

To whom it may concern,

I was an English and education teacher for thirty years in California high schools, community colleges, and CSU Sacramento (as well as in Mexico). I always made sure that my curriculum included the literature and perspectives of the varied ethnic and cultural groups of the students before me, as well as the students that my teachers-in-training would be working with.

We must be willing to tell the truth about some of the horrible struggles that have occurred in our state and our nation, such as the ways in which Native people's lands, culture and lives were taken from them, whether in what is now the Americas or from Africa. We need to be honest about how labor has been exploited in this country to help the rich get richer. The experiences of women and the poor have much to teach us about overcoming hardship.

We also must celebrate the accomplishments of all those people who helped fight for justice in every context, including white allies. When as teachers we acknowledge and include the cultural achievements of people of color, of poor people, of women, immigrants, the disabled, and other minority groups, our students who come from any of those groups are empowered to believe that they too have something important to offer. They can be encouraged to seek higher education and efforts to become ever more part of our communities and society in significant ways.

We must protect every kind of multicultural education--textbooks, workshops, speakers, curricula--that many of us worked hard to include in our schools.

Sincerely,

Kim Bancroft, Ph.D.