

SEVEN DIVINE PROVIDENCES SCORE FOUR UNLIKELY SUCCESSES IN TWO BIGGEST TEXTBOOK MARKETS

Good times rolled of late as four textbook projects with much national significance won in California and Texas. *California* democratized future state textbook adoptions by requiring publishers to post their annual submissions online for all to scan – a huge step, because *to influence a state's textbook CONTENT you must first open up its textbook approval PROCESS*. Plus for the first time in a quarter century, Texas turned down a major company's book, spurning minor overnight cosmetic tweaks, a move sure to reverberate elsewhere. Texas also fended off a ruse to void local judgment on contraception info in Health classes. And at the same time, Texas rightly shifted control over reinforcement of student learning in textbooks from editors to its elected State Board of Education (SBOE).

California was our longest, toughest, costliest venture ever. Getting review copies of textbooks there was as hard as Mel and Norma found it in Texas in the 1960s. We did use methods they honed to better our odds. Still, we would have failed save for *multiple divine providences*: We just happened to find a way to get the books. They just happened to be U.S. History texts, always rich in factual errors. California just happened to be under court order to revamp regulations we needed changed. Its Department of Education balked at our request ... until the State Board of Education granted it. (Read of that under "Sacramento Drama" inside.) *God has brought too many improbabilities to pass, to stay now the momentum of this His mission of mercy to California schools.*

*A great leap forward:
Californians to see new books*

*EVERYDAY's Texas doomsday;
editor judgment curbed*

*Local option on sex ed
neuters condom lobby*

*Texas' resounding "nay" to 3rd grade **Everyday Math** in 2007 – for reasons on page 2 here – shocked the publisher, rocked "progressives," and blocked sales everywhere, for rivals will trumpet*

*Texas' rejection. Behind it lay **yet another providence**. At the final SBOE vote, one member was absent, another abstained.*

*Thus the seven textbook reformers won, **exorcising this festering malaise, because in math as in sex ed and non-phonics reading, destructivists minimize traditional algorithms /standard rules and encourage students to invent their own dysfunctional alternatives**. Many rank-and-file classroom teachers, who actually make local textbook-adoption decisions, welcome hard data that quantify such bad pedagogy, like our comparison chart for 3rd grade Math programs on page 5 within.*

Simultaneously, Texas reined in editors in general and the condom lobby in particular. If textbooks include good data, they often fail to build mastery of it with end-of-section review exercises, end-of-chapter activities, and unit tests. Hence the SBOE told editors to fix that. *Providentially*, a publisher *gave us* his plan to attack this, in plenty of time for us to foil it. Meanwhile, a new act said student texts as well as teacher's editions must cover course standards. That was a *condom-lobby stealth bid to force birth-control instruction into Health classes*. Texas' curriculum seems to mandate this. But state law, which trumps that, clearly leaves such inclusion up to local choice. *Again providentially* wise to the ploy, SBOE heroes ruled that *contraception info would remain optional in Health texts*.