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# Textbooks Going on Public Display

**P**ARENTS who are concerned about the overdose of violence, sex, and undesirable habits being taught their children on TV also should be alert to what is being taught in public schools.

Textbooks may contain similar materials. Reproductions of sample pages sent to me by readers over the state would have been considered vulgar or obscene in the past. Efforts of a number of organizations and individuals have led to state laws that could help clean up the situation, if put to use.

One law requires that textbooks and teaching materials used in schools must be made available for inspection by school patrons, upon request to teachers or school officials.

Now instructional materials being considered for adoption by the State Textbook Commission will be put on display for public inspection at six locations over the state from Aug. 20 through Nov. 9. Patrons may examine books before adoption.

Locations are Library Conference

Room at Northeast Campus of Tulsa Junior College; Library at Northeastern State University, Tahlequah; Library at East Central University, Ada; Room 231, Collings Hall, University of Oklahoma, Norman; Library, Northern Oklahoma Junior College, Tonkawa; and Library, Southwestern State University, Weatherford. Inspections are limited to normal operating hours.

In 1982 the legislature passed Oklahoma School Code, Title 70, which specified standards to be followed in selecting instructional materials. HB 1817, adopted in 1984, made further reference to Chapter 1, Article 16, containing these provisions.

The standards themselves indicate that certain types of objectionable materials may appear in textbooks submitted and that citizens want such matter screened out of compulsory study programs. Because of the volume of materials offered the public may have to do part of the screening. It is a time-consuming task.

Specifications call for adoption of materials which "do not degrade

and where appropriate teach high moral standards" but not everybody would agree on what are "high moral standards."

Textbooks may not include "blatantly offensive language or illustrations," the law says, but these appear in some textbooks.

The law provides that adopted textbooks must "treat the subject of historical origins of humankind in an objective and unbiased manner," but many textbooks present evolution as a proven scientific fact and ridicule belief in creationism.

Parents or school committees who wish to comment on textbooks will be required to submit their intentions in writing to the State Textbook Committee prior to public hearings to be scheduled.

The state committee could not possibly read or even closely inspect the many hundreds of textbooks offered by publishers and neither can parents. By concentrating on textbooks that their youngsters might be required to use parents may be able to see that legally required screening is done.