

## Book Review

REVIEWED BY PATCH BLAKEY

A young Christian man recently told me, "You don't need a bunch of ugly facts about the public schools as a reason to not put your children in them. You just need to know that the Bible commands parents to provide their children with a godly education, *all* of the time." I agreed with him, but then wondered why so many evangelical Christian parents send their children to be educated in the government's public school system. Is it that these Christian parents have attention deficit disorder when it comes to hearing the Word of God?

Regardless of the reasons Christian parents may think that sending their children to the government schools is fine, there *still* are a lot of "ugly facts" that parents need to be aware of. Bruce Shortt has done his homework in his book, *The Harsh Truth About Public Schools*, to lay out those facts with incredible detail and documentation (some chapters have well over 200 footnoted comments). In some cases, the truth is so vile that it would get an "R" rating or worse if it were in a movie and not in the public school system. But Shortt isn't just being salacious or sensationalistic in documenting this material. He is being frank and forthright with Christian parents who should know better, but haven't done *their* homework. For those Christian parents who are aware that the government schools are bad, I dare say that most haven't even the remotest idea just *how* bad they truly are. Shortt makes it painfully clear.

Why do Christian parents object to such things as Halloween which occurs one night a year, but have no qualms with sending their children to the government's public schools for nine months out of the year to be indoctrinated in all forms of religion (other than Chris-

tianity) and the occult? Shortt points out that while Christianity is shunted out of the public schools, Islam is actively being forced on children in some states. In addition, have you ever heard of the Waldorf curriculum and Anthroposophy? They are growing in popularity among government charter schools in this country. You won't want to wait too long before you find out what they are and the adverse impact they will have on your children. However, sometimes a direct question to a teacher or administrator won't result in a direct answer. This is even more problematic.

There has been much public concern expressed by prominent Christian and non-Christian media personnel within the past few

someone may argue. And I have a bridge for sale that will get you to Brooklyn, if you are that gullible. Shortt explains in detail what has happened to "dumb down" standardized tests, reset the limits for a passing score, alter the data, limit who may take the tests (so that average tests scores will seem improved), and much worse. "I don't believe it!" you say? "It couldn't happen in this country!" you say? Read Shortt's book and prepare to be illuminated.

How about all of those "drug free zones" around many public schools and the effectiveness of the local DARE program? All "smoke and mirrors." Shortt observes that the biggest purveyor of drugs among young

people *is* the government's public school system. Oh, yes, and documentation shows that Ritalin has *serious* detrimental physical and psychological effects on children,

just like other drugs that are illegal. *No one* yet knows what the long-term effect will be from Ritalin use in children. Is there any documented evidence that AD/HD is really a diagnosable problem? If you say "yes," then why does it disappear over the summer? Read Shortt's book. The situation is far worse than you think.

Okay, you believe the government school system is bad, but you want to *reform* the public schools. But is this really possible? What about the \$500 billion dollars that finances the government's public school system each year? How altruistic are the unions that control the system and benefit from the influx of these dollars? Are they going to cheerfully let this income go away? What is the link between the teachers unions and the sorry

### The Harsh Truth about Public Schools

by Bruce N. Shortt

Vallecito, CA: Chalcedon/Ross House Books, 2004, 464 pages, \$23

years about the increasing emphasis on alternative life styles and gender choices being actively promoted by the public school system. Shortt lists some of the perversions that are being taught in the name of "education" even to elementary-aged students. It's worse in the secondary. If you are pro-life and have your children in the government's public school system, once you read Shortt's book, you will wonder why on earth you ever subjected the impressionable young minds of your children to such a pro-death culture and such sexual perversion, both heterosexual and homosexual. If you have ever once wondered why our American culture is going so rapidly down the drain, it's not because of MTV (although that contributes). You need look no further than the government's public schools system. And I'm holding back.

But school test scores are improving,  
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CLASSIS

## Quid Novi?

## Book Review

### ACCS Member NSA Honored as One of 50 “All-American Colleges”

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What do the University of Chicago, Hillsdale College, Princeton, and New Saint Andrews College all have in common? They are among the fifty colleges and universities honored in the Intercollegiate Studies Institute’s (ISI) soon-to-be-released publication of *All-American Colleges: Top Schools for Conservatives, Old-Fashioned Liberals, and People of Faith*. The 416-page guide will be available in stores throughout the country later this month.

*All-American Colleges* provides personal, in-depth profiles of fifty *highly recommended* schools and programs. At each of these diverse institutions, students who identify themselves as religious believers, conservatives, or old-fashioned liberals will find programs that connect in a special way with the core values of the American founding and the vibrant intellectual traditions of the West—schools and programs that are, in fact, often transformative. Based on extensive interviews with students, faculty, and administrators, the profiles in *All-American Colleges* extend ISI’s coverage of contemporary academia to accentuate the positive—while including necessary caveats about the unfortunate aspects of each school. The result is a unique new guide that parents, students, and educators will not want to miss.

The ISI is a highly-respected non-profit, non-partisan, tax-exempt educational organization whose purpose is to convey to successive generations of college youth a better understanding of the values and institutions that sustain a free and virtuous society.

New Saint Andrews, founded in 1994, is a limited-enrollment, non-residential college providing an intellectually rigorous classical education firmly grounded in the Christian tradition. The College, which serves students from 30 different states and 20 different Christian denominations, is located in Idaho.

### RENWEB Hits 600-School Milestone with Addition of ACCS Member TALL OAKS CLASSICAL SCHOOL

RenWeb School Management Software, announced that it has reached the 600-school milestone with the addition of Tall Oaks Classical School, in Newark, DE. As a member of the Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS), Tall Oaks Classical School will also receive a discount for the software. ACCS is the first association to negotiate a discount for the purchase of RenWeb software, offering a valuable benefit to its member schools.

Don Post, Headmaster of Tall Oaks Classical School, said, “We chose RenWeb over other providers not only because of its ability to promote communication among the office, classroom and home, but also because of the convenience and service it offers. Along with other schools in the classical Christian movement, we believe parents play the critical role in assuring their children’s academic success, and they can use RenWeb’s services to keep track of their students’ progress, attendance, assignments and more online. Moreover, RenWeb’s web-based tools are available anytime and anywhere, at home or at the office, and the Company will actually convert our files and set the system up for our school, at no extra charge.”

condition of education within the public school system? Does this sound too bizarre to be true? Don’t read Shortt’s book if you don’t want to know. It will make you angry (and that’s a gracious way to state it). Oh, and you can forget any idea of school reform in your lifetime or that of your child.

If you say, “But we want our children to be ‘salt and light,’” how much more “salt and light” can we take? We’ve seen close to 40 years of this kind “salt and light” in our public schools with the result that our Christian children graduate and reject their Christian faith. How well does a young impressionable third grader stand up for his faith against a far older, experienced and hardened secularist who will mock that child to tears in front of his peers? Bruce Shortt covers this topic and more, much more.

Shortt’s book is written in an easy-going conversational style that makes it a smooth read. It’s only the content that is disturbing, and it’s all factual. This is a frightening book, and it will rattle your senses and sensibilities. As the author quotes from another source, “I am not making this up.” Every Christian in America needs to read this book. It’s honestly incomprehensible how the Southern Baptist Convention, or any Christian denomination in the United States for that matter, could be reluctant in the slightest to demand that all of their members remove their children from the government school system with the greatest urgency. The government school system is without question the gravest danger facing our nation bar none. If Christian parents won’t heed their Bibles, perhaps they will listen to Bruce Shortt’s *The Harsh Truth About Public Schools*. I sincerely pray so.