Celestine III (1191-1198) was outspoken in his condemnation of the ordeal as "*superstitious judgements against God's law and the Church's canons*".
Requiring the study of this despicable and fabricated diatribe is a form of "trial by ordeal" inflicted on Catholic children in government schools.

g. Modern-day Iconoclasm by Jacaranda.

The crucifix is the special identifying sacred symbol for Catholics. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ is intrinsic to their worship of God in the Mass. A crucifix on a staff is usually the vanguard of Catholic processions, especially the procession preceding the Mass. John Wiley & Sons Australia Ltd enables students to desecrate this crucifix, with its figure of Jesus Christ, by turning it into a witch's broom. *Humanities Alive 2* [p. 59] associates witches with the worship of the devil. It is sacrilegious, outrageous and unpardonable to allow children to insult this sacred icon.



What would be the reaction of the Ministry of Education and Training if this blasphemy was inflicted on another sacred symbol such as a Jewish menorah or Star of David, an Islamic Star and Crescent, the aboriginal Rainbow Serpent or the LGBTI rainbow flag?

2. “The fate of the Witch of Irongray, a poor widowed woman reported to have lived near Dumfries in Scotland during the reign of James IV of Scotland (1488–1513)

She lived alone, and was frequently seen on a summer’s eve, sitting upon a jagged rock, which overhung the Routing burn [stream], or gathering sticks . . . Her lips were sometimes seen to be moving when she went to church and she was observed to predict showers or sunshine at certain periods, which predictions often came to be realised . . . The Bishop of Galloway was repeatedly urged to punish this witch; and lest it be reported to the King that he refused to punish witches, he at last caused her to be brought before him . . . The wretched woman was enclosed in a barrel, fire was set to it and it was rolled in a blaze, into the waters . . .

“Activities 7(b) What does this extract [about the Witch of Irongray] show about the fears of medieval people?” (p. 59)

- a. This vile vignette is anachronistic slander, calculated to create abhorrence of the Catholic Church in the minds of children? The author has taken an incident that occurred during the reign of King James VI in 17th century protestant Scotland, reversed the Roman numerals and presented this atrocity to children as having occurred during the reign of King James IV in the Catholic Middle Ages. The Bishop of Galloway was not a Catholic bishop as implied. An unfortunate mishap! The same author, writing for Oxford University Press ‘*Oxford Big Ideas History Level 5*’ page 196, took an extract from the book ‘*Europe’s Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom*’ by Norman Cohn, removed the sentence that placed the extract in 17th century protestant England then presented it to children as applying to the Catholic Middle Ages. (see Comment 21)

The seeds of intolerance have been cultivated in the minds of children. Our misled, indoctrinated and now anti-Catholic children can affirm: “I can understand the way medieval crimes were judged and punished; explain why torture is used – both in medieval times and today; appreciate how fear can lead to forming unjust opinions.”

3. “Many medieval church workers were honest, caring and dedicated people, who spent their lives serving the poor and the sick. Others were corrupt and interested only in themselves. [The priest of Wanestanville] plays at dice and drinks too much; he frequents taverns, he does not stay in his church, [and] he goes hawking in the country as he wishes; we imposed on him a penance . . . [The priest of Ruiville] is said to have many . . . children; he does not stay in his church, he plays ball . . . and he rides around in a short coat [what armed men wore]; we have letters from him [of confession] . . .”

“The priest, who lived near the church, was often... as uneducated as the serfs . . . There were many stories about how Robin Hood outsmarted the sheriff and the corrupt churchmen and officials who served him . . . Some monks...were also shown to have lied about the timing of another important man’s death. Perhaps they just wanted to attract pilgrims to get money for their monastery . . .”

And much, much more.

Jacaranda Press indulges in the endless trumpeting of all of the faults of the medieval Catholics. Jacaranda Press has produced a “corrupt” history that is obviously designed to weaken the bond young Catholics have with the Church. The fabrications have been sold to unsuspecting people as a genuine history of the Middle Ages; I would call that “corruption”.

Martin Luther, John Calvin and many historians have confirmed that corruption greatly increased when the control of the Church ceased at the time of the Reformation.

4. “The Dark Ages: first half of the Middle Ages when culture, learning and economic growth were at a low ebb.” “The church’s porch was often the local school (at first only for wealthy boys studying to be priests)”. “The lord’s wife is weaving and her son is being taught Latin by a priest.”
 - a. The Curriculum required the study of education in the Middle Ages but Jacaranda Press presented to children mere trivia then asked children to analyse the Church’s obscurant attitude to education. The obscurant Jacaranda Press ignored the vast number of medieval primary, secondary and technical schools and the universities founded and staffed by the Catholic Church.
 - b. Nicholas Orme, Emeritus Professor of History at Exeter University, writes “. . . the achievements of medieval school founders, schoolteachers and pupils turns out to have been impressive . . . Our understanding of schooling is that you start it at about four or five, and follow it until you are about eighteen. The school year falls into three terms, divided by Christmas and Easter holidays, with a long holiday in the summer. You start by learning to read and go on to more complicated studies. The teacher tries to gain your interest, rather than just communicating facts. You get an education that is not narrowly vocational, but fits you for a wide range of careers.
None of these is a modern invention. They all developed in the schools of the Middle Ages. And we have kept them because they work. They are what medieval schools did for us.” (“What Did Medieval Schools Do For Us”, “History Today”, Volume 56 June 2006)
 - c. “(T)he university system, a gift of Western civilization to the world, was developed by the Catholic Church. Historians have marveled at the extent to which intellectual debate in those universities was free and unfettered. The exaltation of human reason and its capabilities, a commitment to rigorous and rational debate, a promotion of intellectual

inquiry and scholarly exchange – all sponsored by the Church – provided the framework for the Scientific Revolution, which was unique to Western civilization.”

(“How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilisation”, Thomas E Woods Jr, Ph.D., p4)

d. The “most consistent and greatest protector (of universities) was the Pope”.

Lowrie Daly “The Medieval University” 1200-1400 p81

5. “The earlier part of the Middle Ages (up to about the thirteen century) was not a creative period in history. People mostly did just what they were told. They knew their place in society. Those who behaved or thought differently paid a heavy price – often with their lives . . . There was little in their own time to inspire thinkers and other creative people . . .” Unlike humanists, Catholics did not stress “the beauty and dignity of human beings and the importance of reason over blind religious obedience.” . . . culture, learning and economic growth were at a low ebb . . .” And much, much more.

“Things began to change in the fourteenth century. Some people began to think for themselves . . . (Humanism) stressed the beauty and dignity of human beings and the importance of reason over blind religious obedience. . . . people started thinking for themselves” . . . humanists believed they had to learn . . . many thinking people were becoming concerned about some aspects of the Church . . . people should think for themselves, not just accept what the Church said . . .”

Our misinformed, brainwashed and now ex-Catholic children can affirm:

“I can suggest why the Church feared Renaissance thinking.”

And much more of this ilk.

- a. So throughout the centuries of the Middle Ages, the hundreds of thousands of priests, monks, friars and nuns – who voluntarily dedicated their lives in hospitals, orphanages, homes for the elderly and the mentally impaired, leprosariums, schools, universities, ransoming slaves from the Muslims, copying and illuminating manuscripts, copying Bibles, translating the Bible into vernacular languages, writing books, building bridges, roads, lighthouses, etc. – did not “think about their personal responsibilities when it came to religion.”
Sadly Jacaranda Press did not think about its responsibility when it came to producing medieval history textbooks for children.
- b. Rodney Stark, “the so-called “Scientific Revolution” of the sixteenth century was a result of developments begun by religious scholars starting in the eleventh century. In my own academic research I have asked why these religious scholastics were interested in science at all. Why did science develop in Europe at this time? Why did it not develop anywhere else? I find answers to those questions in unique features of Christian theology.” (*“False conflict: Christianity is not only compatible with Science– it created it”*)
- c. We “are told over and over again that the Catholic Middle Ages was a time of blind superstition when people just couldn't think straight - a neat description of the modern ignoramuses who tell us so.”

6. Holy Wars: the following is a link to an article about Jacaranda Press’ interpretation of the Crusades written by me in March 2012:

<http://newsweekly.com.au/article.php?id=5129&s=bFHVMN>

7. “Reformation – rethinking religion . . . many thinking people were becoming concerned about some aspects of the Church . . . its leaders were often promoted for their wealth or social position, not their Christian character. A number of priests were more interested in drinking and gambling than godly living. Others were no longer celibate. As well, humanists ((who) stressed the beauty and dignity of human beings and the importance of reason over blind religious obedience) were saying that people should think for themselves, not to just accept what the Church said. **The time was ripe for change . . . [Protestant] principles verses [Catholic] power.**”

By way of contrast:

Martin Luther was a devout German monk, a Renaissance thinker, highly educated in law and religious studies, a brave, sincere, man of courage and of principle. Luther was very angry at the corruption and greed he had seen in some parts of the Church. He especially hated the practice of selling indulgences. An indulgence ‘bought’ someone forgiveness of sins (wrongdoings). The more money paid, the better the deal in the afterlife. . . Many . . . so-called Protestants were killed . . .

Men of principle . . . Martin Luther and Martin Luther King were both men brave enough to risk speaking out about what they believed in. Their courage helped to change history. Martin Luther King, spoke out against the injustices black people suffered . . . The civil rights movement . . . helped to improve the freedoms enjoyed by African-Americans (and) . . . also helped to break down the racial prejudice held by many white Americans for centuries.

- a. Victoria’s Premiers and Ministers of Education and Training have not upheld Victoria’s **Education and Training Reform Act 2006** that states “education in Government schools must be secular and not promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect”. They are also unwilling to uphold the integrity of their own Curriculum, permitting children to be misinformed by serious omissions and to be taught fabrications and distortions as historical facts. Are Catholic school children exempt from celebrating “Harmony Day” each 21st of March?
- b. Jacaranda Press’ ‘history’ is the essence of propaganda, of religious bigotry, of gross selectivity, of historical fabrication. Jacaranda Press presents to children the Reformation as a reaction of the devout against the corrupt, of principles against power, of learning against ignorance, of enlightenment against obscurantism, of freedom against fear, of vernacular against Latin. Obviously no Protestant wrote this; prejudiced secularists merely use Protestantism to beat the Catholic Church.

For the benefit of children Jacaranda Press draws parallels between **medieval Catholicism** and **racial discrimination**.

Men of principle . . . **Error! Bookmark not defined.Error! Bookmark not defined.Error! Bookmark not defined.,Error! Bookmark not defined.** Martin Luther King/**Martin Luther** spoke out against the injustices **black/medieval** people suffered . . . The **civil-rights/Reformation** movement . . . helped to improve . . . freedoms (and) . . . also helped to break down the **racial/religious** prejudice held by many **white-Americans/Catholics** for centuries.

This is not the occasion to demonstrate that the Reformation did precisely the opposite.

- c. “An indulgence ‘bought’ someone forgiveness of sins (wrongdoings). The more money paid, the better the deal in the afterlife . . . indulgence: payment made to a church official during the Middle Ages in exchange for forgiveness of sins or a sure place in heaven.”

Jacaranda Press totally misrepresents the Catholic teachings on indulgences; not a single idea is correct. In spite of popular myth, the Catholic Church has never sold indulgences.

- d. “excommunicate: to cut off someone from the Church . . . This meant going to hell for the medieval peasant.”

The Church has never taught that an excommunicated person was condemned to Hell. Medieval peasants did not fear excommunication.

8. “The Church and Science

“Nicholas Copernicus said the Earth and other planets orbited the Sun. The Catholic Church banned his book because the Church believed that the Earth was the centre of the universe . . . Galileo Galilei was forced by the Catholic Church to take back his statement that the Sun was the centre of the universe. He was told **he would be tortured** if he did not.” [Jacaranda Press, *Science Alive 1*, p.242-3]

“Nicholas Copernicus . . . He had been afraid to publish earlier, as his ideas contradicted the Catholic Church’s teaching that the Earth was the centre of the solar system.” [Science Quest 2, 2nd Ed., p.114p.279]

“Copernicus wrote a book in which he used mathematics to explain his ideas. He died in 1543 on the day that his book *On the Revolutions of Heavenly Spheres*. The book was banned because it disputed the teachings of the Church and was considered morally wrong. According to the Church at the time, the Earth had to be at the centre of the universe.” [Jacaranda Press, *Science Quest 2*, 3rd Ed., p.148]

“Galileo “was right after all . . . after the invention of the telescope. Galileo Galilei made the observations that supported the idea that the Sun rather than the Earth was the centre of the solar system. But **he was threatened with execution by the Catholic Church** in 1633 for his support of the idea and was forced to publically deny his belief. He spent the rest of his life under house arrest.” [Jacaranda Press, *Science Quest 1*, 2nd Ed., p.114]

“Galileo, despite the strong opposition of the Church, actively supported the ideas of Copernicus. In 1616 he was ordered by the Roman Catholic church not to defend the Copernican model. However, he defied the order and in 1632 published a book in which he showed that the ideas of Copernicus were far more sensible than the Earth-centred model of Ptolemy. The following year Galileo was **forced under the threat of torture** to deny his beliefs in public. His book was banned and **he was sentenced to life imprisonment.**” [Jacaranda Press, *Science Quest 2*, 3rd Ed., p.148]

“In medicine, Vesalius introduced ideas about human anatomy. His students helped him by collection bodies from the gallows at night. In 1543, Vesalius published an illustrated book describing and explaining his observations. He is known as the “father of anatomy” but during his lifetime the Church condemned his work.” [page 279]

This is nothing but unhistorical fabrication and anti-Catholic proselytising. Children are being deceived:

- The Church did not teach the Earth was the centre of the universe or the centre of the solar system.
- The Church did not maintain that Copernicus' book "On the Revolutions of Heavenly Spheres" was "wrong" or "morally wrong".
- The Church encouraged Copernicus to publish his theories (very few of which are now accepted as fact).
- Galileo "was right after all". No, he was not.
- Yes! Galileo's telescopic "observations ... supported the idea that the Sun rather than the Earth was the centre of the solar system" (e.g. phases of Venus) but they also supported the idea that the Earth rather than the Sun was the centre of the solar system (e.g. enlarged stellar images and no stellar parallax).
- Galileo was not threatened with torture or execution.
- Galileo, without sufficient evidence, demanded the Church accept the Copernican System as a literal fact and not as a hypothesis as the Church suggested.
- Teaching children that Galileo "was sentenced to life imprisonment" is hyperbolic; he gained a degree of freedom from his home detention.
- Vesalius' anatomical work was not condemned by the Church; dissections were performed in Church sponsored medical schools long before the time of Vesalius. See Comment 13

**Part 2. Submission to the then
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
against John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd trading as Jacaranda Press**

According to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, The *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* made illegal the vilification of a person or group of people on the grounds of their race or religion.

“Vilification is behaviour that incites or encourages hatred of, serious contempt for, revulsion or severe ridicule of another person or group of people on the grounds of their race or religion.

“Conduct likely to be considered racial or religious vilification includes:

- comments about the race or religion of a person that could incite contempt or ridicule of, or hatred for, that person
- promoting hatred of a racial or religious group in flyers, stickers, posters, in a speech or publication, or through websites or email. . .

It is also against the law to authorise or assist someone to vilify others.

“Conduct unlikely to be considered racial or religious vilification includes:

- religious criticism and racial or religious debate that does not encourage or promote hatred or contempt for other racial or religious groups
- behaviour that offends people of a particular race or religion, but does not incite hatred, severe contempt, serious ridicule or revulsion.

Comments, jokes or other acts related to the race or religion of a person may not constitute vilification, but if they occur in employment, education, accommodation or the provision of goods and services, they could still be the basis for a complaint . . .

Some behaviours may not be considered vilification if they are reasonable and done in good faith. This includes: an artistic work or performance; a statement, publication, discussion or debate in the public interest; and a fair and accurate report in the media.”

In January 2006 I lodged a Complaint (File No. 3057212) with the then Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria against John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd trading as Jacaranda Press on the grounds the publisher may have violated Victoria’s *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001*. Dr Helen Szoke, the then Commissioner of the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission rejected My complaint.

9. In response Dr Szoke wrote that – in the absence of “*the strongest feelings of revulsion, hatred or dislike*” and/or incitement such that “*violence might result*” – my complaint was “*lacking in substance and misconceived*”.

Some observations:

- a. Dr Szoke maintained that Jacaranda Press’ “actions in publishing the text books was conduct engaged in reasonably and good faith and which was for a genuine academic purpose”. Using the words of Premier John Brumby, she described gross misrepresentations, demonisations and fabrications as a true “statement of (Catholic) belief, (Catholic) instruction and discussion concerning the conduct and practices of (Catholic) bodies”. I did not, and do not believe any member of the VEOHRC was competent enough or had the

necessary qualifications to make such a judgement about what is a reasonable statement of Catholic beliefs?

- b. On a C.D. there is 'artwork' that mocks Catholicism (see diagrams above). Where is the "good faith" in associating the crucifix with witches who, according to Jacaranda's textbooks, "were believed to worship the devil"? Where is the "genuine academic purpose" in this modern production? Dr Szoke wrote that an "exemption" exists because this "artistic performance" is "in the public interest"? Would a similar conclusion have been reached if an Islamic star and crescent, a Jewish Star of David, an aboriginal artefact, an LGBTI rainbow flag was the object of similar desecration?
 - c. Incredulously, Dr Szoke classified an ignorant child – compelled by the Victorian Government to attend school and compelled to study this anti-Catholic invective – as an "ordinary person". Presumably a Catholic child should have been able to "engage in robust discussion" (RRTA, Section 4(1b)) with a bigoted teacher about the calumnies and distortions in a malevolent textbook. Obtaining satisfactory outcomes may have depended on how well a Catholic child adapted Assessment Tasks to the teacher's cherished opinions.
10. Clearly the original RRTA did not prohibit attacks on the religious beliefs and practices of children by sectarian teachers; it did not protect them from the possibility of being severely ridiculed or from being bullied by fellow students. I know of a Catholic student who was publicly humiliated by a teacher and another who was greatly embarrassed by the way his spiritual ancestors were supposed to have acted.

Dr Szoke quoted former President Morris:

"The Act is reserved for extreme circumstances: such as where a person engages in conduct that inflames others to hate a person or persons because they adhere to an idea or practice or are of a particular race. "

"The key word is "incites". In its context, this does not mean "causes". Rather it carries the connotation of "inflame" or "set alight". The section is not concerned with conduct that provokes thought; it is directed at conduct that is likely to generate strong and negative passions in the ordinary person. An example of such passions would be where persons are moved that violence might result"

11. It would appear that the then Equal Opportunity Commission of Victoria:

- was not "reflecting the values" of The Racial and Religious Tolerance Act for it is not "ensuring that people are free to go about their daily lives without being subjected to vilification because of their religious beliefs."
- was not using The Racial and Religious Tolerance Act to promote "religious freedom by treating each religion equally."
- was not promoting "the right of all people to be treated with dignity and respect";
- was not requiring "debates promoting the merits of one religion over another be conducted reasonably and fairly"
- did not demonstrate "that in Victoria we are committed to the values of social cohesion and respect for all ... religious beliefs."

a. Section 4 of the Racial and Religious Act 2001 stated the "objects of the Act are ...

(b) to maintain the right of all Victorians to engage in robust discussion of ... religious issues or academic debate ... where such discussion, expression, debate or comment does not vilify or marginalised any person or class of persons; ...”

- a classroom debate cannot be fair if, on the one hand there is a hostile teacher using a hostile textbook and a hostile *Teacher Support Kit*, and on the other, a devout Catholic child who is ignorant of history and the details of Catholic doctrines.
- a classroom debate cannot be fair if a Catholic child is unable to express a point of view because he/she is intimidated by the presence of fellow students who may be hostile to any religion. For the Catholic child “violence might result” in the form of bullying or ridicule.
- a classroom debate cannot be fair if the laws of the State of Victoria compel the Catholic child to be present and to participate.
- a classroom debate cannot be fair if *Humanities Alive 2* is “**purposely provocative**” (Mary Bluett, *The Australian* 9 March 2006) and makes “**provocative propositions** to spark a **debate** among students” (Mr Paul Thompson, Principal of Kimberley College in Queensland, *The Australian* 10 March 2006).
- a classroom debate cannot be fair if a child has to carry out Activities that are detrimental to his/her religious beliefs.
- a classroom debate cannot be fair if, as the result of the propaganda from a hostile teacher using a hostile textbook, a Catholic child rejects his/her religious faith and culture.
- a classroom debate cannot be fair for Catholic children in a government school if – in the words of the Preamble of the *Racial and Religious Act 2001* — it “diminishes their sense of dignity, sense of self-worth and belonging to the community. It diminishes their ability to contribute to, or fully participate in, all social, political, economic and cultural aspects of society as equals, thus reducing the benefit that diversity brings to the community.”

On July 23, 2010, I had an informal discussion with Dr Helen Szoke. She displayed genuine concern about John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd’s textbooks and diagrams and her own letter rejecting my Complaint saying, in the presence of other members of the Commission, “Catholic children could be taunted.” Taunting is a form of bullying, of violence. She invited me to see her at the Commission.

**Part 3. An Analysis of the History of the Middle Ages
according to Jacaranda Press an imprint of John Wiley & Sons Australia Ltd.
“Humanities Alive 2 Second Edition”,
“Humanities Alive Level 5 Teacher Support Kit”
“Jacaranda Essentials History 1”**

“Humanities Alive 2 Second Edition”, repeats most of the canards and distortions of “Humanities Alive 2” which has been ‘updated’ simply by the insertion of pages from an earlier text book “Jacaranda SOSE Studies of Society & Environment”.

12. “Jacaranda - Humanities Alive, Teacher Support Kit, Level 5”, p. 266 offers the following suggestions to teachers

“For many centuries the beliefs and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church were the most dominant forces in European affairs, and in people's lives. The largely unquestioning faith of the population at large and the belief that to openly question or criticise might result in eternal damnation (not to mention possible torture and/or death), allowed Church leaders of the time to exercise great power and influence . . .

Although people may have had personal doubts at various times about what they may have been told, the fear of (painful) retribution outweighed all other thoughts and emotions. Even when corruption was evident and practices by established personnel within the Church hierarchy were clearly against Christian values, people still would not openly question. **(At this point, you may like to draw some parallels with modern-day oppressive regimes, such as the political regimes in some existing, and former communist countries. People in these places are also afraid to speak out for fear of negative consequences, and hence are vulnerable to the greed and/or political self-interest of those in power.)**”

Jacaranda Press gives encouragement to teachers to compare the medieval Popes to murderous tyrants like Lenin, Stalin, Mao Tse-tung, Pol Pot and Fidel Castro.

Brainwashing impressionable children with this propaganda demonstrates the deep and irrational hostility of Jacaranda Press to the Catholic Church.

13. “Vesalius did not receive fame and fortune for his work. The Church condemned him . . .

One discovery after another showed that Church teachings could be wrong. The important medical knowledge gained by physicians like Vesalius called into question the Church's opposition to the dissection of bodies. Humanist scholars like Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469-1536) translated the New Testament of the Bible again from the original Greek and found (great) differences between what the Church was saying and what . . . Jesus and St Paul had actually said.

(Jacaranda SOSE 2 Studies of Society & Environment” p. 70 and Humanities Alive 2, 2nd Edition, p. 100)

- a. “One discovery after another showed that Church teachings could be wrong.” Presenting to children a litany of fabrications about the Church is blatant anti-Catholic proselytising.
- b. The Catholic Church never condemned Vesalius or opposed dissection of bodies; indeed dissection was practised in Catholic medical schools long before the time of Vesalius. Andrew Cunningham (an atheist and a research fellow within the Department of History and Philosophy of Science specializing in the History of Medicine): “I’m a historian of anatomy . . . I have to say the Catholic church was never against anatomising and I say

never, ever, anywhere, and in fact you can look at the Catholic church especially cardinals who become popes, as positive promoters of anatomical knowledge.”

- c. Teaching children that “Erasmus . . . found (great) differences between what the Church was saying and what . . . Jesus and St Paul had actually said” is reprehensible anti-Catholic indoctrination. It is another vague sectarian assault on the ‘teachings’ of the Catholic Church for the benefit of receptive children. It is impossible to counter this assertion because no details are given. Erasmus was a Catholic priest, a humanist, who wrote against the teachings of Martin Luther. Personally, I would dearly love to know what these supposed great differences are.

14. “Perhaps the Earth was not flat? Perhaps the Earth was not at the centre of the universe.”

The Catholic Church never taught that the Earth was flat and never taught the Earth was not at the centre of the universe. If the Church had, Jacaranda Press would quote directly from the relevant Church document. Jacaranda Press is gullible for promoting the anti-Catholic rhetoric of 19th century contrarians such as John William Draper and Andrew Dickson White and is reprehensible for teaching children such falsehoods.

15. Activity: “Why were people who lived during the Renaissance less likely to believe (in Hell) than those who lived during the Middle Ages?”

In the context of the textbook, the children would write that the vast majority of medieval Catholics did not have access to the Bible, were uneducated and illiterate and therefore easily influenced but during the Renaissance people “started to think” and therefore were less likely to believe this ‘irrational’ Catholic doctrine. Jesus Christ and Martin Luther constantly referred to the reality of Hell. Yet another example of agenda-driven biased secularists misusing Protestantism to proselytise against a Catholic doctrine with the full knowledge of the unconcerned upholders of ‘secular’ education.

16. (Nicolaus Copernicus) “published his theory in a work entitled “De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium” (‘On the Revolution of Heavenly Spheres’) in 1543 and dedicated it to the Pope, Paul III . . . Copernicus stated that the sun was at the centre of the planetary system . . . the Earth revolved around the Sun in the course of a year . . . Although the Renaissance period encouraged individuals to explore new ideas and express different opinions, it was still dangerous to publicly state anything that went against the teachings of the Catholic Church. Those who disagreed with the views of the Catholic Church risked being labelled heretics and excommunicated, or possibly even killed. In these circumstances, the publication of Copernicus’ theory is remembered as an amazing achievement. (“Jacaranda Essentials History 1”, p. 219)

- a. If the Catholic Church labelled any scientific thinker a heretic or had such a thinker excommunicated or killed, Jacaranda Press would have named that person. No one is named. Children are deceived by fabricated, anti-Catholic propaganda.
- b. The Catholic Church welcomed the Copernican theory. In 1533, Johann Albrecht Widmannstetter delivered in Rome a series of lectures outlining Copernicus’ theory. The lectures were heard with interest by several Catholic cardinals and Pope Clement VII who rewarded Widmannstetter with the gift of a rare Greek manuscript.
- c. Copernicus was strongly encouraged to publish his work by Bishop Tiedemann Giese of Culm and by Cardinal Nicolas von Schoenberg. The latter wrote to him on 1 November

1536: "With the utmost earnestness I entreat you, most learned sir, unless I inconvenience you, to communicate this discovery of yours to scholars". Copernicus, published "On the Revolution of Heavenly Spheres", which he dedicated it to Pope Paul III, who received it cordially.

- d. We now know that most of the ideas in 'On the Revolution of Heavenly Spheres' are wrong. Copernicus placed the Sun near, not at, the centre of the planetary system. The planets did not orbit the Sun but the centre of Earth's orbit.
- e. The orbiting of the Earth around the Sun is an optical illusion. An observer, positioned high above the pole of our Milky Way galaxy would never say the Earth was scribing an elliptical orbit around the rapidly moving Sun.
- f. According to Albert Einstein, it would not have mattered a pin's point whether it was said that the earth goes around the sun, or the sun goes around the earth. (Einstein and Infeld, "The Evolution of Physics", Cambridge University Press 1938, p. 224)

17. Galileo Galilei's "observations led him to be able to prove that Copernicus' theory was correct and he published his findings in "A Dialogue on the Two Principal Systems of the World".^v The Copernican system and Galileo's defence of it challenged the authority of the Catholic Church, which insisted that the Ptolemaic system was correct.^{vi} As a result, Galileo was charged with heresy in 1633, threatened with torture, excommunicated from the church and virtually kept under house arrest until his death in 1642."

Diagram labelled: "Andrea Cellari's seventeenth-century map of the heavens showing the Copernican system". ("Jacaranda Essentials History 1", p. 219)

- a. The Catholic Church never stated or taught that the Ptolemaic system was correct. The various planetary theories were freely discussed among Catholics.
- b. Galileo did not and could not prove the Copernican system but he insisted the Church accept it as a fact and reinterpret Scripture. Galileo rejected the now accepted, with reservations, Kepler's laws of planetary motion (1619). Galileo insisted that the planets orbit the sun in perfect circles with 48 epicycles (9 for the Earth, 2 for the Moon); Jesuit astronomers could plainly see that this was untenable.
- c. Jesuit astronomers confirmed Galileo's telescopic observations of the moons of Jupiter and subsequently honoured him with a full day of ceremonies. He was given a hero's welcome by cardinals and dignitaries of the Church including Pope Paul V.
- d. Galileo ignored his own telescopic observations; they supported an Earth-centred system. Unbeknown to Galileo his stellar images were distorted by diffraction patterns called Airy disks – he ignored the scientific evidence.
- e. Galileo was hypersensitive to what he perceived to be criticism; his manner was caustic and aggressive. He rejected the Pope's suggestion to treat the Copernican system as a theory. Instead of being an objective and precise scientist, Galileo presented himself as a rebel theologian.
- f. In a "Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina" (1615) Galileo wrote that it was not up to him to prove the correctness of the Copernican system, but for his critics to disprove it. And for this 'logic' some call him the "Father of the Scientific Revolution".

- g. Galileo was never charged with heresy. He was found to be “vehemently suspect of heresy”. Professor Nicola Cabibbo, ex-president of the Italian Institute of Nuclear Physics said, “Galileo was not condemned for his scientific theses, but because he wanted to formulate theology”.
- h. Galileo was never threatened with torture. During his trial he was not confined to a Roman dungeon but housed in the grand Medici Villa from where he attended receptions with the Pope and cardinals.
- i. Galileo was never excommunicated or threatened with excommunication. He remained a faithful Catholic.
- j. The Pope allowed Galileo to stay with his friend Archbishop Piccolomini of Siena who treated him with great kindness as a good Catholic and honoured guest. The Pope continued to inquire after Galileo’s welfare. Galileo returned to his villa in Arcetri, near Florence, where he lived an intellectually productive life and gained a degree of freedom of movement.
- k. Jacaranda Press is wrong about “Andrea Cellari’s seventeenth-century map of the heavens” for it shows Kepler’s system, not the much more complicated Copernican system. The diagram is presented to children as the system rejected by the Church. The Church did not reject the Kepler’s system. But Galileo did.
- l. Had the Catholic Church endorsed Galileo’s views and accepted the Copernican system as proven, modern-day critics would loudly lampoon the Church as a bastion of ignorance and gullibility.
- m. The Dominican scholar William Wallace, O.P., in his book *Galileo's Early Notebooks* (Notre Dame, 1977), has demonstrated by using the internal evidence of terminology, word order and symbols, that much of Galileo's teachings came from nine Jesuit scientists teaching at the Roman College, thus corroborating the research of other scholars such as Adriano Carigo and the Australian Alister C. Crombie. After studying Galileo's manuscripts for fifteen years, Wallace found that Galileo's notebooks show considerable evidence of duplicating the notes of these nine teachers.
If Galileo was the “Father of the Scientific Revolution” then the Jesuits were the “Grandfathers of the Scientific Revolution”.

18. Increased literacy meant many people wanted to read the Bible in their own language, not Latin, and interpret it themselves . . . Luther’s ideas were supported and taken up . . . by people who disagreed with the accepted interpretation of the Bible” [Humanities Alive 2 2E p101]

The inference is clear: the Catholic Church did not want her followers to read the Bible out of fear that her doctrines would be found to be false. However, before the Reformation, there were many translations of the Bible in vernacular languages, including English and German. Between 1466 and the onset of the so-called Reformation in 1517 at least sixteen editions of the Bible appeared in German, with the full approval of the Catholic Church. Ironically, Luther himself wished to suppress Catholic translations of the Bible.’

19. Writing and presenting a speech (*Humanities Alive 2 2E p100-2*)

“The year is 1516. You are organising a meeting at your local village hall to protest about

the state of the Church. Remember the villagers are illiterate and not used to disobeying the Church. Write and present a speech to the villagers. You need to state the reasons for your protest simply -you are not against religion, just concerned about corruption in the Church.

1. Start by praising God and your village priest. 2. Mention heaven and hell and life on Earth. 3. Talk about the sale of indulgences, corrupt monks, illiterate clergy, and the problem of too much wealth and power. 4. List a few changes you think should be made.”

a. This Classroom exercise was preceded by Catholic corruption, corruption and more corruption. The exercise is highly selectivity. Interestingly, Jacaranda Press naively acknowledges “personal bias can distort accounts” (Humanities Alive 2, p. 89); reprehensively, the publisher’s bias is directed at children, priming them to become anti-Catholic bigots.

In government classrooms Catholic children may have been required to complete the exercise to the satisfaction of a sectarian teacher.

b. 1516, the year before the start of the Reformation. This exercise grooms the children to view the Protestant Revolt as an enlightened emancipation.

c. Jacaranda Press could have balanced their presentation by stating honestly what occurred because of the Reformation:

Dr Ignaz von Dollinger in his book on “The Reformation: Its Interior Development and Effects”, shows from Protestant writers alone that the Reformation in Germany, instead of helping matters, led to intellectual, social, moral and religious deterioration.

Martin Luther would agree, “Men are now more revengeful, covetous, and licentious, than they were ever under the Papacy.” (Postil. super Evang. Dom. i., Advent.)

Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563), a Lutheran preacher, described his time (1560) as “unspeakably immoral compared with the Germans of the 15th century.”

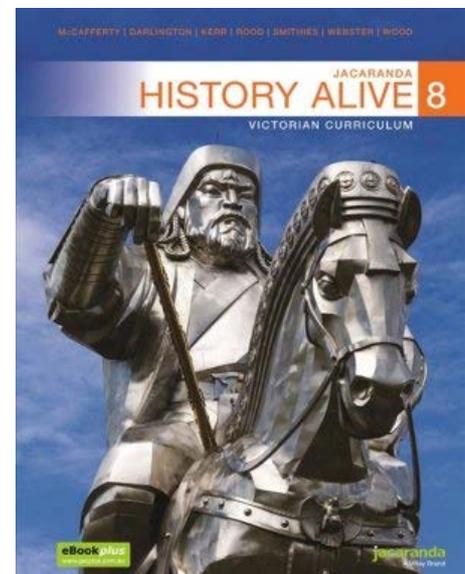
Philip Melanchthon, companion and successor of Martin Luther, wrote in a letter to John Calvin “All the waters of the Elbe [river] would not yield me tears sufficient to weep for the miseries caused by the Reformation.”

**Part 4. Current Year 8 History of the Middle Ages and Early Exploration
according to Jacaranda Press an imprint of John Wiley & Sons Australia Ltd.
“Jacaranda HISTORY ALIVE 8 Victorian Curriculum”**

According to the “Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority”

“History is a disciplined process of investigation into the past that develops students' curiosity and imagination. Awareness of history is an essential characteristic of any society, and historical knowledge is fundamental to understanding ourselves and others. It promotes the understanding of societies, events, movements and developments that have shaped humanity from earliest times. It helps students appreciate how the world and its people have changed, as well as the significant continuities that exist to the present day. History, as a discipline, has its own methods and procedures which make it different from other ways of understanding human experience. The study of history is based on evidence derived from remains of the past. It is interpretative by nature, promotes debate and encourages thinking about human values, including present and future challenges. The study of history also provides opportunities to develop transferable skills of critical and creative thinking, such as the ability to explore questions, imagine possibilities and construct arguments.”

The current Year 8 History textbook by Jacaranda Press “*Jacaranda HISTORY ALIVE 8 Victorian Curriculum*” demonstrates that the publisher is not willing to adhere to the above principles. The misleading ‘history’ in this textbook illustrates well that the publisher has an agenda that distorts the requirements of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. All children will be misinformed; Catholic children will be humiliated and perhaps bullied by taunting.



**Part 5. An Analysis of the History of the Middle Ages
according to Oxford University Press
“Oxford Big Ideas Humanities 2” & “Oxford Big Ideas History 1”**

I wrote to Oxford University Press, Oxfordshire, England detailing the misrepresentations of medieval Catholicism in “*Oxford Big Ideas Humanities 2*” and “*Oxford Big Ideas History 1*” and in the later publication “*Oxford Big Ideas History Australian Curriculum - Year 8*”.

On April 3, 2015, in an email, Oxford University Press’ reply included:

“As you are aware, in 2012 we carried out a detailed review of the issues you raised with two previous and related titles (*Oxford Big Ideas History 1 and 2*). This included an external review by an academic historian. Our conclusion based on this review was that there were no signs of prejudice in the text and that it was broadly balanced in its view of the Church.”

Children have used these two textbooks in the recent past; some schools may still be using them. Extracts from these books follow (emphasis added) with my Comments:

20. “The controls of medieval justice. More serious charges were heard in the Church courts (e.g. heresy or witchcraft) and the king’s court (e.g. treason). Guilt might mean being tortured with thumbscrews. After torture, the victim might be killed by being skinned or burnt alive or being hung, drawn and quartered. Often, the remains of mutilated corpses were left to rot in public places as a warning to others.” (p. 38)

- a. Note, charges heard in the Church courts are mentioned in the same sentence as charges heard in the king’s court. Oxford University Press gives children the deceitful impression these horrific tortures and executions apply to both the Church courts and the king’s courts. Church courts never used torture to punished heretics.
- b. “Witch trials only became common during the Renaissance and the fiercest hunts took place in the 1620s and 1630s in German speaking areas. Contrary to popular belief, they were not a phenomenon of the Middle Ages. Although magical belief and practice were just as common during this earlier period, they did not often lead to trials, let alone executions.” James Hannam, “God’s Philosophers: How the Medieval World Laid the Foundations of Modern Science”.
- c. In the main, the influence of the medieval Catholic Church is presented as being negative. The influence of the Church is associated with “control” (used 23 times), fear and punishment. But what occurred in those areas when the control of the Church was removed?

21. “Source 2.24 from “Europe’s Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom”, by Norman Cohn, 1993.

‘But who was selected for the role of witch? The most striking fact is the large number of women. **As for the Essex cases examined by Dr Macfarlane, out of 291 witches tried at the assizes between 1560 and 1680, only twenty-three were men, and eleven of these were connected with a woman . . .** [Witches] were usually thought of as married women or widows (rather than spinsters) between the ages of fifty and seventy ... Some of those executed were over eighty ... With other women, it was some personal peculiarity that singled them out for suspicion. Many of those accused ... were solitary, eccentric, or

bad-tempered; amongst the traits most often mentioned is a sharp tongue, quick to scold and threaten. Often they were frightening to look at – ugly, with red eyes or a squint, or pock-marked skin; or somehow deformed; or else simply bent and bowed with age.”
(p. 40)

- a. Cohn is quoting Dr Alan Macfarlane, *“Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England, London, 1970”*.
Oxford University Press omitted the sentence in bold print (my formatting); a sentence that places the Source in post-medieval Protestant Britain then asks children to use the Source to examine witchcraft in the Catholic Middle Ages. (See Comment 2)
- b. One cannot but be reminded of Banquo’s warning to Macbeth about witches,
“But ’tis strange. And oftentimes, to win us to our harm, the instruments of darkness (Jacaranda Press and Oxford University Press) tell us truths, win us (children) with honest trifles, to betray ’s in deepest consequence.”
- c. Oxford University Press is so biased it cannot see any “signs of prejudice” in its obviously malicious anachronism.

22. “The crusades were eight military campaigns fought between Christians and Muslims ... Jerusalem was then a key city, important for religious reasons to Muslims, Christians and Jews. ... Each side believed they would win and gain control of the Holy Land. How did this series of religious wars start? Palestine, including Jerusalem, was taken over by Arab Muslims in 637. For nearly 400 years, most Arab rulers allowed Christians to continue to visit sacred sites in the region. They also treated Christian merchants well. In 1050, however, Jerusalem was seized by the Seljuk Turks. These Muslims did not extend the same hospitality towards Christian pilgrims and merchants that the Arab Muslims had done. Now they were threatened. Also threatened was the then Christian city of Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire.” (p. 47)

- a. The Crusades demonstrate that the events of the Middle Ages cannot be dismissed as irrelevant. They are used to bludgeon the Catholic Church for its supposedly past intolerance and aggression. Today many Muslims are aggrieved by the Crusades. Many people believe that the Catholic Crusaders were aggressive invaders motivated by nothing more than vain-glory, eternal salvation and greed (the text supports this).
- b. Hospitality shown towards Christians! Oxford University Press asks children to investigate the Crusades without first informing them that the 463 years before the crusades was a period of constant murderous incursions into Christian territory by Muslim forces intent on booty - gold, silver, precious stones and slaves. In Rome the tombs of St Peter and St Paul, were desecrated and their respective Basilicas sacked, as was the Lateran Basilica (Catholicism’s most important church) along with numerous other churches and public buildings. The crusaders were responding to this expansion and to the most atrocious massacres of Christians by Muslims.
- c. Merely “threatened”! In the Middle East during the century before the Crusades, Muslims destroyed 30,000 Christian churches, convents and shrines including the Holy Sepulchre basilica [the site of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ]. Many Christians converted to Islam simply to save their own lives. The Jews were treated with similar ferocity. Christians had severe restrictions on their religious practices and enjoyed 'peace' only by maintaining the humiliating non-person status of dhimmies, without legal rights and

paying, in degrading public ceremonies, the jizya, a discriminatory taxes. In 1056, the Muslims expelled 300 Christians from Jerusalem and forbade European Christians from entering the rebuilt Church of the Holy Sepulchre. When the Seljuk Turks took Jerusalem in 1077, the Seljuk Emir Atsiz bin Uwaq promised not to harm the inhabitants, but once his men had entered the city, they murdered 3,000 people.

- d. The crusaders did not attack Islam per se; they responded to prevent further slaughter, rape and enslavement of Christians. In Jerusalem they respected the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa mosques. Emirs and Caliphs allied themselves with the crusaders to protect themselves from their co-religionists. The Muslim pilgrim Ibn Jubayr testified to the respectful treatment of Muslims under crusader rule.
- e. Few people would expect Muslims to sit idly by if Christians seized control of and denied access to the Kaaba in Mecca, the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosques in Jerusalem.

23. "The standard of health care in medieval Europe was poor as there was a limited understanding of disease and human anatomy. The Church did not allow dead bodies to be cut up and superstitions were widespread." (p. 88)

- a. The Church never opposed dissection. Andrew Cunningham (Cambridge Uni. Dept of History and Philosophy of Science specializing in the History of Medicine and an atheist), "I'm a historian of anatomy. One thing I now realise I have to say to every audience, wherever I talk on the history of anatomy, is that ... the Catholic Church was never against anatomising and I say never, ever, anywhere, and in fact you can look at the Catholic Church especially Cardinals who became Popes, as positive promoters of anatomical knowledge." See Comment 13
- b. Brain surgery was performed on a woman in 9thC County Donegal, Ireland. She survived the operation as the hole in the skull shows signs of bone growth. Evidence exists of similar operations in 10thC England.

24. "Major outcomes of the Reformation. Translation of the Bible into the language of ordinary people." (p. 102)

"The translation of the Bible into the language of ordinary people was not an outcome of the Reformation. 198 editions of the Bible in vernacular languages appeared, with the sanction of the Catholic Church, before any Protestant version saw the light of day." (Henry G. Graham, "Where We Got the Bible")

25. "Renaissance views about life and the universe. The scientific method was increasingly adopted by Renaissance scholars in their search for truth..." (p. 114)

"Why was this approach so 'revolutionary' for its time." (p. 116)

- a. 'revolutionary'! Two 13th century Oxford luminaries, Robert Grosseteste (later bishop) and Roger Bacon, (later a Franciscan friar) were two of the earliest European advocates of the modern scientific method. Bacon's *Optus Maius* (1292), written at the request of Pope Clement IV, emphasised empirical and experimental methods and the role of mathematics in the understanding of the physical world.
- b. Herbert Butterfield M.A. Master of Modern History, University of Cambridge refers to the research of Pierre Duhem (1861-1916) . . . This research credits the rise of the modern scientific method in Europe to the Catholic clergy at the Universities of Oxford and Paris in the 13th C. (The Origins of Modern Science 1300-1800, 1962, p15)

- c. Dr Peter Hodgson of Oxford University, “The work of Duhem is of great relevance today, for it shows clearly the Christian roots of modern science, thus decisively refuting the alleged incompatibility of science and Christianity still propagated by the secularist establishment. Science is an integral part of Christian culture, a lesson to be learned even within the Christian Church.”

26. “One of those who did support (the Copernican theory) was the outspoken Italian thinker Giordano Bruno (1548–1600). He went even further. He suggested, among other things, that the known universe may be only one of many God had created. He was burnt naked at the stake in 1600, with his mouth gagged.” (p. 115)

It is scurrilous and a corruption of history for Oxford University Press to teach children that Giordano Bruno was executed for his support of the views of Copernicus. Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy: “in 1600 there was no official Catholic position on the Copernican system, and it was certainly not a heresy. When Bruno was burned at the stake as a heretic, it had nothing to do with his writings in support of Copernican cosmology.”

While in England Giordano Bruno insulted the professors of Oxford University saying they knew more about beer than about Greek; clearly Oxford University Press knows more about chardonnay than about medieval history.

27. “Renaissance inventions. During the Renaissance years, people started thinking outside the boundaries of the way people typically thought in the Middle Ages. They often took risks. **Many lost their lives for thinking in ways the Church regarded as heresy.** But many creative ideas and inventions were produced.” (p. 117)

- a. Professor Ronald Numbers delivered the lecture “Myths and Truths in Science and Religion: A historical perspective”, 11 May 2006 at Cambridge. “*No scientist to my knowledge, or to the knowledge of friends of mine who work on the history of the scientific revolution, ever lost his life because of his scientific views ...*”
- b. Oxford University Press cannot identify even one of the many it asserts “lost their lives” for their creative ideas or inventions and it cannot see any “signs of prejudice” in its calumny.

28. “How do strong leaders change societies?”

“Source 4.61 is an extract from a translated letter Joan of Arc sent to the Hussites in March 1430. The Hussites were a group that had broken away from the Catholic Church in support of Jan Hus, a Czech religious leader. This happened around the time of the Reformation in Europe. (p. 123)

“As far as I am concerned ... if I wasn’t occupied in the English wars I would have come to see you a long time ago; but if I don’t find out that you have reformed yourselves I might stop fighting the English and go against you, so that by the sword, if I can’t do it any other way, I will eliminate your mad and obscene superstition and remove your heresy or your life. [But if] ... you obstinately resist ... remember what damage and offences you have committed and await me, who will inflict similar upon you with forces human and divine.” (Translated extract from The Trial of Jeanne d’Arc)

a What impressions do you get about Joan of Arc from this quotation? “

- a. Reprehensively and knowingly Oxford University Press misleads children. What impressions do you get about Oxford University Press for omitting from the extract of

Joan's letter the following essential text?

"You [Hussites] spoil the sacraments of the Church, you tear up the articles of the Faith, you destroy the churches, you break and burn the statues which were set up as memorials, you massacre Christians because they preserve the true Faith".

- b. Joan was not responding merely to heresy as indicated by Oxford University Press. Joan was responding to a war started by the Hussites. Secular historian Will Durant wrote, "*(Jan Hus supporters) passed up and down Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia . . . pillaging monasteries, massacring monks, and compelling the population to accept the Four Articles of Prague . . .*" ("The Reformation", p.169). In one incident the Hussites set alight a monastery burning to death 64 friars.
- c. And again, Oxford University Press can see "no signs of prejudice"; its deliberate omission of essential facts leaves children to conclude the Joan of Arc was intolerant.

29. (Children suggest) simple ways to encourage religious tolerance in Australia. (p. 93)

Response of this writer: Don't use in schools "Oxford Big Ideas Humanities 2", "Oxford Big Ideas History 1" or "Oxford Big Ideas History Australian Curriculum - Year 8".

30. And much more . . .

**Part 6. An Analysis of The Western and Islamic World
according to Oxford University Press
“Oxford Big Ideas History Australian Curriculum - Year 8”**

This textbook is currently being studied by school children. The textbook includes a section titled “The Western and Islamic world”. It has many positive things to say about the Catholic Church but it is found wanting when compared to a tolerant and enlightened Islam.

Some extracts from these books follow (emphasis added) with my Comments:

31. **“Church, the:** the medieval Roman Catholic Church, which began in 394 CE when the ancient Roman Emperor Constantine made Christianity the empire’s official religion.” (p. 331)

- a. There is no historical documentation to support this ignorant and sectarian fabrication. Constantine died in 337 CE. All distinctive Catholic doctrines preceded his reign.
- b. References to ‘medieval’ and to ‘Roman’ are anachronistic.

32. “very strict and severe Catholic beliefs” (p. 257)

- a. A summary of eight religions is given; only one religion is singled out for a negative comment – Catholicism. Catholic beliefs are compared unfairly to other religious beliefs. Perhaps Catholics should pass the blame to the Jews from whom they received the “very strict and severe” Ten Commandments and for the “very strict and severe” command to “*love your neighbour as yourself*” (Leviticus 19: 18). The injunction not to “*bear false witness against thy (Catholic) neighbour*” would certainly be too strict and too severe for members of Oxford University Press.
- b. A defining diagram accompanies each religious tradition. For the Catholic Church Oxford University Press could have chosen a gothic cathedral, an illuminated book or a photograph of Oxford University; it chose a diagram of the execution of a heretic. (*A Jewish merchant and his family being burned at the stake for desecrating the host; from Paolo Uccello’s altarpiece for the Confraternity of Corpus Domini, Urbino, 1467–1469*). The Church never considered Judaism a heresy or Jews heretics.

- c. The Catholic Church did not execute anyone. Obstinate and intractable heretics were turned over to the civil authorities because heresy was an offense against civil law as well as Church law. We look upon religious issues and social issues as entirely separate phenomena but medieval society did not. The promulgation of error was viewed as a threat to the



fabric of society; for this reason, secular rulers, such as Robert II of France in 1022 and Henry III of Germany in 1052, saw it was the duty to execute heretics. In 1224 the Emperor Frederick II of Germany – a semi-atheist and at times a violent opponent of the Pope – established harsh penalties for convicted heretics ranging from cutting out the tongue to death by burning.

33. "New inventions, exploration and scientific discoveries weakened the power and control of the medieval Church, allowing for increased trade, exploration, and the spread of new ideas." (p. 58)
- a. The textbook does not identify any new inventions, explorations or scientific discoveries that weakened the Church's power and control nor does it suggest how weakening the Church's power and control allowed for increased trade, exploration, and the spread of new ideas? In modern parlance, this is "fake news" fabricated by the intolerant Oxford University Press.
 - b. Regarding inventions Rodney Stark writes, "the so-called Dark Ages saw an extraordinary outburst of innovation in both technology and culture. ... what was most remarkable ... was the way in which the full capacities of new technologies were rapidly recognized and widely adopted, as would be expected of a culture dominated by faith in progress... there was remarkable progress in areas of high culture - such as literature, art, and music - as well. Moreover, new technologies inspired new organizational and administrative forms, culminating in the birth of capitalism within the great monastic estates ... we don't know who discovered what or, in most instances, even where or exactly when most of these innovations were accomplished. What we do know is that they soon vaulted the West ahead of the rest of the world." *"The Victory of Reason"*, page 35
 - c. Oxford University Press does not wish children to know of the remarkable "exploration, and the spread of new ideas" achieved by Catholic religious and Catholic explorers. A 16th century maritime map in a Los Angeles library vault proves that the Catholic Portuguese Christopher de Mendonca lead a fleet of four ships into Botany Bay in 1522 -- almost 250 years before Captain James Cook.
The achievements of the Jesuits were remarkable. During the Age of Discovery Jesuit explorers were the first to chart extensively five of the eight major rivers that previously were unknown or little known by Europeans. Ferdinand Verbiest SJ, working for the Chinese Emperor, determined the present Russo-Chinese border. The Jesuit Reductions or Settlements in Paraguay (1607-1767) were called "*one of the most altruistic ventures in human history*" by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, hardly a friend of the Jesuits.
34. "The medieval Church was based on Christian beliefs and was highly organised and powerful. Holy Wars (known as the Crusades) were fought against Muslims, and Christianity became focused on saving souls and fighting for what was considered 'right' and 'Christian'. The Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the Renaissance, and eventually the Reformation (sic) changed and reduced the power and influence of the Church. Do you think religion helped or hindered the progress of these societies from ancient to modern times? Give examples to support your view." (p. 58)
- a. This is a leading question if ever there was one. By misrepresentation and omission, Oxford University Press is grooming children to believe the Catholic Church hindered progress. It also promotes myths about the Renaissance, the Reformation, Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment.
 - b. Rodney Stark (non-Catholic), "books have been written about the success of the west, analysing why Europe was able to pull ahead of the rest of the world by the end of the Middle Ages ... Completely overlooked is the fact that faith in reason, rooted in Christianity's commitment to rational theology made all these developments possible.

Simply put, the conventional wisdom that Western success depended upon overcoming religious barriers to progress is utter nonsense ... Christianity and its related institutions are in fact, directly responsible for the most significant intellectual, political, scientific, and economic breakthroughs of the past millennium ... Christian theology ... is the very font of reason ... Christianity alone embraced logic and deductive thinking as the path of enlightenment, freedom and progress ... what we most admire about our world – scientific progress, democratic rule, free commerce – is largely due to Christianity, through which we are all inheritors of this grand tradition.”

(*The Victory of Reason*, Random House, New York, 2005, jacket)

35. "The Crusades were a series of wars fought at various times between 1096 and 1291 in a region known as the Holy Land - now made up of countries such as Israel, Lebanon and Syria. Armies from Christian areas in Europe travelled to this region and fought armies of Muslims. The main reason for the Crusades was to gain control over the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was an important religious city for Christians, Muslims and Jews at the time, and remains that way today.

“Before the first Crusade, European merchants and travellers to the region were on good terms with the local Arabs. Things changed when a militant Muslim group - the Seljuk Turks - took control. They closed Jerusalem to Jewish and Christian pilgrims. This caused the Pope to call for volunteers to form an army and recapture the city.”(p. 18)

When treating the history of the Crusades Oxford University Press trots out the similar distortions, canards and omissions mentioned in Comment 22 and as usual mainly favorable to Islam.

36. “As we saw earlier, belief systems drove Christians and Muslims to fight for control over Jerusalem and the Holy land for over two centuries ... Societies sometimes have contact through war because of their religious beliefs. An example of this is the Crusades.” “Armies from Christian areas in Europe travelled to (Holy Land) and fought armies of Muslims.” (p. 31)

- a. The Pope did not call the Crusades because of different “belief systems” or merely for the closure of "Jerusalem to Jewish and Christian pilgrims”; he was responding to the homicidal “growing Islamic Empire”. The religion of these mass-murderers was irrelevant.
- b. “belief systems drove Muslims and Christians to fight for control” of Europe for many, many centuries. Indeed this fight for control still continues

37. “... it was the Pope who encouraged Europeans to go to war against the Muslims in what is now called the First Crusade. The resulting conflict: caused great loss of life, saw Crusaders return with many new goods, and ideas that impacted on European society, sowed the seeds of religious tension, which continues to the present day in that part of the world.” (p. 108)

- a. It is reprehensible of Oxford University Press to leave children ignorant of the salient parts of Pope Urban II’s speech,

“They [the Muslim Turks] have invaded the lands of those Christians and have depopulated them by the sword, pillage and fire; they have led away a part of the captives into their own country, and a part they have destroyed by cruel tortures... When they wish to torture people by a base death, they perforate their navels, and dragging forth the extremity of the intestines, bind it to a stake;

then with flogging they lead the victim around until the viscera having gushed forth the victim falls prostrate upon the ground... What shall I say of the abominable rape of the women? To speak of it is worse than to be silent ... On whom therefore is the labor of avenging these wrongs and of recovering this territory incumbent, if not upon you?"

- b. Oxford University Press' presentation of the history of the Crusades demonstrates it is very cavalier and irresponsible about possible grave consequences for today's Catholics. By its selective quoting, Oxford University Press is nourishing "the seeds of religious tension, which continues to the present day in that part of the world" and inciting Muslim children to be outraged at Pope Urban II for his description of their spiritual ancestors as "awful people" and "barbarians". This view of the crusades is counter-productive, because it cultivates in Muslim children an unjustified sense of grievance, hatred and perhaps revenge against Christians, especially Catholics. Oxford University Press is shielding Muslims from the need to confront their own violent history.

38. "The Ottoman Empire and the Islamic faith spread from Asia into Africa and Europe, challenging the Christian belief system of medieval Europe." (p. 58)

- a. Contrast this euphemistic statement with Oxford University Press' treatment of the crusades when ""Armies from Christian areas in Europe travelled to (Holy Land) and fought armies of Muslims." and "caused great loss of life".
- b. Only occasionally Oxford University Press gives children some details of this challenge. Virtually every summer for a thousand years, Islamic *crescentaders* invaded - with great brutality and slaughter - Africa, Asia and Europe to acquire land, plunder and slaves: of all the churches mentioned in the New Testament only Rome escaped Muslim subjugation.

39. "New developments in Africa ... in the 1100s, a university in Timbuktu had around 25000 students, many of them foreigners. The university was housed then, as today, in the Sankore Mosque. At the time, it was recognised as a centre of world-class academic excellence." (p. 45)

- a. A Muslim University (or Madrassa?) is praised but where is the recognition and praise of the many Catholic-founded universities, including the University of Oxford, and those of the New World?
- b. "What made it possible for Western civilization to develop science and the social sciences in a way that no other civilization had ever done before? The answer, I am convinced, lies in a pervasive and deep-seated spirit of inquiry that was a natural consequence of the emphasis on reason that began in the Middle Ages. With the exception of revealed truths, reason was enthroned in medieval universities as the ultimate arbiter for most intellectual arguments and controversies. It was quite natural for scholars immersed in a university environment to employ reason to probe into subject areas that had not been explored before, as well as to discuss possibilities that had not previously been seriously entertained."
(Edward Grant, *God and Reason in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge University Press, 356)
- c. The "most consistent and greatest protector (of universities) was the Pope".
(Lowrie Daly, "The Medieval University 1200-1400", p. 81)

40. "Although Christian scholars had been carrying out medical research for many years and set up a number of medical schools across Europe, during the Scientific Revolution

Europeans such as Andreas Vesalius (1514-64) wanted to further develop medical understanding of the human body. Their work dissecting and investigating the human body added to insights about anatomy and blood flow. By comparison, standards of medicine in the Arab and Indian worlds were significantly more advanced than in early medieval Europe.” (p. 53)

- a. In the Middle East early Christian hospitals were taken over by invading Muslims. In early medieval Europe, Christendom was almost wiped out by the barbarian, Viking and Islamic invasions; it took time to build a significant number of religious volunteers for hospitals; Catholic hospitals did not use slaves. It is interesting that Oxford University Press is not prepared to acknowledge standards of medicine in the Arab and Indian worlds were significantly inferior to those in later medieval Europe.
- b. In the Middle Ages some twenty medical schools were founded in various parts of Europe. Of these, the best known in the order of their foundation were Salerno, Bologna, Naples, Montpellier, Paris, Padua and Pisa. Excellent schools, however, were established also at Oxford, Rome, Salamanca, Orleans and Coimbra. Even early in the fourteenth century such unimportant towns as Perugia, Cahors and Lerida had medical schools. These schools were usually established in connection with the universities.
- c. Before the time of Vesalius, July 26, 1491 saw the first printed medical book with anatomical illustrations, *Fasciculus medicinae* by Johannes de Ketham. Peter of Spain, a physician who taught medicine at the university of Siena wrote about sanitary science; he became Pope John XXI (1276-77),

41. “Do you think similar concerns were discussed when the medieval Church refused to allow body dissections for medical reasons?” (p. 329)

Not true. See Comment 13

42. “Another possible reason why Vikings started to carry out violent raids on nearby lands was a desire for revenge. Charlemagne (c. 742-814), King of the Franks and later the Holy Roman Emperor, fought for around 40 years to bring most of western and central Europe under his control. As part of his military efforts, he ordered those he regarded as pagans (including some Vikings) to become Christians. Any who refused were killed. Why do some historians take the view that the early Viking raids on Europe were revenge missions?” (p. 84)

- a. Oxford University Press does not inform children of the difference between Catholic Church teachings and the action of, at times sinful, Catholics. Charlemagne's adviser, Alcuin, and Arno of Salzburg severely rebuked the emperor over his policy of forcing pagans to be baptised into Catholicism on pain of death. Alcuin argued, "*Faith is a free act of the will, not a forced act. We must appeal to the conscience, not compel it by violence. You can force people to be baptised, but you cannot force them to believe.*" His arguments seem to have prevailed – Charlemagne abolished the death penalty for paganism in 797. The Catholic Church has always prohibited forced conversions. Oxford University Press omits this essential information and can see “no signs of prejudice”.
- b. If forced conversion by the ill-informed Catholic Charlemagne is a valid topic for study, why no mention of the numerous examples of Islamic forced conversions from the time of Mohammed until the present. Oxford University Press, why no mention of the thousands of Jews and Christians and the millions of Hindus who were forcibly converted to Islam? There

is no mention of the coerced and indoctrinated Janissaries or the attempted forced conversion, followed by the massacre of thousands of the citizens of Otranto, Italy in 1480.

- c. Oxford University Press asks children to respond to the question, “Why do some historians take the view that the early Viking raids on Europe were revenge missions?” Perhaps Oxford University Press can offer the historical interpretation that the Crusader raids on the Middle East were revenge missions for the large-scale Islamic conquests, killings, rape and forced conversions? Oxford University Press has much about Viking raids on Europe but nothing about the vast number of similar Moslem raids (e.g. 1631, Baltimore, Ireland).

43. The Black Death. "perspectives: who's to blame? Even though Muslim pilgrims carried the plague to Mecca in 1348, it did not spread to the nearby city of Medina. This was seen by believers as a miracle. The outbreak in Mecca was seen by Muslims as evidence of Allah's anger that there were unbelievers (Jews) in the city. They viewed the Jews as scapegoats . . ." (p. 310)

“Explain the different perspectives Muslims and European Christians had about the Jews regarding responsibility for the Black Death.” (p. 311)

“Europeans also saw Jews as scapegoats, but had a different perspective from that of the Muslims. Most medieval Europeans were Christians; some viewed the Jews negatively for crucifying Jesus Christ. This made Jews ready targets for the fears of those Christians threatened by the plague. Jews were charged with bringing about this health crisis by poisoning freshwater wells. Many innocent Jews were tortured and killed. Massacres of Jews began in the spring and summer of 1348, starting in France. ... all Jews in the town of Basel (in today's Switzerland) were rounded up and burned alive.” (p. 322)

- a. Criticism has been made of this historical interpretation that selectively compares offending Catholic regions with a single Muslim city.
- b. Obviously Oxford University Press wishes children to be ill informed. When Muslims carried out acts of violence against Jews, they were doing so in obedience to the Koran. When Catholics carried out acts of violence against Jews, they were doing so in disobedience to their religious beliefs and their spiritual leaders.
It would be contrary to Oxford University Press' agenda to inform children that the Catholic Church condemned those Catholics who carried out these massacres.
- c. Maurice Andrieux writes, “Of all the rulers, the popes were most lenient towards the Jews; no other sovereign allowed them so full a liberty of conscience. During the most fanatical periods, when they were hounded in every land in Europe, St. Peter gave them shelter.” (“Daily Life in Papal Rome in the Eighteenth Century”, p. 86)

- d. Did the Catholic Church persecute the Jews?

Let the Jews themselves offer their own testimony. In 1807 rabbis and delegates from different synagogues were invited by Napoleon to a meeting in Paris to constitute a great Sanhedrin. A resolution was passed on February 5, 1807 (now preserved in the Department of Public Worship):

“ . . . what is really inconceivable, is to see that the Christians, who have the same origins as us, . . . have inherited . . . that hatred and that contempt which at first shared together. It is really difficult to find the solution of that problem . . .

“it is in consequence of the sacred principles of morals that in different times the Roman pontiffs have protected and received into their states the Jews – persecuted and

expatriated from different parts of Europe, and that clergymen, of every country have often raised their voice in several states in that part of the world.

“About the middle of the 7th century, St Gregory defended and protected the Jews in the whole Christian world. In the 10th century the bishops of Spain resisted, with the greatest energy, the people who wished to massacre them. The Pontiff Alexander II wrote to those bishops a letter full of felicitations on their conduct. In the 11th century, the Jews, then very numerous in the dioceses of Uzes and of Clermont, were powerfully protected by the bishops. St Bernard in the 12th century condemned the fury of the Crusaders. Innocent II and Alexander III equally protected them. In the 13th century Gregory IX sheltered them when, in England, France and Spain, they were threatened with great danger; he forbade, under pain of excommunication, to force their conscience or disturb their religious ceremonies. Clement V did more than protect them – he facilitated for them the means of instruction.

“Clement VI gave them asylum in Avignon, when they were persecuted in all the rest of Europe. Towards the middle of the same century, the bishop of Spires prevented the general liberation which the debtors of the Jews claimed by main force, under the everlasting pretense of usury. In the following centuries Nicholas II wrote to the Inquisition to prohibited forcing the Jews to embrace Christianity . . . It would be an easy matter to quote several other instances of charity, manifested at different times, towards the Jews, fully impressed with a sense of their duties as men and as ministers of their religion.”
 (“Transactions of the Parisian Sanhedrim”, Diogène Tama, p. 327)

- A.D. 598-604 Pope St Gregory the Great wrote a series of letters proclaiming the Jews were entitled to "*enjoy their lawful liberty.*"
- Pope Clement VI issued a bull in July 1348 and another on September 26, "*Quamvis Perfidiam*", at the time of the Black Death, stating, ". . . *certain Christians, seduced by that liar, the devil, are imputing the pestilence to poisoning by Jews.*" The Pope described this imputation and the massacre of Jews as "*a horrible thing.*"
- In 1120 Pope Calixtus II who issued the papal bull "*Sicut Judaeis*" ("As the Jews") which forbade Christians, on pain of excommunication, from forcing Jews to convert, from harming them, from taking their property, from disturbing the celebration of their festivals, and from interfering with their cemeteries. Four other popes republished this papal bull during the century; many subsequent Popes endorsed it.

44. "In medieval times, victims of leprosy were seen as cursed. They were social outcasts to be avoided at all costs. They were condemned to live in colonies on remote islands or in caves. This might seem very unjust to us, knowing what we know today about the disease, but we need to exercise our historical empathy to understand how medieval people felt. Think for a moment how someone who did not understand what caused leprosy would react to a sight like that shown in Source 7.23. The treatment of lepers in medieval times was motivated by fear and ignorance." (p. 312)

- a. But Oxford University Press itself has not exercised historical empathy. The treatment of lepers in medieval times was often motivated by compassion. 19,000 leprosaria, run principally by Catholic religious orders, existed across medieval Europe. Geoffrey Blainey writes, ". . . hundreds of thousands of people were infected . . . Medical opinion was astute enough to recommend that lepers be isolated and given special care. By the year 1200, thousands of leper hospitals or hospices had been set up in Europe." ("A Short History of

the World”, p. 272)

- b. Without the aid of drugs, leprosy was eradicated from medieval England. Presently, the Catholic Church maintains about 512 centres for the care of leprosy victims.

45. “The Aztecs - then and now. In 1519, the troops of the Spanish conquistador Hernando Cortez”s destroyed the city of Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital. Some 40000 Aztecs were killed. Others died from diseases the Spaniards introduced, such as smallpox. The Aztecs, a once-proud people, were stripped of their culture and dignity. In time, survivors blended into the society of Spaniards (and others) who came to settle in their land ... Most are members of the Roman Catholic Church, but their beliefs also include a mix of ancient Aztec traditions and viewpoints.” (p. 24)

“Cultures destroyed or badly eroded. Sometimes armies completely destroyed conquered cities. Reasons were often linked to religion. For instance, the Spanish destroyed many buildings and artifacts of the Aztecs and Incas, because they believed them to be the works of pagan ‘savages’.” (p. 40)

- a. Thomas E Wood, Jr., Ph.D. writes, “. . . it was Francisco de Vitoria, a Catholic priest and professor, who earned the title of father of international law: Faced with Spanish mistreatment of the natives of the New World, Vitoria and other Catholic philosophers and theologians began to speculate about human rights and the proper relations that ought to exist between nations. These Catholic thinkers originated the idea of international law as we understand it today . . . (Vitoria) “defended the doctrine that all men are equally free; on the basis of natural liberty, they proclaimed their right to life, to culture, and to property.” (“How The Catholic Church Built Western Civilisation”, Regnery Publishing, Inc., Washington D.C., 2005, p.5)
- b. Aztec culture had within itself the seeds of its own destruction. Each year the Aztecs stripped the “culture and dignity” from thousands of natives from nearby tribes who were seized and brutally sacrificed. To defeat their brutal Aztec oppressors, these tribes allied themselves with the Spanish.
- c. Oxford University Press ignores positive aspects of life for the Aztecs under the Spanish? Evelyn Waugh wrote, “By 1575, a century before the first printing press was set up in British America, books were being printed in Mexico City, not only in Spanish, but in twelve different languages. There were three universities in Spanish America nearly a century before the foundation of Harvard [1636, British America’s first]. There was a Medical School at the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico two hundred years before Harvard’s, and anatomy and surgery were taught with dissection eighty-six years before William Hunter opened the first school of dissection in England. Elementary education for Indian children existed wherever there was a mission station; . . . At the village schools the peasants were taught not only their religion, but reading, writing, music, handicrafts of all kinds and agriculture. In many centres there were institutions of higher education for the Indians, some of whom even took up teaching posts in Europe . . . there were Indians who spoke Latin ‘like another Cicero and every day their number grows’. Von Humboldt, in 1803, made these observations: No city in the new continent, without even excepting those of the United States, can display such great and solid scientific establishments as the capital of Mexico . . . While the Puritan settlers in the North were denying all education to their women, nuns had established elementary girls’ schools all over Mexico and, in the cities, substantial colleges.” (“Robbery Under Law”)

46. "Population figures are contested for the number of deaths in the Americas as a result of contact with Europeans. One source (*'La catastrophe demographique'* from the French journal *L'Histoire*, No. 322, July-August 2007) suggests that an indigenous population approximately 30 million was reduced to about six million between 1492 and the late 1500s. This loss of potential labour prompted many European settlers in the region to import slaves. Around 10 million Africans were forcibly transported to work on European plantations in the Americas."
- a. Oxford University Press conflates the number of slaves and deaths in Mexico (the subject of the curriculum) with the number of slaves and deaths in the Americas as a whole. Slavery and Aztec deaths were appalling in themselves without the need to distort the statistics.
 - b. Pope Paul III in 1537 issued the Bull "*Sublimis Deus*" against slavery, Satan "has stirred up some of his allies who, desiring to satisfy their own avarice, are presuming to assert far and wide that the Indians ... be reduced to our service like brute animals, under the pretext that they are lacking the Catholic faith. And they reduce them to slavery, treating them with afflictions they would scarcely use with brute animals ... by our Apostolic Authority decree and declare by these present letters that the same Indians and all other peoples - even though they are outside the faith - ... should not be deprived of their liberty ... Rather they are to be able to use and enjoy this liberty and this ownership of property freely and licitly, and are not to be reduced to slavery . . ."
 - c. Many Popes condemned this forced servitude and imposed excommunication on slave owners including: 1435, Pope Eugenius IV's "*Sicut Dudum*" which condemned slavery in the Canary Islands; 1537, Pope Paul III issued a bull "*Sublimus Dei*" declaring native peoples "*are not to be reduced to slavery and whatever happens to the contrary is to be considered null and void*"; 1591, Pope Gregory XIV's "*Cum Sicuti*" denounced slavery (in the Philippines); 1639, Pope Urban VIII in "*Commissum Nobis*"; March 20, 1686, Pope Innocent XI; December 20, 1741 Pope Benedict XIV's encyclical "*Inmensa Pastorum*"; 1839, Pope Gregory XVI issued "*In Supremo*"; Pope Leo XIII issued in 1888 "*In Plurimis*" and in 1890 "*Catholicae Ecclesiae*". In 1815 Pope Pius VII attempted unsuccessfully at the Congress of Vienna to have slavery outlawed.
 - d. Henri Daniel-Rops writes, "If a slave owner or anyone who had appropriated native property presented himself for Confession, Spanish priests refused to give him absolution." (*The Heroes of God*, Echo Books, Garden City, New York, p. 72)
 - e. Oxford University Press introduces New World regions irrelevant to the curriculum so let Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, an unbeliever, comment.
"... how noble a tribute is ("The Jesuits in Canada") which [Francis Packman] of Puritan blood pays to that wonderful [Jesuit] Order! He shows how in the heyday of their enthusiasm these brave soldiers of the Cross invaded Canada as they did China and every other place where danger was to be faced, and a horrible death to be found. I don't care what faith a man may profess, or whether he be a Christian at all, but he cannot read these true records without feeling that the very highest that man has ever evolved in sanctity and devotion was to be found among these marvellous men. They were indeed the pioneers of civilization, for apart from doctrines, they brought among the savages the highest European culture, and in their own deportment an object-lesson of how chastely, austere, and nobly men could live."
(*Through the Magic Door*, by Arthur Conan Doyle, Ch. 9)

47. "Most of the people who built [Chartres cathedral] were slaves. This was common in the medieval period." (Sample pages from the Teacher Kit are available on line: p. 103)

f. Is Oxford University Press prepared to substantiate these outrageous statements?

Maliciously Oxford University Press equates 'serfs' with 'slaves'. The textbook is written so that Islamic slavery and aggression is greatly understated and Western slavery and aggression highlighted. In Catholic Europe slavery was miniscule in comparison to that in Islamic lands because the Popes fought against the abomination.

g. Oxford University Press is unwilling to present to children the noble mission of Catholic religious orders who rescued and ransomed slaves. The Trinitarian Order, founded by John of Matha in France in 1198 had redeemed 900,000 slaves by 1787. The Mercedarian Order of friars and nuns was founded by Peter Nolasco in Barcelona in 1218 and still exists today in 17 countries; it ransomed 490,736 slaves between the years 1218 and 1632. "Vinnies" founder St. Vincent de Paul, a slave himself, led his priests to save 1200 Christian captives in the short period between 1642 and 1660 at the staggering cost of 1,200,000 pounds of silver.

French Protestant historian, Gaston Bonet-Maury wrote that no expedition sent into the Barbary States by the powers of Europe or America equalled "*the moral effect produced by the ministry of consolation, peace and abnegation, going even to the sacrifice of liberty and life, which was exercised by the humble sons of St. John of Matha, St. Peter Nolasco, and St. Vincent de Paul.*"

**Part 7. Sponsoring of Anti-Catholicism by the Federal Government.
The First National Curriculum
of the “Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority”**

Through the National Curriculum, the “*Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority*” (ACARA) presents a prejudicial view – an anti-Catholic view – of Catholicism.

ACARA provided for Year 8 History teachers “annotated work sample portfolios . . . to support implementation of the (History) curriculum. Each portfolio is an example of evidence of student learning in relation to the achievement standard . . . The portfolios have been selected, annotated and reviewed by classroom teachers and other curriculum experts.”

Students investigated the roles and relationships of various groups in society in medieval England. The students were presented with a historical interpretation to research.

48. **“Due to the hierarchy of society in medieval times, the lives of serfs were particularly harsh not only in daily life but in methods of punishment.”**

https://acaraweb.blob.core.windows.net/curriculum/worksamples/Year_8_History_Portfolio_Above.pdf

ACARA required the students to examine the life of serfs in society with reference to the historical interpretation. They were asked to discuss three aspects:

- (1) the hierarchy and power of the Church,
- (2) the daily life of serfs, and
- (3) how serfs were punished.

The following is one child’s response. This author has typed the response. Note, some of the formatting has been altered.

“With the fall of the Roman Empire the middle or dark ages began, It was as if the light of Roman civilisation was turned off across Europe, The middle ages were a time of great hardship where the church dominated everyday life and where health was poor. Due to the hierarchy of the medieval times, the lives of serfs was particularly harsh not only in daily life but in methods of punishment.

“The social hierarchy of the middle ages was tightly controlled and very ordered. This is seen in the social structure where the church dominated all aspects of life. Image 1 (source ‘B’) shows the social hierarchy of the Middle Ages with the serfs and peasants placed at the bottom and the church and pope at the top. This means serfs didn't have much input and because of this were not very social as no one wanted to interact with them. On the other hand, the church and pope were at the top, giving them extreme wealth and control. The church dominated serfs lives by being able to get money off them and their harvested food. This secondary source reveals that the church dominated all aspects of serfs lives and had control over them. This is supported by source ‘F’ explaining a section of the social hierarchy. Serfs and peasants were frequently given the worst torture. People who were higher on the hierarchy had more right than the lower people who were made slaves. The quote (from source ‘F’), ‘there is a direct relationship between the amount of social and economic value in the middle ages,’ proves that serfs were considered insignificant to society. These two sources explain that the hierarchy in the middle ages was tightly ordered.

“The type of life serfs lived during the middle ages was particularly harsh. Serfs were

made servants and had to do many tough tasks. Source 'A', the lords view of serfs, states they had to perform farming tasks such as gathering and harvesting. Serfs lives would have been tricky since every day they had long and difficult labour in the sun. They had to do this work as no one else would do it or know how to. The serfs social position was the lowest of the low and they had no power. This is supported in source 'D', displaying the serfs had to farm. Ploughing was another task and the tapestry shows a farmer accompanied by an oxen, although the farmer is doing large majority of the labour, A small percentage of serfs were granted their own land as they always obeyed their masters and never had any trouble with the law. In the middle ages every person, rich or poor, had to pay their tithe, which is similar to taxes. They had to give one tenth of their year's earnings to the church. Majority of the time the tithe was money. This was done as the church was the main focal point of villages and provided medical services, controlled education and much more. This is also supported in source 'C', the 'Domesday Book'. It was a big feature in serfs lives as it was a record of all their activities. The purpose of the book is to inform the king how much money he should be receiving, how much the serfs had and if he could obtain any more money from them and who he was ruling or who lived in England at the time. From these three sources you can conclude that the serfs lived a difficult life. Being heavily controlled by 'higher' people and the church, meant serfs had to continuously work and pay their tithe to the church.

"Serfs were dealt the worst punishments if they broke the law in the middle ages. Serfs suffered more punishment than any other social group because they were the lowest of the low. Source 'E' displays a wood carving of a woman being punished for committing a 'crime' to her husband or a man. Most punishments or torture to serfs were undertaken in public as a warning to others and also to humiliate them. Serfs committed many crimes such as stealing, murder, attempted escape and failure to produce crops. This is supported in source 'F', explaining social and economic value in the middle ages. Serfs were being regularly punished as they lacked rights. The quote (from source 'F') serfs were most frequently tortured because they lacked rights and were much lesser value', proves that serfs were the lowest and lacked many rights. Serfs suffered dunking, thumbscrew, pressing, the rack, garrotting chair and whipping as forms of punishment or torture. Lacking rights was an unfortunate aspect in serfs lives as it meant they were controlled by others and dealt the worst punishments.

"Due to the hierarchy of the medieval times, the life of serfs was particularly harsh not only in daily life but methods of punishment. The social hierarchy in the middle ages was strongly restricted and ordered with the church at the top dominating all aspects of serfs lives who were at the bottom. Serfs lived difficult lives as they were constantly working and had to obey orders from people who had more power than them. Serfs suffered the worst punishments for any crime as they were considered little value to their society. These pieces of evidence clearly demonstrate the difficulties the serfs faced in the middle ages."

ACARA's Annotations for this child's extended paragraph:

- "Uses a secondary source to explain the impact of social hierarchy on wealth and power;
- Explains the differing attitudes towards serfs using sources;

- Describes the significance of beliefs and values of society in the daily lives of people at the time.
 - Explains the usefulness of sources to describe daily life in medieval times”.
- a. The children were presented with a very prejudicial historical interpretation to research. Bigotry in: bigotry out.
 - b. Regardless of the historicity of the statement, regardless of an abundance of contrary evidence, ACARA is able to dismiss criticism on the grounds the task is merely ‘historical interpretation’. But children would believe the Sources are factual and typical; they would not have the knowledge to reject this ‘historical interpretation’.
 - c. Some Sources do record positive aspects of the times but the overall impression is condemnatory. Any curriculum ‘expert’ who characterises the Middle Ages as the “Dark Ages” is himself living in ignorant darkness. See Comment 33b.
 - d. The word ‘hierarchy’ is used twice. The task states, “Due to the hierarchy of society” and the first aspect for analysis is “the hierarchy and power of the Church”. This is an all too obvious and crude attempt by members of ACARA to prejudice the minds of the selected children – including, perhaps, Catholic children – against the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. These children would now believe the propaganda that the Pope was a ruthless tyrant who imposed the most heinous of punishments on the poorest and most indefensible individuals. Children are told the Church “provided medical services, controlled education and much more” but they would not learn the Pope was, and still is, the head of the greatest and largest charitable organisation the world has ever known.
 - e. Perhaps ACARA could have presented to the children the opinion of the non-Catholic William Cobbett [1763–1835], who wrote in his “History of the Protestant Reformation”, that medieval Catholic England was “*the happiest country, perhaps, that the world had ever seen*” where “*the ease and happiness and harmony and Christian charity (was) enjoyed so abundantly and for so many ages*” and that “*England celebrated, when it was Catholic, as the land of hospitality, generosity, comfort, opulence and serenity . . .*”

ACARA also gave children the task of writing an extended paragraph, with reference to primary Sources that were supplied by ACARA, on the question,

49. “How did the beliefs of the church affect medieval society?”.

https://acaraweb.blob.core.windows.net/curriculum/worksamples/Year_8_History_Portfolio_Satisfactory.pdf

The following is one child’s response. Note, some of the formatting has been altered and hopefully the transcribing is faithful to the difficult to read script.

“The beliefs of the church affected medieval society because people had been told from the powerful catholic church about the way the people should live in order not to go to a place called “Hell”. Instead they were told they would go to “Heaven”. According to Source 4 it stated that the parish priest told the peasants what they had to do in order to go to heaven. Also in Source 2 it has a picture that shows what would happen to people if they had sinned. These tortures included being boiled alive, having to eat foul things, being pieced with long poles or spears, thrown around and pushed and also being eaten by the devil himself. Source 4 says that the pope had more power than the kings due to his authority being directly from God. It also states

that he had the rights to ex-communicate (banish) from the community. This meant that he was the most powerful person in medieval society. In Source 5 it mentions that the pope was head of the church followed by Archbishops, bishops and cardinals. Some of these acted as advisers; they were followed by monks and nuns who helped the community, then parish priests were in charge of local churches and according to source 4 held mass, preached sermons, heard confessions, arranged weddings and funerals. The friars were last least important as they wandered the world talking about the Catholic religion. So in conclusion due to the evidence from the sources it is clear the beliefs of the church had changed the lives of the people living in medieval society."

ACARA's Annotations for this child's extended paragraph:

- "Describes the significance of belief systems within medieval European society.
- Provides some explanation of the values and beliefs of different groups in medieval times.
- Recognises the hierarchy within the Catholic Church".

What depressing Sources ACARA has presented to children to give them some understanding of how the beliefs of the Catholic Church affected medieval society. Much could be said about the Sources given to children and their analyses of them. One comment about the "powerful" Catholic Church.

ACARA presents to children an image of a powerful Church that was oppressive. The Church was and is powerful because of the intense devotion of millions of Catholics. Children should be informed about the millions of men (including kings, emperors, lords) and women (including queens and empresses) who volunteered/dedicated their lives as priests, monks, friars, nuns and missionaries; the hundreds of thousands of men who volunteered as crusaders; the enthusiastic crowds in modern days who greet the Pope; and the millions of youth from a multitude of nations who attend World Youth Day. Not one of this multitude was motivated by the fear of excommunication.

Other Sources should have been provided for a balanced analysis; for example simplified versions of the following:

How did the beliefs of the church affect the development of medieval society?

In 1833 Dr Waddington, the Protestant Dean of Durham, in his "Ecclesiastical History" describes the Catholic Church as 'the instrument of heaven for the preservation of religion,' and mentions six special benefits the Church conferred on the world: 'First, she provided for the exercise of charity; secondly, she inculcated the moral duties by means of her penitential discipline; thirdly, she performed the office of legislation in an admirable way; fourthly, she unceasingly strove to correct the vices of the existing social system, setting herself especially against the abomination of slavery; fifthly, she laboured anxiously in the prevention of crime and war; and lastly, she has preserved to those ages the literature of the ancient world'.

Joseph Henry Dahmus (1909 – 2005) professor at Pennsylvania State University from 1947 to 1975 stated, "(Arnold) Toynbee considered Benedictine monasticism as the matrix of Western civilisation." ("A History of the Middle Ages" p74)

Thomas E Wood, Jr., Ph.D., "... when the Comte de Montalembert wrote a six-volume history of the monks of the West, he complained at times of his inability to provide anything more than a cursory overview of great figures and deeds ... Who else in the history of Western civilization can boast such a record?" ("How The Catholic Church Built Western Civilisation", p. 45)

According to Leon Marion the Middle Ages "has been justly called 'The Golden Age of Monasticism'. All Europe is literally covered with monasteries; everywhere monks pray, do penance, work, devote themselves to works of charity and zeal, from the care of roads and bridges to the teaching of metaphysics and Christian perfection. Monks are found at the head of all the useful institutions of the time." ("Histoire de l'Eglise", Volume xi, (Tequi), p. 609)

In 2007 the atheist businessman, Robert Wilson, gave \$22.5 million to Catholic education in New York, arguing that, "without the Roman Catholic Church, there would be no western civilisation."

How did the beliefs of the church affect the development of our law?

The 12th century decretals of the monk Gratian, a canon lawyer, form the basis of our present systematic law. This led to the founding of law schools, starting in the University of Bologna in A.D. 1088, from which our legal profession emerged. The late Harold J. Berman, former Ames professor of Law at Harvard Law School and Emory University, argued that the 11th century rise of papal authority with its own canon law jump-started modern law. Berman stated, "[I]t was the church that first taught Western man what a modern legal system is like. The church first taught that conflicting customs, statutes, cases, and doctrines may be reconciled by analysis and synthesis." ("The Interaction of Law and Religion", 1974, p59)

How do the beliefs of the church affect medieval students and students today?

Students should thank monks of the Catholic Church for Carolingian miniscule (this submission is written in a form of Carolingian miniscule).

Phillippe Wolff: "The various scripts in use before the advent of Carolingian minuscule were difficult to read and time-consuming to write; there were no lowercase letters, punctuation, or blank spaces between words . . . (With Carolingian minuscule) Western Europe had a script that could be read and written with relative ease. The introduction of lowercase letters, spaces between words, and other measures intended to increase readability quickened both reading and writing . . . It would be no exaggeration . . . to link this development with that of printing itself as the two decisive steps in the growth of civilization based on the written word."

("The Awakening of Europe", New York: Penguin Books, 1968, p. 57 quoted by Thomas E Woods, Jr., Ph.D., "How The Catholic Church Built Western Civilisation", Regency Publishing, Washington DC, 2005, p. 18)

Pope Sylvester II [Gerbert of Aurillac] (999-1003), "the Scientist Pope" was the first European Christian known to have taught mathematics using the nine Arabic/ Hindu numerals and zero. Gerbert's abacus (the first computer?) is one of only four innovations mentioned between 3000 B.C. and the invention of the slide rule in 1622.

St Hilda of Whitby (614 - 680), a Benedictine abbess, is the Mother of English Literature. Her pupil Caedmon became one of the first Anglo-Saxon poets. He is the earliest English poet whose poetry is extant.

How did the beliefs of the church affect health?

There is no Source illustrating the gratuitous work of countless thousands of Catholic priests, monks, friars, nuns and laity in Catholic hospitals, leprosaria (19,000 across medieval Europe), orphanages, hostels for the mentally ill, hostels for the elderly.

The first ecumenical council at Nicea in 325 directed bishops to establish hospices in every city that had a cathedral. In 369 St Basil built the first hospital in Caesarea. By the Middle Ages hospitals covered all of Europe and even beyond. In fact, "Christian hospitals were the world's first voluntary charitable institutions."

Before the Reformation, when western Europe was virtually wholly Catholic, some twenty medical schools were founded in various parts of Europe.

Sadly these two work sample portfolios, courtesy of the Australian Government, demonstrate well that anti-Catholicism is ingrained and accepted in our society. A new generation of ignorant sectarian bigots is being groomed in hundreds of our classrooms.

Part 7. Conclusion

50. Still relevant is the comment by John Morley, a Rationalist, on the subject of the greatness of the Thirteenth Century in an address on Popular Culture, delivered as President of the Midland Institute, England, October 1876 (Great Essays. Putman, New York):

"It is the present that really interests us; it is the present that we seek to understand and to explain. I do not in the least want to know what happened in the past, except as it enables me to see my way more clearly through what is happening today. I want to know what men thought and did in the Thirteenth Century, not out of any dilettante or idle antiquarian's curiosity, but because the Thirteenth Century is at the root of what men think and do in the nineteenth."

It would appear that Jacaranda Press, Oxford University Press and the compilers of the first version of the Australian Curriculum, unlike John Morley, see little value in studying the origins of our Western Civilisation.

Centuries ago our Western civilisation, with its Judeo-Christian heritage, was saved at Tours/Poitiers, Valletta, Lepanto and Vienna; not that children – and perhaps their teachers - would know this. Western civilisation today is again under threat, so to teach children to be ashamed of it is to betray them and deprive them of their patrimony and identity.