

*Global Forces of the Twentieth Century: A Textbook Critique.* Grade 12.

*Global Forces of the Twentieth Century*, written by Alyn Mitchner and R. Joanne Tuffs uses a thematic approach to teach history from 1918 to 1991. It guides students in exploring confrontation and cooperation within an international context and focuses heavily on the global interactions that took place throughout the twentieth century. The textbook is divided into 16 chapters and has four major themes running through it: International Confrontation and Cooperation, Interactions during the Interwar Period and the Second World War, The Superpowers, Contemporary Global Interaction. Although the book is loaded with different activities, primary sources, critical thinking questions, maps, case studies and summaries, because it was written over two decades ago, it fails to acknowledge and accommodate the immense changes taking place in terms of the creation and consumption of social media. Also, although the textbook uses several different case studies and primary sources, but fails to instruct students on how to read and comprehend these things.

Critical media literacy is an essential skill that students need to obtain in order to be able to appropriately comprehend all of the different materials, in the various forms of media being produced today that they are exposed to. Also, without being able to critically read and analyze the information that they are consuming today, how are students expected to actively participate in the world around them.

Throughout *Global Forces of the Twentieth Century*, there are several opportunities for readers to closely engage with many different forms of media such as images or quotes from primary sources such as journals or quotes from key historical figures, often the text asks students to think critically about the documents they are working with, but it neglects the fact that many students do not have the skills to deconstruct the different sources of media they are working with. Often, the text book provides students with an image, painting or political cartoon such as the one seen on page twenty-eight and asks them to look for clues about society or the end of the war, but does not provide any instruction or information that can guide students in terms of considering how media is constructed and what sorts of biases, inferences etc. the author of the piece may have had.

Finally, this textbook is very dated and not prepared to help youth engage with different kinds of the growing types of media today. Students are constantly being bombarded with different sources of media and do not have the skills or tools to be able to adequately process and analyze the information. The fact that is textbook was created before the internet had advanced to the capacity that is at today, with an incomprehensible power to share information in a variety of forms, the textbook still adequately prepare students to look critically at the media they are engaging with on any level and provides only a very limited engagement with media on a very surface and superficial level.