

5th August 2008

SUBMISSION TO SENATE INQUIRY INTO ACADEMIC FREEDOM

To: Mr John Carter
Committee Secretary
Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee
Department of the Senate
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Dear Mr Carter & Committee members,

I welcome the opportunity to provide a submission to your Inquiry. I have long been concerned about this issue and I have been doing something about it, helping students deal with the problem of bias through my private tutoring business. To some degree, you could say that I set up my business to address the issues of ideological bias and teacher quality.

Recently, I have published two articles that address precisely the concerns of this Inquiry. I am presenting them to you as a submission: 'This bias: the left-wing domination of Year 12 English' (December 2006), and 'Surviving ideological bias in the classroom' (October 2007).

The first article (This bias) analyses the bias in the curriculum and reflects upon its implications. I focused on the Year 12 English but I could have spoken about any of the humanities subjects since the problems outlined for this compulsory subject are replicated in the others. This article first appeared in the IPA Review with an extract published in The Australian. The second article, written as a sequel, looks at the practice of bias by teachers in the classroom. This article originally appeared in News Weekly with a shorter version published in The Australian.

The problem of bias is much worse than many assume. Through my business I have a superb opportunity to observe and scrutinise, through the experiences of my students, the curricula and what really goes on in school classrooms and university tutorial rooms. I have extensive experience dealing with this, 18 years, covering dozens of school and university subjects in the English and humanities areas, where assessment is, as you know, subjective. I am about to bring a book out on this subject, The Little Black School Book, which analyses the problem in depth and shows students how to deal with it.

I am willing to be contacted for more information and I would be more than happy to be a witness at the public hearings.

Sincerely,
Dr Mark Lopez