

The background is a vibrant blue with a subtle geometric pattern of squares and circles. In the top right corner, there is a large, bright yellow sun. A stylized white pen nib graphic is positioned horizontally across the middle of the page, pointing towards the right. The main title is written in a large, white, sans-serif font, slanted upwards from left to right. Below it, the subtitle is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, also slanted upwards from left to right.

Fun with Dick and Jane!

A Lesson in Social Brainwashing

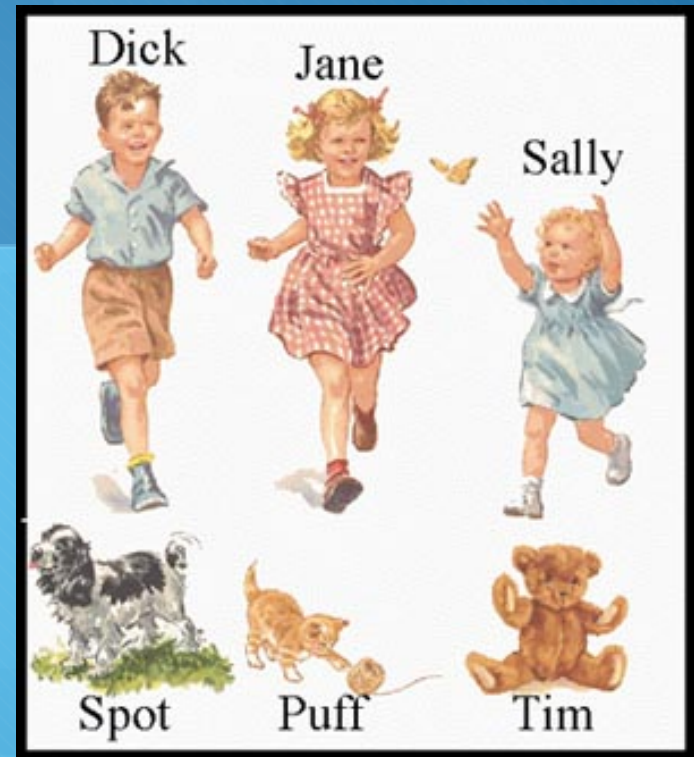
What were they?



- Dick and Jane were the main characters in the popular “basal readers” that were used to teach American school children to read from the 1930s through the 1970s
- Students used these readers in grades 1-8
- The books relied on whole language and repetition

Who were they?

- Dick and Jane
- Baby Sally
- Mother: “Mother is very nice.”
- Father: “He is big and strong.”
- Spot the Dog: “See Spot Run. Run, Spot, run!”
- Puff the Cat, Tim the Teddy Bear





What kind of family were they?

- Just like yours, of course
- Exactly like yours
- Doesn't this look and sound like your family?



"One, two, three," said Jane.
"Three new dolls for my birthday!
Three baby dolls that talk!
All for my birthday!
Now I have a big doll family.
Thank you, thank you, thank you.
This is a happy birthday.
A happy, happy birthday for me."



Mother said, "Oh, Sally.
Come here and get Puff.
Run, Sally, run!"

Come down, Dick.
Come and see.
See the big, big mother.
See the funny little baby.
Puff is my baby.
Puff is my funny little baby.



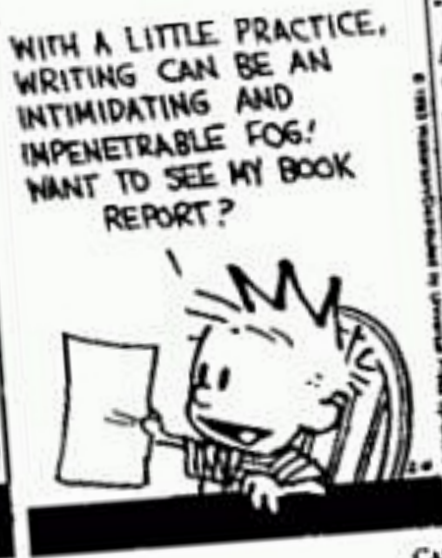
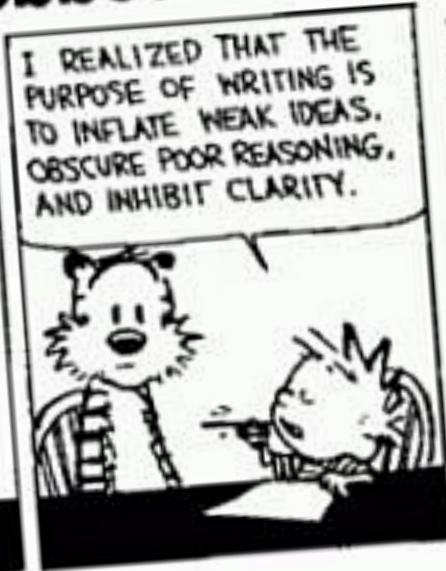
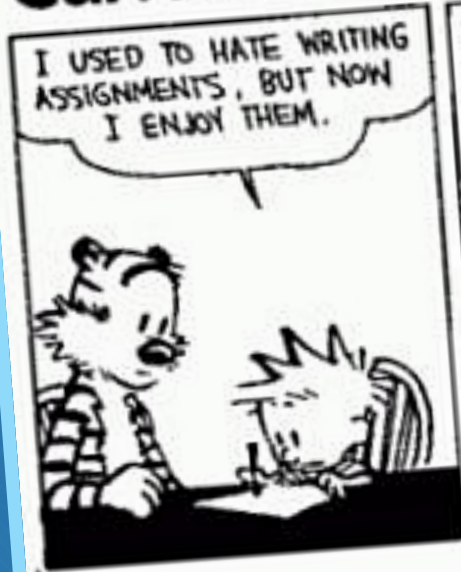
I see the big mother.
I see the little baby.
Look, Jane.
See the big father.



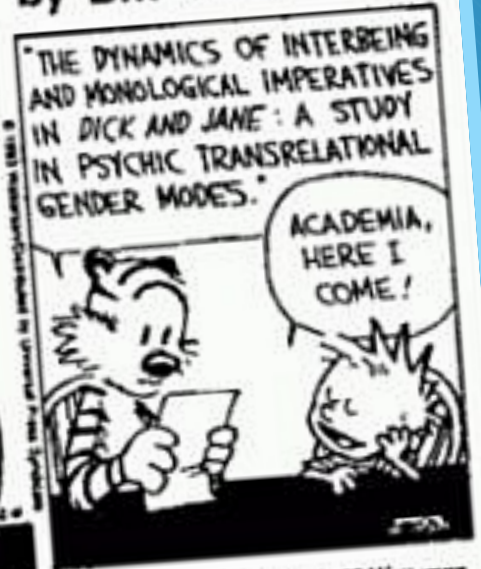
So what's the issue?

- If this is the only vision of a family to which you're exposed, then this becomes "the norm"
- Dick and Jane might have the "perfect" family but...
- How many of our families look like Dick and Jane's?
- How many of us look like Dick and Jane?
- What then is the subliminal message sent by these books?
 - Be more like Dick and Jane
- But what if there's no way?

Calvin and Hobbes



by Bill Watterson



CALVIN AND HOBBS copyright 1993 Watterson. Reprinted with permission of UNIVERSAL UFSI SYNDICATE. All rights reserved.