

## A New Set of Stories

When American leadership decides to start "dealing off the top of the deck", a set of pleasant stories with entirely novel properties will evolve.

"*Harry Potter*" is a magnificent study in dealing off the bottom of the deck, the most recent in a long line of nightmares that the English delight in exporting. The 19<sup>th</sup> century European opera: "*The Marriage of Figaro*" illuminates a sea of social dysfunctions.

In engineering classes, students are taught how to solve problems. In humanities classes, on average, people are shown various failure paths, as if being shown failure alternatives in sufficient quantity will efficiently enlighten success, which isn't the case; furthermore, the underlying problems are portrayed as unsolvable: "War is inevitable.", "Utopians are fools.", etc.

If math class were also an endless demonstration of failure paths coupled with such overt pessimism, far fewer people would be any good at math.

-----  
I think that "*Learning Together in a Diverse World*" is too positively stated for the present mindset of literate America; almost no one grasps it as anything but a waste of everyone's time: the document isn't villain-centric.

Dysfunctional advice is easy listening, because no acquisition-of-a-skill is implicit in the communication. Infinite choices present themselves like luscious, low-hanging, no-brainer fruit.

Jeff Setterholm, August 23, 2007