# Controversial history claims spark debate over balance in British school curriculum



Children in British schools are increasingly exposed to controversial interpretations of history, with claims emerging that Stonehenge was constructed by black individuals. A recent investigation by Policy Exchange, an education think-tank, has raised alarms over the shift in educational narratives, indicating that the influence of contemporary movements, particularly the Black Lives Matter protests, has led to the incorporation of these narratives into the curriculum.

The report highlights materials such as the book "Brilliant Black British History" by Atinuke, which posits that Britain was predominantly inhabited by black people for over 7,000 years prior to the arrival of white populations. This text asserts that early black Britons were responsible for the construction of Stonehenge, a claim that has faced significant backlash from historians who describe it as misleading and lacking robust evidence. These historians argue that such assertions are presented as facts, thereby creating a distorted view of historical events.

Among other contentious claims propagated in educational resources, one resource from the Classical Association’s ‘Queering the Past’ project states that the Roman Emperor Nero married a trans woman named Sporus, neglecting to mention that Sporus likely underwent forced castration rather than a consensual gender transition. This omission raises additional concerns about the adequacy of historical nuance provided in educational settings.

Despite the introduction of these diverse historical perspectives, the report from Policy Exchange reveals a troubling trend: pivotal events in British history, like the victories at Waterloo and Trafalgar, remain largely absent from the curriculum. Disturbingly, the think-tank found that a mere one in ten students are adequately taught about these significant milestones, suggesting a concerning imbalance in students' education regarding British history.

Chris McGovern, chairman of the Campaign for Real Education and former history teacher, argues that this shift represents an ideological takeover of historical instruction, stating that history class is increasingly being utilised as a platform to challenge and undermine British national identity. The Policy Exchange report cautions that while some educational initiatives aimed at broadening historical perspectives may have value, they are often eclipsed by the promotion of radical and contested interpretations presented as established fact.

In response to the growing concerns surrounding the national curriculum, the Government is conducting a review aimed at ensuring that students receive a balanced educational experience that adequately reflects the diverse societal landscape of modern Britain. However, critics suggest that significant revisions may not be warranted, as schools are already incorporating diverse perspectives into their teaching.

A spokesperson for the Department for Education conveyed that the curriculum review is under way, focusing on the need to provide young people with access to a broad and balanced education. Meanwhile, representatives from the Classical Association maintain that their resources encourage complex and nuanced engagement with history, allowing for multiple interpretations of past events.

As discussions over educational content continue to unfold, it remains crucial for educators and policymakers alike to navigate the delicate balance between fostering inclusivity and ensuring a comprehensive understanding of historical narratives. With the future of British education hanging in the balance, the need for careful review and thoughtful discourse has never been more pressing.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14723303/woke-schools-Stonehenge-built-black-people-Waterloo-Trafalgar-untaught.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 2: [[2]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/09/18/stonehenge-built-by-black-britons-childrens-history-book/)
* Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14723303/woke-schools-Stonehenge-built-black-people-Waterloo-Trafalgar-untaught.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14723303/woke-schools-Stonehenge-built-black-people-Waterloo-Trafalgar-untaught.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
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1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14723303/woke-schools-Stonehenge-built-black-people-Waterloo-Trafalgar-untaught.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/09/18/stonehenge-built-by-black-britons-childrens-history-book/> - An article from The Telegraph discusses the children's book 'Brilliant Black British History' by Atinuke, which claims that Stonehenge was built by black Britons. The book asserts that Britain was predominantly black for over 7,000 years before white people arrived, and during this period, Stonehenge was constructed. The book also states that the first Britons were black and that every British person descends from migrants. These claims have sparked controversy among historians, who argue that such assertions are misleading and not supported by evidence.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/09/18/stonehenge-built-by-black-britons-childrens-history-book/> - An article from The Telegraph discusses the children's book 'Brilliant Black British History' by Atinuke, which claims that Stonehenge was built by black Britons. The book asserts that Britain was predominantly black for over 7,000 years before white people arrived, and during this period, Stonehenge was constructed. The book also states that the first Britons were black and that every British person descends from migrants. These claims have sparked controversy among historians, who argue that such assertions are misleading and not supported by evidence.
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